

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 2021

Mr. John T. Stankey, CEO
AT&T, Inc.
208 South Akard Street
Dallas, Texas 75202

Dear Mr. Stankey,

Our country's public discourse is plagued by misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and lies. These phenomena undergird the radicalization of seditious individuals who committed acts of insurrection on January 6th, and it contributes to a growing distrust of public health measures necessary to crush the pandemic. We are concerned about the role AT&T plays in disseminating misinformation to millions of its U-verse, DirecTV, and AT&T TV subscribers, and we write to you today to request additional information about what actions AT&T is taking to address these issues.

Nearly half of Americans get their news primarily from TV.¹ However, not all TV news sources are the same. Some purported news outlets have long been misinformation rumor mills and conspiracy theory hotbeds that produce content that leads to real harm.² Misinformation on TV has led to our current polluted information environment that radicalizes individuals to commit seditious acts and rejects public health best practices, among other issues in our public discourse.³

Experts have noted that the right-wing media ecosystem is "much more susceptible...to disinformation, lies, and half-truths."⁴ Right-wing media outlets, like Newsmax, One America News Network (OANN), and Fox News all aired misinformation about the November 2020 elections.⁵ For example, both Newsmax and OANN "ran incendiary reports" of false information following the elections and continue to support "an angry and dangerous subculture [that] will continue to operate semi-openly."⁶ As a violent mob was breaching the doors of the Capitol, Newsmax's coverage called the scene a "sort of a romantic idea."⁷ Fox News, meanwhile, has spent years spewing misinformation about American politics.⁸

These same networks also have been key vectors of spreading misinformation related to the pandemic. A media watchdog found over 250 cases of COVID-19 misinformation on Fox News in just one five-day period,⁹ and economists demonstrated that Fox News had a demonstrable impact on non-compliance with public health guidelines.¹⁰ One online platform suspended and demonetized OANN's channel online because it was spreading COVID-19 misinformation.¹¹ Newsmax has amplified allegations that members of the Chinese Communist Party helped to develop the COVID-19 vaccine.¹²

Sadly, these facts are not new. One popular television show aired a segment about OANN last April that included a dire warning: "the kind of misinformation [OANN] is spewing right now could end up getting people killed."¹³

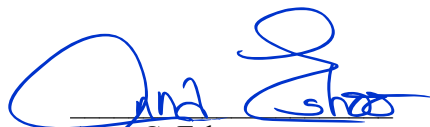
Yet, to our knowledge, the cable, satellite, and over-the-top companies that disseminate these media outlets to American viewers have done nothing in response to the misinformation aired by these outlets.¹⁴ AT&T currently carries Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN on U-verse, DirecTV, and AT&T TV.¹⁵ As a company that serves 17 million Americans,¹⁶ AT&T plays a major role in

the spread of dangerous misinformation that enabled the insurrection of January 6th and hinders our public health response to the current pandemic.

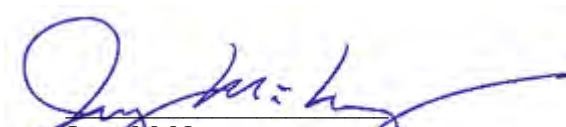
It is for these reasons we ask that you provide us with responses to the following questions about AT&T's policies toward content carried on U-verse, DirecTV, and AT&T TV by March 8, 2021:

1. What moral or ethical principles (including those related to journalistic integrity, violence, medical information, and public health) do you apply in deciding which channels to carry or when to take adverse actions against a channel?
2. Do you require, through contracts or otherwise, that the channels you carry abide by any content guidelines? If so, please provide a copy of the guidelines.
3. How many of your subscribers tuned in to Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN on U-verse, DirecTV, and AT&T TV for each of the four weeks preceding the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks on the Capitol? Please specify the number of subscribers that tuned in to each channel.
4. What steps did you take prior to, on, and following the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks to monitor, respond to, and reduce the spread of disinformation, including encouragement or incitement of violence by channels your company disseminates to millions of Americans? Please describe each step that you took and when it was taken.
5. Have you taken any adverse actions against a channel, including Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN, for using your platform to disseminate disinformation related directly or indirectly to the November 3, 2020 elections, the January 6, 2021 Capitol insurrection, or COVID-19 misinformation? If yes, please describe each action, when it was taken, and the parties involved.
6. Have you ever taken any actions against a channel for using your platform to disseminate any disinformation? If yes, please describe each action and when it was taken.
7. Are you planning to continue carrying Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN on U-verse, DirecTV, and AT&T TV both now and beyond any contract renewal date? If so, why?

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

¹ Amy Mitchell et al., "Americans Who Mainly Get Their News on Social Media Are Less Engaged, Less Knowledgeable" (Pew Research Center, July 30, 2020), <https://www.journalism.org/2020/07/30/americans-who-mainly-get-their-news-on-social-media-are-less-engaged-less-knowledgeable/>.

² Bill Keveney and Maria Puente, "How Conservative Media Stoked Baseless Election-Fraud Claims That Motivated DC Rioters," *USA Today*, January 11, 2021,

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/entertainment/tv/2021/01/11/dc-riots-how-newsmax-oan-conservative-outlets-fueled-mob/6589298002/>; Jason Mittell, “America’s Fake News Problem Predates Facebook,” *Vox*, November 21, 2016, <https://www.vox.com/culture/2016/11/21/13682574/fake-news-facebook-fox-news-conservative-radio>.

³ Karen Attiah, “The Media Had a Role to Play in the Rise of Trump. It’s Time to Hold Ourselves Accountable.” *Washington Post*, January 20, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/20/media-had-role-play-rise-trump-its-time-hold-ourselves-accountable/>; Christopher Ingraham, “New Research Explores How Conservative Media Misinformation May Have Intensified the Severity of the Pandemic,” *Washington Post*, June 25, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/06/25/fox-news-hannity-coronavirus-misinformation/>.

⁴ Yochai Benkler, Robert Faris, and Hal Roberts, *Network Propaganda: Manipulation, Disinformation, and Radicalization in American Politics* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018), 13.

⁵ Renee DiResta and Alex Stamos, “The Insurrection Hiding in Plain Sight,” January 14, 2021, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-01-14/insurrection-hiding-plain-sight>; Peter Kafka, “Fox News Wants Its Viewers Angry Enough to Watch but Not Angry Enough to Riot,” *Vox Recode*, January 7, 2021, <https://www.vox.com/recode/22219026/fox-news-riot-capitol-maga-carlson-hannity>.

⁶ DiResta and Stamos, “The Insurrection Hiding in Plain Sight.”

⁷ Justin Peters, “How Newsmax Covered the Insurrection It Provoked,” *Slate*, January 7, 2021, <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2021/01/newsmax-capitol-siege-trump.html>.

⁸ Peter Kafka, “Fox News Wants Its Viewers Angry Enough to Watch but Not Angry Enough to Riot.”

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¹⁰ Andrey Simonov et al., “The Persuasive Effect of Fox News: Non-Compliance with Social Distancing During the Covid-19 Pandemic” (National Bureau of Economic Research, May 25, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.3386/w27237>.

¹¹ Ashley Gold, “YouTube Temporarily Suspends, Demonetizes OANN,” *Axios*, November 24, 2020, <https://www.axios.com/youtube-temporarily-suspends-demonetizes-oann-420e8ea9-66c1-4eab-9754-6e3b708483c9.html>.

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¹³ “OAN,” *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (HBO, April 5, 2020), <https://www.hbo.com/last-week-tonight-with-john-oliver/2020/127-episode-186>.

¹⁴ Oliver Darcy, “Analysis: TV Providers Should Not Escape Scrutiny for Distributing Disinformation,” *CNN*, January 8, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/08/media/tv-providers-disinfo-reliable-sources/index.html>.

¹⁵ “U-verse Channel Lineup,” (AT&T, March 2020), https://www.att.com/idpassets/pdfs/channel_lineups/Uverse_Channel_Lineup.pdf; “Directv Packages & Channel Lineup,” (AT&T, accessed February 21, 2021), https://www.att.com/idpassets/pdfs/channel_lineups/Uverse_Channel_Lineup.pdf; “AT&T TV Channel Lineup,” (AT&T, accessed February 21, 2021) <https://www.att.com/channels/att-tv/?edsp=true>.

¹⁶ “Financial and Operational Trends (4Q 2020),” (AT&T, accessed February 21, 2021), 8, https://investors.att.com/~media/Files/A/ATT-IR/financial-reports/quarterly-earnings/2020/q4-2020/4Q20_Trending_Schedule.pdf.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 2021

Mr. Hans Vestberg, CEO and Chairman
Verizon Communications
One Verizon Way
Basking Ridge, New Jersey 07920

Dear Mr. Vestberg,

Our country's public discourse is plagued by misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and lies. These phenomena undergird the radicalization of seditious individuals who committed acts of insurrection on January 6th, and it contributes to a growing distrust of public health measures necessary to crush the pandemic. We are concerned about the role Verizon plays in disseminating misinformation to millions of its Fios TV subscribers, and we write to you today to request additional information about what actions Verizon is taking to address these issues.

