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The Cover Up: Big Tech, the Swamp, and Mainstream Media Coordinated to Censor Americans' Free Speech - United States House Committee on Oversight and Accountability

7–9 minutes

Former Twitter employees testified on their decision to restrict protected speech and interfere in the democratic process

WASHINGTON — Today, the House Committee on Oversight and Accountability held a hearing titled “[Protecting Speech from Government Interference and Social Media Bias, Part 1: Twitter’s Role in Suppressing the Biden Laptop Story.](#)” Chairman Comer and Committee Republicans detailed how Twitter worked closely with the federal government to actively monitor and censor Americans online. Under the leadership of former Twitter employees Vijaya Gadde, James Baker, and Yoel Roth, Twitter coordinated extensively with the FBI to disproportionately target Republican leaders, conservative activists, and certain media outlets. In October 2020, Twitter censored the *New York Post*’s story about the Biden family’s business schemes based on the contents of Hunter Biden’s laptop, despite the article not violating any Twitter policies.

Key Takeaways:

Social media companies, including Twitter, are powerful entities that have the potential to influence public opinion and behavior.

Under former Twitter employees' watch, Twitter devolved into a private company the FBI and federal government infiltrated to deliberately limit free speech, particularly conservative speech and news contrary to the mainstream narrative.

Former Twitter employees admitted the New York Post's Hunter Biden laptop story didn't violate any Twitter policies but it was taken down anyway. They also admitted they made no attempt to verify the authenticity of the contents of Hunter Biden's laptop.

Member Highlights:

Chairman James Comer (R-Ky.) emphasized that Twitter executives made no attempt to verify whether the Hunter Biden laptop materials were authentic before censoring the New York Post story.



Rep. Comer: *"Isn't it correct that the Biden campaign had contact*

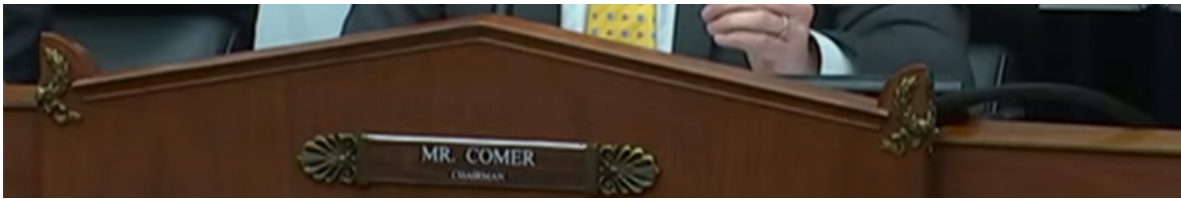
with Twitter in the run-up to the 2020 election... And you're telling this committee that you didn't ask any Biden representative if the laptop was real or for Hunter Biden's attorney's phone number to confirm it's authenticity?"

Ms. Gadde: *"We did not speak to anybody related to that."*

Rep. Comer: *"Mr. Roth, Ms. Gadde, and Mr. Baker, it appears to me that you failed at your jobs. You were entrusted with the highest level of power at Twitter, but when you were faced with a New York Post story, instead of allowing people to judge the information for themselves, you rushed to find a reason why the American people shouldn't see it. In a matter of hours, you were deciding on the truth of a story that spans years and dozens of complex international transactions. You did this because you were terrified of Joe Biden not winning the election in 2020, that's what it appeared. I can assure you this committee will succeed in holding the Biden's accountable."*

In addition, Chairman Comer stressed former Twitter executives were openly hostile towards conservatives and specifically targeted the New York Post's Hunter Biden laptop story.





Representative Andy Biggs (R-Ariz.) noted that the communications from the day the New York Post article was published show that Twitter executives said the article did not violate Twitter policies.



Rep. Biggs: *“Within mere minutes or hours after the New York Post published its story on the Hunter Biden laptop, at 8:51 am, you sent a message to a team, part of your team I assume. You said, ‘It isn’t clearly violative of our hacked materials policy,’ referring to the story, ‘nor is it clearly in violation of anything else.’ Do you remember sending that message?”*

Mr. Roth: *“I don’t recall that message specifically, but that does sound like my judgment on that day, yes.”*

Rep. Biggs: *“That’s two weeks that you imposed your will on the American electorate.”*

Representative Nancy Mace (R-S.C.) pointed out that the former Twitter executives were not only hostile towards conservative voices, but also towards other individuals such as medical experts.



Rep. Mace: *“Why do you think you or anyone else had the medical expertise to censor a doctor’s expert opinion? Did the U.S. government ever contact you or anyone at Twitter to censor or moderate certain Tweets? Yes or no.”*

Mr. Gadde: *“We receive legal demands to remove content from the platform from the U.S. government and governments all around the world...”*

Rep. Mace: *“Thank god for Elon Musk for allowing to show us and the world that Twitter was basically a subsidiary of the FBI, censoring real medical voices with real expertise that put real Americans live in danger because they didn’t have that information.”*

Representative Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) discussed how the FBI

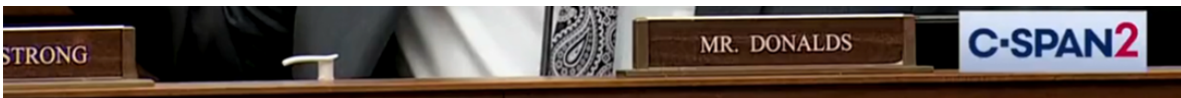
infiltrated Twitter’s leadership to censor the New York Post’s Hunter Biden laptop story ahead of the 2020 Presidential election in a potential attempt to sway the outcome.



Rep. Jordan: *“What a lot of people are wondering is if it didn’t violate your policies and they didn’t tell you it was fake, didn’t tell you it was hacked, why’d you take it down?”*

Representative Byron Donalds (R-Ohio) highlighted emails showing former Twitter employees regularly communicated with the Biden campaign ahead of the 2020 election.





Rep. Donalds: *“Over my right shoulder, we have an email. This is Saturday, October 24th, 5:39 pm, referencing five different Tweets with a Twitter email chain. Under the line it’s, ‘more to review from the Biden team.’ Does anybody have a comment on how much interaction was with the Biden team at Twitter with respect to tweets that they wanted Twitter to review?”*

Representative Kelly Armstrong (R-N.D.) noted that despite setting up teams dedicated to investigating potential foreign interference, Twitter did not reach out to seek guidance before deciding to censor the Hunter Biden laptop story.



Rep. Armstrong: *“Earlier today, you testified that you were following [the accounts of] national security experts on Twitter as a reason to take down the New York Post story on Hunter Biden’s laptop.”*

Mr. Roth: *Yes sir, I did.*

Rep. Armstrong: *So after 2016, you set up all these teams to deal with Russian interference, foreign interference, you're having regular meetings with the FBI, you have connections with all of these different government agencies and you didn't reach out to them once?"*

Representative Lisa McClain (R-N.D.) asked for clarification on how the former Twitter executives flagged tweets as disinformation and whether their policies were applied equally to all.



Rep. McClain: *"We have one set of rules for this team and another set of rules for this team. So we're trying to look at what is the equal playing field. I'm under the assumption that when we use disinformation and we use criteria, the criteria is the same for both sides. So I'm trying to figure out what is the criteria that you had in place to determine which information was misinformation, and did you apply that equally, equitably, inclusively so to speak, to all sides"*

READ MORE: [Big Tech Wields Unchecked Power to Suppress Constitutional Speech](#)

[CLICK HERE](#) to watch the hearing.