

ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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March 11, 2021

Mr. Jeff Bezos
Chief Executive Officer
Amazon.com, Inc.
410 Terry Avenue North
Seattle, WA 98109

Dear Mr. Bezos:

Big Tech, including Amazon, is engaged in systematic viewpoint-based discrimination.¹ In the unfortunate phenomenon of “cancel culture,” Amazon plays a leading role in silencing and censoring the political speech of conservative Americans. In just the last several months, Amazon has exhibited a pattern of curtailing, censoring, and removing from its platforms content that espouses conservative viewpoints.

There are a number of examples of Amazon exerting editorial control over the content on its various platforms in a manner that is biased against conservatives and conservative viewpoints. These editorial decisions give the appearance of a coordinated effort to cancel conservative speech on Amazon’s platforms.

- In June 2020, Amazon refused to allow advertising for a book by Abigail Shrier that warns how “transgender identification among teen girls has become a social contagion.”²
- In June 2020, Amazon’s Kindle Direct Publishing refused to publish a booklet by Alex Berenson called *Unreported Truths About Covid-19 and Lockdowns*, which challenged the prevailing viewpoints about the efficacy of COVID-19 lockdowns.³ Amazon later said that the book was rejected “in error.”⁴

¹ See generally Republican Staff Report, *Reining in Big Tech’s Censorship of Conservatives*, H. JUD. COMM. (Oct. 6, 2020), <https://republicans-judiciary.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/2020-10-06-Reining-in-Big-Techs-Censorship-of-Conservatives.pdf>.

² Abigail Shrier, *Amazon Enforces ‘Trans’ Orthodoxy: The company won’t allow a publisher’s ads for my skeptical book*, WALL ST. J. (June 22, 2020).

³ Jeffrey A. Trachtenberg, *Covid-19 skepticism puts author Alex Berenson at center of Amazon controversy*, WALL ST. J. (June 5, 2020).

⁴ *Id.*

- In June 2020, Amazon censored President Trump’s account on its video streaming service, Twitch, due to remarks the President made at political rallies.⁵ Although Amazon later lifted the ban,⁶ it indefinitely banned President Trump from Twitch following the violence at the Capitol on January 6, 2021.⁷
- In August 2020, Amazon removed a pro-life video from Amazon Prime, reportedly telling the video’s director that the video “d[id] not meet our customer content quality expectations”⁸
- In January 2021, Amazon stopped providing cloud computing services to Parler—a social media service popular with conservatives as an alternative to Twitter—around the same time that Google and Apple de-platformed Parler.⁹
- In February 2021, Amazon abruptly stopped selling a 2018 book by conservative scholar Ryan Anderson titled *When Harry Became Sally: Responding to the Transgender Movement*.¹⁰
- In February 2021—during Black History Month—Amazon deleted a documentary about Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, without warning or notification to the film’s director.¹¹

As the House Judiciary Committee continues to examine and debate the size, role, and competitiveness of Big Tech companies, we write to request that Amazon provide the following documents and information:

1. All documents and communications referring or relating to Amazon’s refusal to allow advertising for *Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters* by Abigail Shrier;
2. All documents and communications referring or relating to Kindle Direct Publishing’s refusal to publish *Unreported Truths About Covid-19 and Lockdowns* by Alex Berenson;
3. All documents and communications referring or relating to Twitch’s bans of President Trump’s account in June 2020 and again in January 2021;

⁵ See Jonah Gottschalk, *Jeff Bezos’ streaming service Twitch bans Trump*, THE FEDERALIST (June 30, 2020).

⁶ Adam Smith, *Trump has Twitch account restored after two week suspension for ‘hateful conduct’*, THE INDEPENDENT (July 14, 2020).

⁷ Sarah Polous, *Twitch suspends Trump account indefinitely*, THE HILL (Jan. 20, 2021).

⁸ Jordan Davidson, *Producer: Pro-Life documentary removed from Amazon Prime without warning*, THE FEDERALIST (Aug. 5, 2020).

⁹ Keach Haley & Tim Higgins, *Apple, Amazon move to marginalize Parler*, WALL ST. J. (Jan. 9, 2021).

¹⁰ Jeffrey A. Trachtenberg, *Amazon faces questions over removal of book by conservative scholar*, WALL ST. J. (Feb. 24, 2021).

¹¹ Jason L. Riley, *Why did Amazon censor Justice Thomas?*, WALL ST. J. (Mar. 2, 2021).

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4. All documents and communications referring or relating to Amazon's removal of *Babies Are Still Murdered Here*, a documentary by Marcus Pittman;
5. All documents and communications referring or relating to Amazon Web Services's decision to stop providing cloud computer services to Parler, including but not limited to all communications between or among Amazon or Amazon Web Services and Twitter, Google, or Apple concerning Parler;
6. All documents and communications referring or relating to Amazon's removal of *When Harry Became Sally: Responding to the Transgender Movement* by Ryan Anderson; and
7. All documents and communications referring or relating to Amazon's removal of *Created Equal: Clarence Thomas in His Own Words*, a documentary by Michael Pack.

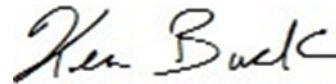
Please produce these documents as soon as possible but no later than 5:00 p.m. on March 25, 2021.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jim Jordan
Ranking Member



Ken Buck
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Antitrust,
Commercial and Administrative Law

cc: The Honorable Jerrold Nadler, Chairman

The Honorable David Cicilline, Chairman, Subcommittee on Antitrust, Commercial
and Administrative Law