

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
FOREIGN RELATIONS
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

January 19, 2021

Jack Dorsey
Chief Executive Officer
Twitter
355 Market Street, Suite 900
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Mr. Dorsey:

On December 1, 2020, I wrote to you requesting information related to Twitter's review and response to a tweet by Zhao Lijian, the deputy director-general of China's Information Department. Since that time, Twitter has communicated a series of non-answers to me, including in a December 23 letter from Twitter's head of U.S. public policy. It has also engaged in a sweeping crackdown of U.S.-based users.

In a recent Twitter thread, you acknowledged the inherent danger of the type of control your company has "over a part of the global public conversation." I agree, and that danger is amplified when your company engages in inconsistent content moderation and attempts to avoid congressional oversight. In light of Twitter's response letter, it is not unreasonable to conclude that either the company has no formal process for reviewing tweets or that it wishes to hide the details of its review process from policymakers and the public.

It is deeply troubling that Twitter found that the post in question did not violate its terms of service and that it merited nothing more than an interstitial merely denoting it as "potentially sensitive content." However, what may be even more disturbing is Twitter's refusal or inability to answer basic questions about its moderation procedures and the effects that the company's global ambitions have on its moderation decisions.

I would appreciate a response to the following, along with supporting documentation, by Tuesday, February 2:

1. Please provide documentation clearly detailing the steps for Twitter's process of evaluating user-generated content, from the circumstances that give rise to a review to how the company determines whether to remove, flag, or intentionally limit specific content's reach.
 - Please also provide the names of departments responsible for these decisions and the country or countries in which such departments are located.

2. In my previous letter, I inquired whether Twitter plans to operate in China in the future, and if the company has had any conversations with relevant officials or entities in China. This question was not answered in your company's December 23 response letter.
 - The absence of any reply to this question strongly implies that Chinese market access is a motivating factor in how Twitter handles content generated by Chinese Government and Chinese Communist Party officials.

Thank you in advance for providing clear, detailed, and well-documented replies to my inquiries, which will be taken into account as Congress revisits Big Tech's unique legal immunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Rubio', written in a cursive style.

Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator