



July 31, 2019

Twitter, Inc.

1355 Market St. #900
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Chairman Schiff,

I write in response to your letter dated July 15, 2019, regarding manipulated media on the service. Twitter's purpose is to serve the public conversation. We serve our global audience by focusing on the needs of the people who use our service and we put them first in every step we take.

We share your concern about malicious efforts to manipulate and divide people in the United States and throughout the world, including through the use of disinformation campaigns that rely upon the use of "deepfakes."

Current Policies. The public conversation occurring on Twitter is never more important than during elections, the cornerstone of our democracy. Any attempts to undermine the integrity of our service is antithetical to our fundamental rights and undermines the core tenets of freedom of expression.

In April 2019, we issued a new policy regarding election integrity governing manipulative behavior and content related to elections. First, an individual cannot share false or misleading information about how to participate in an election. This includes but is not limited to misleading information about how to vote or register to vote, requirements for voting, including identification requirements, as well as the official, announced date, or time of an election. Second, an individual cannot share false or misleading information intended to intimidate or dissuade voters from participating in an election. This includes but is not limited to misleading claims that polling places are closed, that polling has ended, or other misleading information relating to votes not being counted.

This policy also prohibits Tweets containing misleading claims about police or law enforcement activity related to polling places or elections. We also do not permit misinformation pertaining to long lines, equipment problems, voting procedures or techniques which could dissuade voters from participating in an election. We also prohibit misinformation relating to threats regarding voting locations. Finally, we do not allow the creation of fake accounts which misrepresent their affiliation, and we do not allow individuals on Twitter to share content that falsely represents its affiliation to a candidate, elected official, political party, electoral authority, or government entity. If we become aware of the use of deepfakes to spread misinformation in violation of our policies governing election integrity, we will remove that content.

Additionally, deepfakes in the context of intimate media are clear violations of our terms of services and our intimate media policy. Twitter suspends any account we identify as the original poster of intimate media that has been produced or distributed without the subject's consent. We also suspend any account dedicated to posting this type of content.

Policy Improvements. We are carefully investigating how to handle manipulated media and agree that manipulated media can pose serious threats in certain circumstances. The solutions we develop will need to protect the rights of people to engage in parody, satire, and political commentary.

We are aware currently of two variants of altered videos of Speaker Pelosi appearing on Twitter. Our investigation is ongoing and we will update this committee if we identify additional variants. The first video, which appears to have been slowed down, received a total of nine Retweets, 17 Likes, and 797 video views as of July 31, 2019.

A second video, shared by the account of President Trump, appears to be an edited collection of clips of Speaker Pelosi. This Tweet received approximately 31,107 Retweets, nearly 96,000 Likes, and approximately 6.37 million video views as of July 31, 2019. We are unable to obtain metrics regarding links to

off-platform videos.

On June 26, 2019, Twitter testified before the U.S. House Committee on Homeland Security: "We are continuing to explore how we may take action — through both policy and product — on these types of issues in the future. We continue to critically examine additional safeguards we can implement to protect the conversation occurring on Twitter."

Additional Safeguards. Twitter continues to develop the detection tools and systems needed to combat malicious automation on our service. For example, Twitter prioritizes identifying suspicious account activity, such as exceptionally high-volume Tweeting with the same hashtag or mentioning the same @handle without a reply from the account being addressed; when we identify such activity, we may require an individual using the service to confirm human control of the account or their identity. Twitter has also increased its use of challenges intended to catch automated accounts, such as reCAPTCHAs, that require individuals to identify portions of an image or type words displayed on screen, and password reset requests that protect potentially compromised accounts. In 2018, we challenged 426,040,548 account registrations in total. Twitter has also implemented mandatory email or phone verification for all new accounts.

Moreover, in October 2018, we published the first comprehensive archive of Tweets and media associated with suspected state-backed information operations on Twitter and since then we have provided two further updates covering a range of actors. Thousands of researchers from across the globe have now made use of these datasets, which contain more than 30 million Tweets and more than one terabyte of media, using our archive to conduct their own investigations and to share their insights and independent analyses with the world.

By making this data open and accessible, we seek to empower researchers, journalists, governments, and members of the public to deepen their understanding of critical issues impacting the

integrity of public conversation online, particularly with respect to elections. This transparency is core to our mission.

The challenges we face as a society are complex, varied, and constantly evolving. Twitter cannot address these issues alone. Every entity has a role to play – including how the media chooses to cover examples of manipulated media. A whole-of-society approach includes educators and media literacy groups to promote better understanding of these issues. This is a long-term problem requiring a long-term response, and Twitter welcomes engaging with other stakeholders and policymakers on these important topics.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Monje, Jr.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Carlos Monje, Jr.

Director of Public Policy & Philanthropy, United States & Canada