

President Joseph R. Biden
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20050

April 15, 2021

Dear President R. Biden, Jr.,

America is facing a crisis of online misinformation that is eroding faith in our democratic institutions, threatening public health, stoking radical extremism, and fanning the flames of hatred and division. Truth is under siege, and Big Tech platforms have become too big to care – they must be reined in.

Through the use of profit-driven algorithms and a lack of oversight, companies like Facebook and Google have used their platforms to promote increasingly radical, violent, and racist content that appeals to the worst of our nature in order to keep users engaged so they can sell more ads. This is what their business model is built on, and they have gained enormous market share through enabling and promoting misinformation. Facebook and Google control over 60% of all digital advertising in the U.S. Two companies. And Google's 2020 ad revenue alone is expected to be more than all U.S. TV and radio ad revenue combined.

It is increasingly evident that the size and dominance of these platforms have allowed them to operate with impunity, making them too big to care about the real-world harms they continue to cause. This recklessness has been met with little oversight or regulation – including weak enforcement of antitrust laws – that have allowed these harms to compound.

In recent years, companies like Amazon, Apple, Google, and Facebook have used anticompetitive practices to manipulate markets and buy out competitors. As these companies have grown larger and larger, nearly 75% of Americans have grown concerned with their power. With the push of a button, decisions made in the C-suites of these gatekeeper companies have the power to stifle innovation, poison our information ecosystem, and weaken U.S. democracy in the pursuit of profit.

As experts and advocates on the front lines of the misinformation crisis, we urge you and your administration to hold these platforms accountable, and strongly enforce U.S. antitrust laws. We commend the administration for appointing strong antitrust experts to the National Economic Council and Federal Trade Commission (FTC). This same approach will be even more important in selecting leadership for antitrust enforcement at the Department of Justice and for further appointments at the FTC. These appointments should include only those able and willing to fearlessly investigate and litigate against the large tech firms without conflicts of interest from previous employment or representation.

Personnel is policy, and it is critical that the Biden Administration appoint leaders committed to enforcing our nation's antitrust laws to the fullest degree. We must not go back to business as usual. Privacy, civil liberties, public health, truth, and the strength of U.S. democracy are at stake.

This is a defining moment of our time, and the will of the American people is on our side. Nearly three in four Americans – including majorities of Democrats and Republicans alike – want stronger regulation of Big Tech platforms. We urge you to deliver. You are serving as president to restore the soul of this nation. Ensuring that no company is unaccountable or too big to care about the harms they are causing to America is at the very heart of that fight.

Sincerely,

Accountable Tech
Action Center on Race and the Economy
American Economic Liberties Project
American Family Voices
Artist Rights Alliance
Awood Center
Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood
Center for Countering Digital Hate
Center for Digital Democracy
Color of Change
Demand Progress Education Fund
Fight for the Future
Food & Water Watch
Friends of the Earth
Good Jobs First
Institute for Local Self-Reliance
Jobs With Justice
Make the Road New York
Main Street Alliance
Open Markets Institute
Organic Consumers Association
People for the American Way
People's Parity Project
Progressive Change Institute
Public Citizen
Revolving Door Project
SumOfUs
U.S. PIRG