Nearly half of Americans get their news primarily from TV.¹ However, not all TV news sources are the same. Some purported news outlets have long been misinformation rumor mills and conspiracy theory hotbeds that produce content that leads to real harm.² Misinformation on TV has led to our current polluted information environment that radicalizes individuals to commit seditious acts and rejects public health best practices, among other issues in our public discourse.³

Experts have noted that the right-wing media ecosystem is "much more susceptible...to disinformation, lies, and half-truths."⁴ Right-wing media outlets, like Newsmax, One America News Network (OANN), and Fox News all aired misinformation about the November 2020 elections.⁵ For example, both Newsmax and OANN "ran incendiary reports" of false information following the elections and continue to support "an angry and dangerous subculture [that] will continue to operate semi-openly."⁶ As a violent mob was breaching the doors of the Capitol, Newsmax's coverage called the scene a "sort of a romantic idea."⁷ Fox News, meanwhile, has spent years spewing misinformation about American politics.⁸

These same networks also have been key vectors of spreading misinformation related to the pandemic. A media watchdog found over 250 cases of COVID-19 misinformation on Fox News in just one five-day period,⁹ and economists demonstrated that Fox News had a demonstrable impact on non-compliance with public health guidelines.¹⁰ One online platform suspended and demonetized OANN's channel online because it was spreading COVID-19 misinformation.¹¹ Newsmax has amplified allegations that members of the Chinese Communist Party helped to develop the COVID-19 vaccine.¹²

Sadly, these facts are not new. One popular television show aired a segment about OANN last April that included a dire warning: "the kind of misinformation [OANN] is spewing right now could end up getting people killed."¹³

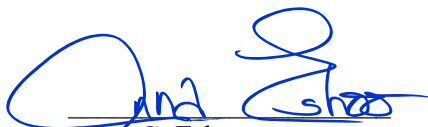
Yet, to our knowledge, the cable, satellite, and over-the-top companies that disseminate these media outlets to American viewers have done nothing in response to the misinformation aired by these outlets.¹⁴ Verizon currently carries Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN on Fios TV.¹⁵ As a company that serves nearly four million Americans,¹⁶ Verizon plays a major role in the spread of

dangerous misinformation that enabled the insurrection of January 6th and hinders our public health response to the current pandemic.

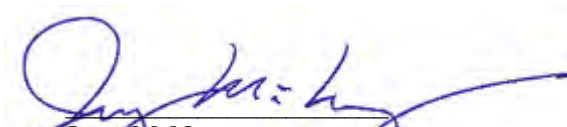
It is for these reasons we ask that you provide us with responses to the following questions about Verizon's policies toward content carried on Fios TV by March 8, 2021:

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2. Do you require, through contracts or otherwise, that the channels you carry abide by any content guidelines? If so, please provide a copy of the guidelines.
3. How many of your subscribers tuned in to Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN on Fios TV for each of the four weeks preceding the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks on the Capitol? Please specify the number of subscribers that tuned in to each channel.
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6. Have you ever taken any actions against a channel for using your platform to disseminate any disinformation? If yes, please describe each action and when it was taken.
7. Are you planning to continue carrying Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN on Fios TV both now and beyond any contract renewal date? If so, why?

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

¹ Amy Mitchell et al., "Americans Who Mainly Get Their News on Social Media Are Less Engaged, Less Knowledgeable" (Pew Research Center, July 30, 2020), <https://www.journalism.org/2020/07/30/americans-who-mainly-get-their-news-on-social-media-are-less-engaged-less-knowledgeable/>.

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¹⁵ “Verizon Fios Channel Guide,” (Verizon, accessed February 21, 2021), <https://www.verizon.com/info/channel-lineup/>.

¹⁶ Verizon Communications Inc, “Form 10-Q (for the Period Ending September 30, 2020)” (Securities and Exchange Commission, October 27, 2020), 44, <https://www.verizon.com/about/investors/sec-filings>

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 2021

Mr. Anthony Wood, CEO, Chairman, and Founder
Roku, Inc.
1155 Coleman Avenue
San Jose, California 95110

Dear Mr. Wood,

Our country's public discourse is plagued by misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and lies. These phenomena undergird the radicalization of seditious individuals who committed acts of insurrection on January 6th, and it contributes to a growing distrust of public health measures necessary to crush the pandemic. We are concerned about the role Roku plays in disseminating misinformation to millions of its subscribers, and we write to you today to request additional information about what actions Roku is taking to address these issues.

