



January 26, 2018

**Twitter, Inc.**

1355 Market Street  
Suite 900  
San Francisco, CA 94103

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
The Honorable Adam Schiff  
United States Congress  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Senator Feinstein and Representative Schiff,

Thank you for your letter regarding trending hashtags and concerns over Russian disinformation efforts. Mr. Dorsey has asked me to respond to the issues you have raised.

Twitter is deeply committed to protecting the integrity of the democratic process, and we value Congress' interest in understanding the role of social media in Russian disinformation efforts.

As we have indicated previously, Twitter has conducted an extensive inquiry into Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. election. We also continue to strengthen our fight against malicious automation and coordinated efforts to manipulate the Twitter platform. As we have also indicated previously to Congress, our work addressing such activity has yielded significant progress over the last few years. For example, as a key component of this work, Twitter has established a dedicated Information Quality team, which focuses on enhancing the strategies we use to detect and stop bad automation, improve machine learning to spot spam, and increase the precision of our tools designed to prevent such content from contaminating our platform.

With respect to our analysis of particular hashtags, we welcome the opportunity to share with the Committee some initial findings on this issue.

We performed a preliminary analysis of available geographical data for Tweets with the hashtag #ReleaseTheMemo. Our initial inquiry, based on available data, has not identified any significant activity connected to Russia with respect to Tweets posting original content to this hashtag.

We are continuing to analyze the data and to the extent additional analysis determines that coordinated manipulation or malicious automation from Russian sources played any significant role in Tweeting original content with the hashtag, we will share such determination with Congress. Importantly, Twitter has long had measures in place to exclude such accounts from the determination of any trending topics. For example, the raw volume of Tweets discussing a topic is only one factor integrated into our trending algorithms, and attempts to cause something to trend solely based on high-volume Tweeting or re-Tweeting would likely be ineffective.

As we continue to analyze the data, we further note that #ReleaseTheMemo was also used by several prominent, verified U.S. accounts on the evening of

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Thursday, January 18. Typically, hashtag use by high-profile accounts, including those with high numbers of followers, plays a role in driving conversations around a hashtag on Twitter.

Because the Hamilton Dashboard's account list is not available to the public, we are unable to offer any specific context on the accounts it includes. There may be individual cases where Twitter accounts are operating within our rules but are included in the Dashboard. We have offered to review the list of accounts contained in the Dashboard and this offer remains open.

Regardless of which accounts are contained within the Dashboard, any attempts by any such accounts to manipulate our trending topics list would be subject to the same enforcement actions as any other account.

Again, we thank you for your inquiry into this matter. As we continue to examine this and other issues related to state-sponsored disinformation campaigns, we will keep Congress updated on any material findings.

Sincerely,

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

**Vijaya Gadde**  
General Counsel  
Twitter, Inc.