

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

August 17, 2026

Mark Zuckerberg
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer
Meta Platforms, Inc.
1 Hacker Way
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Dear Mr. Zuckerberg,

We are writing to express our concern over Meta’s rollback of key safeguards designed to prevent the spread of misinformation on its platforms, and the risk this could pose to the 2026 elections in the United States.

As you know, in January 2025, Meta announced that it would discontinue its third-party fact-checking program, which had partnered with more than 90 independent organizations to review content for misinformation.¹ Notably, it has been reported that Meta continues to offer fact-checking partnerships in other countries around the world, while withdrawing this safeguard from American users heading into a major election.² Meta launched this program in 2016 amid widespread concerns over the platform’s impact on the U.S. elections³ and as recently as March 2021, you described it to Congress as “unprecedented” and “industry-leading.”⁴

At the same time, Meta significantly rolled back the automated enforcement systems⁵ that scan for and remove mis- and disinformation, hate speech, and other content that violate your Community Standards.⁶ In announcing these rollbacks, you acknowledged that the change would lead to Meta “catch[ing] less bad stuff.”⁷ In place, Meta rolled out Community Notes. Where content previously flagged by a fact-checker or by your content filters was removed or down-ranked, Community Notes now act only as unobtrusive disclosures – they do not stop the spread of the underlying content.⁸ Soon after Meta’s made this change, users encountered white-

¹ Bruna Horvath, Jason Abbruzzese, Ben Goggin, “Meta is ending its fact-checking program in favor of a ‘community notes’ system similar to X’s,” [NBC News](#), January 7 2025.

² Rebecca Catalanello, Katie Sanders, “Meta is ending its third-party fact-checking partnership with US partners. Here’s how that program works,” [Poynter](#), January 7, 2025.

³ See footnote 1.

⁴ Alexios Mantzarlis, “Let’s fact-check Mark Zuckerberg’s fact-checking announcement,” [NiemanLab](#), January 8 2025.

⁵ See footnote 1.

⁶ [Meta Transparency Center](#), “How enforcement technology works,” November 12, 2024.

⁷ See footnote 1.

⁸ Joel Kaplan, “More Speech and Fewer Mistakes,” [Meta Newsroom](#), January 7, 2025.

supremacist propaganda and Holocaust denial clips on Instagram Reels, with individual videos accumulating millions of views before Meta intervened to slow their spread.⁹ The proliferation of such content not only spreads harmful falsehoods, but discourages communities from participating in online civic discourse, as recognized in Meta’s own hate speech standards.¹⁰ By replacing dedicated fact-checking and robust enforcement of your own content-moderation policies with Community Notes, Meta has effectively shifted the burden of fact-checking onto its users, who may not have the resources, the time, or the expertise to scrutinize the news they are receiving on Meta’s platforms.

Compounding these concerns, internal Meta documents revealed that up to 90% of all privacy and integrity risk assessments at Meta could now be automated.¹¹ In practice, this means that critical updates to Meta’s algorithms, new safety features, and changes to how content is allowed to be shared on Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp that were previously reviewed by human privacy and safety teams, could instead be approved by an automated AI system.¹² Current and former Meta employees have raised serious concerns that AI is ill-suited to make the nuanced determinations required to prevent real-world harm.¹³ Taken together with the rollback of dedicated fact-checking teams, algorithmic decisions that could shape what voters see in their feeds heading into 2026 could be made faster, with less human oversight, and with fewer internal voices empowered to flag election-integrity risks before changes go live.

As you know, generative AI has made it dramatically easier for bad actors to produce deepfakes, cloned voices, and synthetic personas. The barrier to entry is now so low that producing and disseminating such content does not even require coordinated state resources. For example, in April 2026, it was reported that a 22-year-old medical student in India used AI tools to fabricate “Emily Hart,” a fake conservative MAGA “influencer” that espoused anti-abortion rhetoric and anti-immigration views.¹⁴ The synthetic persona amassed millions of views and thousands of subscribers before Instagram finally removed the account for fraudulent activity.¹⁵ Generative AI makes it possible to mass produce and disseminate fabricated political content at scale, deceiving voters and deepening polarization, particularly on platforms like Facebook and Instagram where tens of millions of Americans get their political news.

This is not alarmism: AI generated content is already being employed in an attempt to influence elections. Deepfakes of 2026 midterm candidates are circulating as standard campaign content: There have been multiple confirmed deepfake incidents across Senate races in Texas and Georgia, including an ad featuring a fabricated, life-like video of Texas Senate candidate James

⁹ Eva Roytburg, “Millions of Gen Zers are watching Hitler and Holocaust denial clips on Instagram,” [FORTUNE](#), November 20 2025.

¹⁰ [Meta Transparency Center](#), “Hate Speech Community Standard,” last accessed May 2026.

¹¹ Bobby Allyn, Shannon Bond, “Meta plans to replace humans with AI to assess privacy and societal risks,” [NPR](#), May 31 2025.

¹² *Id.*

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ EJ Dickson, “This Scammer Used an AI-Generated MAGA Girl to Grift ‘Super Dumb’ Men,” [WIRED](#), April 21 2026.

