

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM
2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051
MINORITY (202) 225-5074
<https://oversight.house.gov>

October 28, 2022

Mr. Elon Musk
Owner
Twitter, Inc.
1335 Market St #900
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Mr. Musk:

Committee on Oversight and Reform Republicans are investigating the Biden family's pattern of influence peddling to enrich themselves and President Biden's involvement in these schemes. As part of this investigation, Committee Republicans are reviewing the role Big Tech—including Twitter—played in supporting the Biden campaign in 2020 by suppressing certain stories implicating the Bidens. Following your recent acquisition of Twitter¹ and pledge to make the social media platform a place “where a wide range of beliefs can be debated in a healthy manner,”² we hope you will correct this error made by the company's former leadership and provide Americans with transparency. To that end, we request Twitter provide information regarding its previous leaders' decision to limit information that may have affected the 2020 election.

On April 20, 2022, we wrote Twitter's then-Chief Executive Officer Parag Agrawal, requesting the company “preserve all documents and communications in Twitter's custody referring or relating to the October 2020 *New York Post* article about Hunter Biden's laptop.”³ The company's former leadership did not respond to our letter. We believe open communication and access to information is a fundamental principle for any free people, and the American people deserve to know the reason Twitter suppressed or censored the Biden laptop story shortly before the 2020 election.⁴

¹ Lauren Thomas, *Elon Musk Twitter Deal Completed, CEO and CFO Immediately Fired*, WALL STREET JOURNAL (Oct. 27, 2022).

² Elon Musk (@elonmusk), TWITTER (Oct. 27, 2022, 9:08 AM).

³ Letter from Hon. James Comer, Ranking Member H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform to Parag Agrawal, Twitter (Apr. 20, 2022).

⁴ Cristiano Lima, *Hunter Biden laptop findings renew scrutiny of Twitter, Facebook crackdowns*, WASHINGTON POST (Mar. 31, 2022).

On October 14, 2020—a few weeks before the 2020 Presidential Election—the *New York Post* published evidence about Hunter Biden’s laptop—recovered from a Delaware computer repair store—which showed a disturbing pattern of influence peddling and corruption among Biden family members and associates.⁵ Quickly following the *New York Post*’s publication of the story, Twitter prohibited users from sharing it and locked the *Post*’s Twitter account. Twitter censors met any attempts to share the story’s link with a notice that said, “[w]e can’t complete this request because this link has been identified by Twitter or our partners as being potentially harmful.”⁶ Twitter unilaterally decided—without any evidence—that the story was untrue. Only after the election did the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* admit the laptop was authentic.⁷ Committee Republicans are concerned Twitter inappropriately censored the Hunter Biden laptop story to influence the 2020 Presidential Election.

Upon receiving a copy of Hunter Biden’s laptop hard drive, Committee Republicans were quickly able to verify the validity of its contents—something Twitter’s 7,500 employees were unable or unwilling to do. Subsequently, Committee Republicans have released compelling evidence that lays out dangerous implications regarding the Biden family’s questionable foreign business dealings.⁸ This includes evidence that the Biden family was directly involved in influence peddling and corruption, including the sale of U.S. natural gas to China.⁹ The allegations are serious and raise grave national security concerns.

Republicans on the Committee on Oversight and Reform urge you to reverse the pattern of censoring certain news and views. This includes ending the practice employed by Twitter’s previous leadership of prioritizing its own worldview over freedom of speech and information. Therefore, and in accordance with our April 20, 2022, document preservation letter sent to Twitter’s then-Chief Executive Officer Parag Agrawal, we request the following documents and information as soon as possible but no later than November 11, 2022:

1. All documents and communications to, from, between and among Twitter and Twitter employees related to the October 2020 *New York Post* articles on Hunter Biden’s laptop;

⁵ Emma-Jo Morris, *Smoking-gun email reveals how Hunter Biden introduced Ukrainian businessman to VP dad*, NEW YORK POST (Oct. 14, 2020); Emma-Jo Morris, *Emails reveal how Hunter Biden tried to cash in big on behalf of family with Chinese firm*, NEW YORK POST (Oct. 15, 2020).

⁶ Kari Paul, *Facebook and Twitter restrict controversial New York Post story on Joe Biden*, THE GUARDIAN (Oct. 14, 2020).

⁷ Bruce Golding, *Washington Post joins New York Times in finally admitting emails from Hunter Biden laptop are real*, NEW YORK POST (Mar. 30, 2022).

⁸ Letter from Hon. James Comer, Ranking Member H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform to Hon. Janet Yellen, Secretary, U.S. Dep’t of Treasury (Jul. 14, 2022); Letter from Hon. James Comer, Ranking Member H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform to Hon. Janet Yellen, Secretary, U.S. Dep’t of Treasury (Sep. 20, 2022); Letter from Hon. James Comer, Ranking Member H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform to Hon. Christopher Wray, Director, U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (Oct. 26, 2022).

⁹ *Id.*

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2. All documents and communications between Twitter and the Federal Bureau of Investigation or any other U.S. law enforcement or intelligence agency regarding the Hunter Biden laptop story;
3. All documents and communications regarding the decision to censor or suppress the Hunter Biden laptop story on Twitter's platform.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue. To make arrangements to deliver documents or ask any related follow-up questions, please contact Committee on Oversight and Reform Republican Staff at (202) 225-5074. The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this inquiry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Comer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

James Comer
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Reform

cc: The Honorable Carolyn Maloney, Chairwoman
Committee on Oversight and Reform