

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 4, 2025

Mr. Mark Zuckerberg
Chief Executive Officer
Meta Platforms, Inc.

Dear Mr. Zuckerberg:

On June 28, 2021, I held a roundtable with individuals who experienced adverse reactions to COVID-19 vaccines.¹ Brianne Dressen was among those who came forward and spoke about her struggles with vaccine injuries following her participation in an AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine trial.² Mrs. Dressen described how, despite the intensity of her symptoms, which began immediately after vaccination and included hearing problems, nausea, and loss of bodily function so severe she could barely eat, Mrs. Dressen was told by doctors that what was happening to her wasn't real, instead blaming other illnesses such as anxiety.³ After connecting with other vaccine injured individuals, Mrs. Dressen found relief in knowing that she was no longer alone, but this quickly turned to alarm as the numbers of vaccine injured grew.⁴ Years later, in November 2024, Mrs. Dressen's experiences with the repercussions of the COVID-19 vaccine were chronicled in a book entitled *Worth a Shot?*⁵ The book also highlights Facebook's apparent censorship of the vaccine injured.⁶

According to the book, vaccine injured individuals, such as Mrs. Dressen, utilized Facebook groups to connect with and support each other.⁷ The book alleges that within twenty-four hours of my June 28, 2021 roundtable, "Facebook started shutting down those groups."⁸ In response, Mrs. Dressen and others coordinated efforts to gather members of these once-accessible Facebook support groups into a single Facebook group named "A Wee Sprinkle of Hope."⁹ This group, which the book states was "the largest COVID vaccine injury support group in the world," was then shut down by Facebook "five days after" my roundtable.¹⁰

As reported in *Worth a Shot?*, Facebook's apparent censorship campaign against the vaccine injured went beyond merely shutting down their support groups. The book asserts that

¹ Press release, Sen. Johnson: "These Families Have a Very Simple Request: They Want to be Seen, Their Stories Heard. They Would Like To Be Believed", U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson, June 29, 2021, <https://www.ronjohnson.senate.gov/2021/6/sen-johnson-these-families-have-a-very-simple-request-they-want-to-be-seen-their-stories-heard-they-would-like-to-be-believed>.

² *Id.*

³ Sen. Ron Johnson with families on adverse reactions to COVID vaccine, FOX6 News Milwaukee, Jun. 28, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IAeVLdMnerQ>.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ Caroline Pover, *Worth A Shot?*, 199 (2024).

⁶ *Id.*

⁷ *Id.* at 199.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ *Id.* at 200.

when individuals posted about their injuries on their own Facebook pages, warnings would be appended to the post, often without the posting individual's knowledge, that "urged the viewer to go to Facebook's Community Guidelines to get accurate information about the COVID vaccine."¹¹ Further, it appears that the intent of these warnings was to discourage other individuals from interacting with users that Facebook considered to be "repeat offender[s] of posting misinformation."¹² Vaccine injured users were also reportedly shadowbanned—a technique used by social media platforms to limit the visibility of a user's posts, often without their knowledge.¹³

Worse still, the book alleges that Facebook censored private messages sent on the platform by limiting the recipient's ability to even realize they had received a message. According to the book, one woman tragically took her own life following unanswered pleas for help that she messaged to other members of the Facebook vaccine injured community.¹⁴ Sadly, it appears that those messages went unanswered because those Facebook users were unaware they received a message.¹⁵

On January 10, 2025, the Joe Rogan Experience podcast, published an interview with you, which discussed Facebook's content moderation practices.¹⁶ Specifically, you spoke about pressure from the Biden administration to censor information concerning side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines.¹⁷ According to your interview, the Biden administration "pushed [Facebook] super hard to take down things that were honestly were true[.]"¹⁸ You further stated the Biden administration pressured Facebook to take down "anything that says that vaccines might have side effects."¹⁹ According to you, the Biden administration would "call[] up the guys on [Facebook's] team and yelling at them and cursing and threatening repercussions if we don't take down things that are true[.]"²⁰ It is unclear whether the Biden administration's pressure campaign led to Facebook's reported censorship of the vaccine injury support groups.

Facebook's alleged censorship campaign against the vaccine injured, as detailed in *Worth a Shot?*, is the latest evidence of Big Tech's efforts, in conjunction with the Biden administration, to silence anything critical of the COVID cartel and the vaccines.²¹

¹¹ *Id.* at 202.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ *Id.* at 203.

¹⁵ *Id.* (according to the book, the support group member's messages were only discovered when a group administrator searched for her messages after she took her own life).

¹⁶ The Joe Rogan Experience Podcast, Episode 2255-Mark Zuckerberg, Jan. 10, 2025, available at <https://open.spotify.com/episode/3kDr0LcmqOHOz3mBHMDuV> (last accessed Jan. 16, 2025).