¹⁵ *Id.*

Talarico speaking directly to camera.¹⁶ Internationally, days before Ireland’s October 2025 presidential election, a deepfake video designed to look like a news bulletin falsely depicted candidate Catherine Connolly withdrawing from the race and announced that the election had been “cancelled.”¹⁷ It’s troubling to consider that these are the conditions under which our 2026 elections will be conducted, where AI tools can fabricate candidates’ positions and crucial voting information.

We recognize Meta’s contributions to the United States’ economy – the thousands of high-paying jobs it sustains, the innovative technologies it has built that reach billions of people, and its past leadership on incredibly challenging problems, including protecting the integrity of our elections. In earlier cycles, before the rollbacks described above, Meta invited legislators to its offices in Menlo Park and showcased its election war rooms, and the effort Meta was devoting to election integrity was both substantial and effective.

That record is why Meta’s current course concerns us. We believe that Meta’s approach to the 2026 election cycle¹⁸ is inadequate to address the threats now facing American elections – particularly given Meta’s rollback of fact-checking, the automation of risk review, and the proliferation of AI generated content on Meta’s platforms. To that end, we request your response to the following questions:

1. How do the staffing and budget for election integrity teams at Meta in 2026 compare to 2020 and 2024? Please provide U.S.-specific, election-dedicated headcount and budget comparisons.
2. Meta’s published 2026 election policies focus largely on paid political advertising. What specific policies and enforcement mechanisms apply to non-advertising AI-generated political content – including deepfake videos of candidates, synthetic audio of officials, and impersonation accounts – posted by users or third parties? On average, how long does Meta take to remove such content, broken down by its platforms (Facebook, Instagram, Threads, WhatsApp)?
3. Does Meta require individuals or third-party accounts that are being paid to disseminate political content (i.e., influencers) on Meta’s platforms to disclose their compensation and its sources?
4. Does Meta require advertisers to disclose when AI has generated the sound or images in a political ad in a way that would mislead a user?
5. Do state and local election officials have dedicated channels to report misleading content about voting to Meta? If yes, how is that reporting channel currently staffed and

¹⁶ Joseph Ax, Helen Coster, “AI deepfakes blur reality in 2026 US midterm campaigns,” [Reuters](#), March 28 2026.

¹⁷ Jake Liggett, “‘Disgraceful’ deep-fake AI video condemned by presidential candidate,” [BBC](#), October 22 2025..

¹⁸ Andrew Hutchinson, “Meta Outlines Its Plan To Manage Integrity During the US Midterm Elections,” [Social Media Today](#), February 19 2026.

resourced? What is the average response time on reports submitted by election officials in 2025 and 2026 to date?

6. How does Meta enforce Facebook's "real-name" policy in practice, and what verification (if any) is required? What mechanisms does Meta use to similarly prevent malign bot accounts on Instagram and Threads?
7. For non-paid Facebook Pages and third-party-administered pages on other Meta platforms, what disclosure is required about who controls the account and what is posted? Is that information verified and, if so, how?
8. What has been the measured impact of the Community Notes program since January 2025? How has the volume of misinformation flagged via this program compared to Meta's shuttered dedicated fact-checking program?
9. How much content has been taken down by Meta for violations of your community guidelines since January 2025, compared to 2024 and 2023, broken down by platform (Facebook, Threads, WhatsApp, Instagram), and aggregated annually?

We respectfully request your responses to these questions by Friday, September 18, 2026. Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



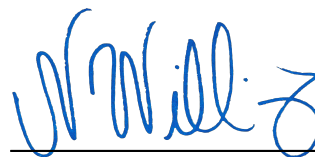
Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress



Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Congress



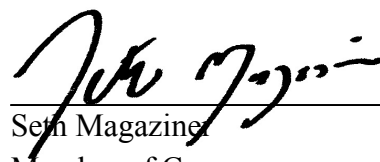
Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress

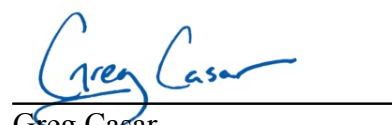


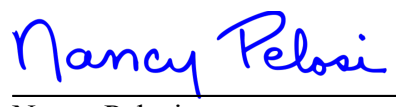
Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress

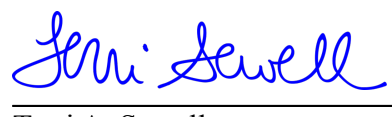

Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress


Greg Casar
Member of Congress

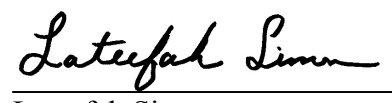

Nancy Pelosi
Member of Congress

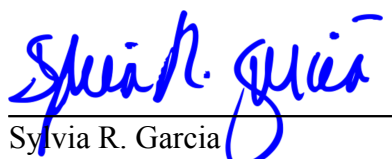

Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress


Dan Goldman
Member of Congress


Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress

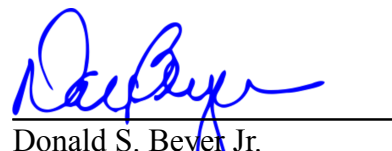

Adam Smith
Member of Congress


Lateefah Simon
Member of Congress


Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress


Valerie P. Foushee
Member of Congress


Adenita S. Grijalva
Member of Congress


Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alexa Ocasio-Cortez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alexa" and last name "Cortez" being more prominent than the middle name "Ocasio".

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress