

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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August 15, 2024

Mr. Thierry Breton
Commissioner for Internal Markets
European Commission
Rue de la Loi / Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels, Belgium

Dear Mr. Breton:

The Committee on the Judiciary and the Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government of the U.S. House of Representatives are conducting oversight of how and to what extent the executive branch of the U.S. government has coerced or colluded with companies and other intermediaries to censor lawful speech.¹ As a part of our oversight, the Select Subcommittee has received testimony about how officials from other governments, including you and other officials in the European Union (EU), have sought to censor speech—including political speech—online.² In light of your recent threats of reprisal toward X Corp., an American company, for facilitating political discourse in the United States, we write to demand that you stop any attempt to intimidate individuals or entities engaged in political speech in the United States and that you take no action to otherwise interfere in the American democratic process.

¹ See Ryan Tracy, *Facebook Bowled to White House Pressure. Removed Covid Posts*, WALL ST. J. (July 28, 2023).

² See, e.g., *Hearing on the Weaponization of the Federal Government: Hearing Before the Select Subcomm. on the Weaponization of the Fed. Gov't of the H. Comm. on the Judiciary*, 118th Cong. (Nov. 30, 2023) (submitted written statement of Rupa Subramanya) (“Across the world right now, governments, in the name of the good, are considering or adopting measures like we have in Canada. In Dublin, they’re about to enact a draconian hate-crime bill that poses a dire threat to free speech. In Paris, President Emanuel Macron has called for censoring online speech. **In Brussels, the EU’s Internal Market Commissioner [Thierry Breton] is calling for a crackdown on ‘illegal content.’** In Brasilia, they’re fighting ‘fake news’ and ‘disinformation’ by clamping down on legitimate online speech. To say nothing of Russia and China and Iran. America is so exceptional—indispensable really. Please do not succumb to the same illiberal, the same authoritarianism. Please keep fighting for what you know is right. Canada is watching. *The whole world is watching.*”) (bolded emphasis added; italicized emphasis in original); see also STAFF OF THE H. COMM. ON THE JUDICIARY AND THE SELECT SUBCOMM. ON THE WEAPONIZATION OF THE FED. GOV’T OF THE H. COMM. ON THE JUDICIARY, 118TH CONG., *THE ATTACK ON FREE SPEECH ABROAD AND THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION’S SILENCE: THE CASE OF BRAZIL* (Comm. Print Apr. 17, 2024); STAFF OF THE H. COMM. ON THE JUDICIARY AND THE SELECT SUBCOMM. ON THE WEAPONIZATION OF THE FED. GOV’T OF THE H. COMM. ON THE JUDICIARY, 118TH CONG., *THE ATTACK ON FREE SPEECH ABROAD AND THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION’S SILENCE: THE CASE OF BRAZIL, PART II* (Comm. Print May 7, 2024).