¹⁷ *Id.* beginning at 8:17. (identifying the Biden administration specifically at 9:06).

¹⁸ *Id.* beginning at 8:34.

¹⁹ *Id.* beginning at 8:45.

²⁰ *Id.* beginning at 58:41.

²¹ *See, e.g.*, Letter from Ron Johnson, Ranking Member, Permanent Subcomm. on Investigations, to Dr. Mandy Cohen, Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Aug. 28, 2023 (detailing the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's work with social media companies such as Twitter to censor VAERS data as vaccine misinformation).

Pursuant to Senate Resolution 59 (118th Cong.), the United States Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (the “Subcommittee”) is conducting a review of the censorship of COVID-19 vaccine injuries. In order to assist the Subcommittee’s review, please provide the following information:

1. Did Facebook shutdown, remove, or otherwise ban the COVID-19 vaccine injury support group named “A Wee Sprinkle of Hope”? If yes, please explain why this group was shutdown, removed, or otherwise banned.
2. Did any federal entity ever request that Facebook shutdown, remove, ban, or otherwise censor any COVID-19 vaccine injury support group?
 - a. If yes, please explain when were these requests made, what support groups were targeted, and what federal entity (or entities) made the request.
3. Did Facebook shutdown, remove, or otherwise ban any COVID-19 vaccine injury support group as a result of pressure from the Biden administration? If yes, please explain what Facebook groups were shutdown, removed, or otherwise banned and when.
4. A list of all Facebook groups connected to COVID-19 vaccine injuries that were shutdown, removed, had restrictions placed on them, or were otherwise banned by Facebook since January 1, 2020, including the reason(s) that each group was shutdown, removed, had restrictions placed on them, or were otherwise banned by Facebook.
5. All records²² referring or relating to Facebook groups connected to COVID-19 vaccine injury groups, including, but not limited to, all communications referring or relating to moderation, shutdown, removal, restriction, or otherwise banning of groups associated with COVID-19 vaccine injuries.
6. All records referring or relating to the moderation, removal, restriction, or reduction in the visibility of posts made concerning COVID-19 vaccine injuries, adverse events, or side effects.
7. All communications with any federal entity, or any employee or representative of any federal entity, referring or relating to COVID-19 vaccine injuries, adverse events, or side effects, including, but not limited to, all communications with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes for Health, or the White House.
8. A list of all Facebook employees, including contractors, along with their titles and dates they held those titles between January 1, 2020 and the present, who have been responsible for the creation and/or application of Facebook’s policies referring or relating to the moderation, removal, suppression, or other forms of restrictions for posts made regarding COVID-19 vaccine injury or of COVID-19 vaccine injury groups.

²² “Records” include any written, recorded, or graphic material of any kind, including letters, memoranda, reports, notes, electronic data (emails, email attachments, and any other electronically-created or stored information), calendar entries, inter-office communications, meeting minutes, phone/voice mail or recordings/records of verbal communications, and drafts (whether or not they resulted in final documents).

9. All communications with any COVID-19 vaccine manufacturer or trade association, or any entity involved with the clinical trial of any COVID-19 vaccine referring or relating to COVID-19 vaccine injuries, adverse events, or side effects, including, but not limited to, all communications with Pfizer, Inc., Moderna, Inc., Johnson and Johnson.²³
10. A list of any third-party group, nonprofit organization, academic institution, government entity, or individual that Facebook has communicated with, consulted with, or otherwise relied upon for:
 - a. the development of policies regarding content moderation as it relates to COVID-19 vaccine injuries, adverse events, or side effects; and
 - b. the moderation, removal, suppression, or other forms of restrictions for posts made regarding COVID-19 vaccine injury or of COVID-19 vaccine injury groups.
11. All records referring or relating to any third-party group, nonprofit organization, academic institution, government entity, or individual that Facebook has communicated with, consulted with, or otherwise relied upon for:
 - a. the development of policies regarding content moderation as it relates to COVID-19 vaccine injuries, adverse events, or side effects; and
 - b. the moderation, removal, suppression, or other forms of restrictions for posts made regarding COVID-19 vaccine injury or of COVID-19 vaccine injury groups.

To expedite the Subcommittee's review, submit the material responsive to this request as it becomes available, rather than waiting to provide it all at once. To avoid any unnecessary delays, carefully review the *Procedures for Transmitting Documents to the U.S. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations* and contact the Subcommittee to discuss the method and timing of the production. Please provide this information by no later than February 18, 2025. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Ron Johnson
Chairman
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

cc: The Honorable Richard Blumenthal
Ranking Member
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

²³ For purposes of this letter, vaccine manufacturer, trade association, or entity involved with clinical trials includes any contractor or consultant for any vaccine manufacturer, trade association, or entity involved with clinical trials.