

February 7, 2018

VIA EMAIL

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on the Judiciary  
331 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Adam Schiff  
Ranking Member, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence  
2372 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Ranking Member Feinstein and Ranking Member Schiff,

Thank you for your January 31, 2018 letter requesting additional information relating to media reports indicating that certain non-Facebook accounts believed to be affiliated with Russia called for the release of a memo regarding a surveillance application by the US government.

Facebook is committed to protecting the integrity of conversations on our platform. We continuously monitor our platform for any signs of efforts by nation-state actors to misuse it for traditional offensive cybersecurity actions or disinformation campaigns. As we have discussed with you and your staff, we have actively participated in the battle against organized disinformation:

- We detected and disrupted traditional cybersecurity threats by a group with ties to Russia during the 2016 US Presidential Election and reported them to law enforcement officials. This included activity from a cluster of accounts we believe belonged to a group that the US government has publicly linked to Russian military intelligence services.
- Shortly after the election, Facebook performed a retroactive analysis of state-sponsored disinformation as well as the more prevalent phenomenon of fake news. Our findings from this work were applied to protecting the French and German elections from attempted manipulations and were published by us in April 2017.
- In the summer of 2017, we undertook a separate analysis to understand the use of advertising by Russian groups during the US elections. We published our findings in September and provided the appropriate Congressional committees and law enforcement teams with detailed data and content.

facebook

Address: 1601 Willow Road  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

- We have had productive interactions with the French and German governments in the run-up to their elections, and we have been happy to answer questions posed to us by the US Congress.

Despite our efforts, and the efforts of other researchers and security experts around the world, state-sponsored disinformation continues to be a serious challenge across a range of social media. We have continued to learn about Russian information operations through our initiatives, and are dedicated to improving our ability to mitigate the effect of disinformation and maintain the integrity of the Facebook platform.

We are also committed to deepening our collaboration with law enforcement and responding to their lawful requests, and we are actively engaged with the FBI's newly-formed task force that is dedicated to addressing election interference. We are encouraged by this development. Law enforcement has the resources, experience, and responsibility to identify and prioritize threats and violations and respond to them. Their requests and guidance inform in significant part our investigative priorities, and we want and expect that to continue. We are in regular contact with the FBI, DHS, and other agencies about how we can work together to protect the 2018 midterms from external attack. We have a long history of working with democratic governments and other companies to disrupt more traditional cybersecurity actors, and we believe that we can work with these investigative authorities in a manner that is effective in stopping foreign interference and consistent with American ideals.

We are also working to find ways that we can better partner with academic groups and NGOs who study organized disinformation. We are exploring options that would give such groups visibility into the flow of political information on the platform while still maintaining the privacy of our users and our compliance with privacy laws around the world.

You asked that we “explain the analysis undertaken to assess the role that Kremlin-affiliated or -directed Twitter or Facebook accounts played in the #ReleaseTheMemo campaign online.” To date, our internal Information Security team has not become aware of information or activity of a sort that would prompt further review, but we continue to monitor the situation. In addition to reaching out to law enforcement and our industry partners to understand whether they have any relevant information regarding this issue and Russian influence more generally, our Information Security team regularly conducts internal reviews to monitor for state-sponsored threats. While we do not publicly disclose the elements of these reviews for security reasons, factors include monitoring and assessing thousands of detailed account attributes, such as location information and connections to others on our platform. We are committed to keeping law enforcement apprised of our efforts and to working together to address this threat.

Sincerely,

*Molly Cutler*

Molly Cutler  
Associate General Counsel

**facebook**

---

Address: 1601 Willow Road  
Menlo Park, CA 94025