

Nicholas Clegg
President, Global Affairs
Meta
1 Hacker Way
Menlo Park, California

To Mr. Clegg:

We are writing to you in response to Meta's decision to reinstate Trump's Facebook and Instagram accounts. We are deeply disappointed by the decision and do not feel that Meta took the proper steps to protect our democracy.

We recently wrote to you urging your leadership team to continue the suspension of former president Donald Trump's Facebook account, citing the need to keep dangerous and unfounded election denial content off your platform. The response from your team lacked any transparency regarding what Meta would take into consideration when making this critical decision.

In the recent statement on reinstating Trump's account, you claimed to have assessed "whether the serious risk to public safety that existed in January 2021 has sufficiently receded" and concluded that it has.

This could not be further from the truth.

President Trump incited a violent attack on the Capitol. Two years later, we can see unequivocally that Trump is still spreading the Big Lie and thus undermining our democracy. Indeed, he has even expressed support for pardoning people involved in the January 6th attack on police, should he ever get the chance.

Trump's Big Lie is a cancer on the body politic, and allowing him to return escalates a very serious risk to public safety. Based on Meta's previous statements on standards for allowing Trump back on the platform, his account should not have been reinstated. Trump has continued to post harmful election content on Truth Social that would likely violate Facebook's policies, and we have every reason to believe he will bring similar conspiratorial rhetoric back to Facebook, too. How Facebook could reinstate his account, given all the additional content on Truth Social that would likely have resulted in a brand-new suspension if it were on your platform, is inexplicable.

Meta's inconsistent and opaque content removal process is a harm to the public. In this week's decision, Meta stated that the updated protocol will address content that "contributes to the sort of risk that materialized on January 6." The statement then says that Meta "may" limit the distribution of such posts and the content would still remain on the account.

As stated in our recent letter, we believe that part of Meta's commitment to election integrity should be ensuring that those who maintain the unfounded, dangerous narrative of the 2020 election are not allowed or encouraged to spread the lie in any form. It is not clear in this decision where Meta will draw the line "between content that is harmful and should be removed, and content that, however distasteful or inaccurate, is part of the rough and tumble of life in a free society" and we would greatly appreciate further clarity on this matter. The lack of clear guardrails is especially concerning given that Meta enjoys special immunity under Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act for harmful content, including speech that is fraudulent, incites violence or insurrection, or otherwise would not be

protected under the First Amendment. A company that seeks to preserve this special immunity has a heightened responsibility to moderate and remove dangerous content and users.

Although we do not agree with this decision, we hope to continue the conversation on election integrity on the platform. We will be monitoring Donald Trump's activity and your response.

Sincerely,



Adam Schiff
Member of Congress



Sheldon Whitehouse
Member of Congress