Nearly half of Americans get their news primarily from TV.¹ However, not all TV news sources are the same. Some purported news outlets have long been misinformation rumor mills and conspiracy theory hotbeds that produce content that leads to real harm.² Misinformation on TV has led to our current polluted information environment that radicalizes individuals to commit seditious acts and rejects public health best practices, among other issues in our public discourse.³

Experts have noted that the right-wing media ecosystem is "much more susceptible...to disinformation, lies, and half-truths."⁴ Right-wing media outlets, like Newsmax, One America News Network (OANN), and Fox News all aired misinformation about the November 2020 elections.⁵ For example, both Newsmax and OANN "ran incendiary reports" of false information following the elections and continue to support "an angry and dangerous subculture [that] will continue to operate semi-openly."⁶ As a violent mob was breaching the doors of the Capitol, Newsmax's coverage called the scene a "sort of a romantic idea."⁷ Fox News, meanwhile, has spent years spewing misinformation about American politics.⁸

These same networks also have been key vectors of spreading misinformation related to the pandemic. A media watchdog found over 250 cases of COVID-19 misinformation on Fox News in just one five-day period,⁹ and economists demonstrated that Fox News had a demonstrable impact on non-compliance with public health guidelines.¹⁰ One online platform suspended and demonetized OANN's channel online because it was spreading COVID-19 misinformation.¹¹ Newsmax has amplified allegations that members of the Chinese Communist Party helped to develop the COVID-19 vaccine.¹²

Sadly, these facts are not new. One popular television show aired a segment about OANN last April that included a dire warning: "the kind of misinformation [OANN] is spewing right now could end up getting people killed."¹³

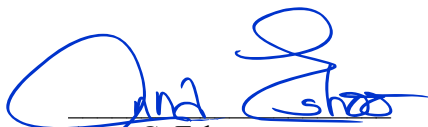
Yet, to our knowledge, the cable, satellite, and over-the-top companies that disseminate these media outlets to American viewers have done nothing in response to the misinformation aired by these outlets.¹⁴ Roku currently carries Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN.¹⁵ As a company that serves over 50 million Americans,¹⁶ Roku plays a major role in the spread of dangerous

misinformation that enabled the insurrection of January 6th and hinders our public health response to the current pandemic.

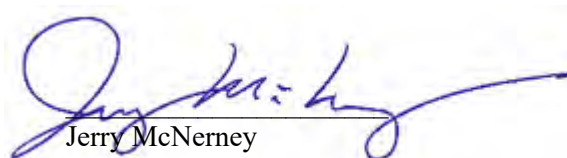
It is for these reasons we ask that you provide us with responses to the following questions about Roku’s policies toward content carried on Roku by March 8, 2021:

1. What moral or ethical principles (including those related to journalistic integrity, violence, medical information, and public health) do you apply in deciding which channels to carry or when to take adverse actions against a channel?
2. Do you require, through contracts or otherwise, that the channels you carry abide by any content guidelines? If so, please provide a copy of the guidelines.
3. How many of your subscribers tuned in to Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN on Roku for each of the four weeks preceding the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks on the Capitol? Please specify the number of subscribers that tuned in to each channel.
4. What steps did you take prior to, on, and following the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks to monitor, respond to, and reduce the spread of disinformation, including encouragement or incitement of violence by channels your company disseminates to millions of Americans? Please describe each step that you took and when it was taken.
5. Have you taken any adverse actions against a channel, including Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN, for using your platform to disseminate disinformation related directly or indirectly to the November 3, 2020 elections, the January 6, 2021 Capitol insurrection, or COVID-19 misinformation? If yes, please describe each action, when it was taken, and the parties involved.
6. Have you ever taken any actions against a channel for using your platform to disseminate any disinformation? If yes, please describe each action and when it was taken.
7. Are you planning to continue carrying Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN on Roku both now and beyond any contract renewal date? If so, why?

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



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¹⁵ “Roku Channel Store News & Weather,” (Roku, accessed February 21, 2021), <https://channelstore.roku.com/browse/news-and-weather>.

¹⁶ Anthony Wood and Steve Louden, “Roku Q4 and Full Year 2020 Shareholder Letter,” (Roku, February 18, 2021), 1, <https://ir.roku.com/static-files/0e84462d-74ac-459d-9aff-be335c09a4f3>.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 2021

Mr. Jeff Bezos, CEO
Amazon.com, Inc.
410 Terry Avenue North
Seattle, Washington 98109

Dear Mr. Bezos,

Our country's public discourse is plagued by misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and lies. These phenomena undergird the radicalization of seditious individuals who committed acts of insurrection on January 6th, and it contributes to a growing distrust of public health measures necessary to crush the pandemic. We are concerned about the role Amazon plays in disseminating misinformation to millions of its Amazon Fire TV subscribers, and we write to you today to request additional information about what actions Amazon is taking to address these issues.

Nearly half of Americans get their news primarily from TV.¹ However, not all TV news sources are the same. Some purported news outlets have long been misinformation rumor mills and conspiracy theory hotbeds that produce content that leads to real harm.² Misinformation on TV has led to our current polluted information environment that radicalizes individuals to commit seditious acts and rejects public health best practices, among other issues in our public discourse.³

Experts have noted that the right-wing media ecosystem is "much more susceptible...to disinformation, lies, and half-truths."⁴ Right-wing media outlets, like Newsmax, One America News Network (OANN), and Fox News all aired misinformation about the November 2020 elections.⁵ For example, both Newsmax and OANN "ran incendiary reports" of false information following the elections and continue to support "an angry and dangerous subculture [that] will continue to operate semi-openly."⁶ As a violent mob was breaching the doors of the Capitol, Newsmax's coverage called the scene a "sort of a romantic idea."⁷ Fox News, meanwhile, has spent years spewing misinformation about American politics.⁸

These same networks also have been key vectors of spreading misinformation related to the pandemic. A media watchdog found over 250 cases of COVID-19 misinformation on Fox News in just one five-day period,⁹ and economists demonstrated that Fox News had a demonstrable impact on non-compliance with public health guidelines.¹⁰ One online platform suspended and demonetized OANN's channel online because it was spreading COVID-19 misinformation.¹¹ Newsmax has amplified allegations that members of the Chinese Communist Party helped to develop the COVID-19 vaccine.¹²

Sadly, these facts are not new. One popular television show aired a segment about OANN last April that included a dire warning: "the kind of misinformation [OANN] is spewing right now could end up getting people killed."¹³

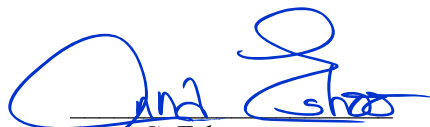
Yet, to our knowledge, the cable, satellite, and over-the-top companies that disseminate these media outlets to American viewers have done nothing in response to the misinformation aired by these outlets.¹⁴ Amazon currently carries Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN on Amazon Fire TV.¹⁵ As a company that serves over 50 million Americans,¹⁶ Amazon plays a major role in the

spread of dangerous misinformation that enabled the insurrection of January 6th and hinders our public health response to the current pandemic.

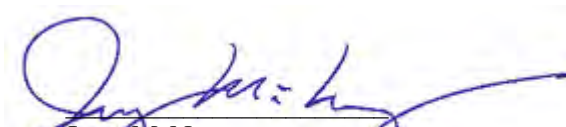
It is for these reasons we ask that you provide us with responses to the following questions about Amazon’s policies toward content carried on Amazon Fire TV by March 8, 2021:

1. What moral or ethical principles (including those related to journalistic integrity, violence, medical information, and public health) do you apply in deciding which channels to carry or when to take adverse actions against a channel?
2. Do you require, through contracts or otherwise, that the channels you carry abide by any content guidelines? If so, please provide a copy of the guidelines.
3. How many of your subscribers tuned in to Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN on Amazon Fire TV for each of the four weeks preceding the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks on the Capitol? Please specify the number of subscribers that tuned in to each channel.
4. What steps did you take prior to, on, and following the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks to monitor, respond to, and reduce the spread of disinformation, including encouragement or incitement of violence by channels your company disseminates to millions of Americans? Please describe each step that you took and when it was taken.
5. Have you taken any adverse actions against a channel, including Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN, for using your platform to disseminate disinformation related directly or indirectly to the November 3, 2020 elections, the January 6, 2021 Capitol insurrection, or COVID-19 misinformation? If yes, please describe each action, when it was taken, and the parties involved.
6. Have you ever taken any actions against a channel for using your platform to disseminate any disinformation? If yes, please describe each action and when it was taken.
7. Are you planning to continue carrying Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN on Amazon Fire TV both now and beyond any contract renewal date? If so, why?

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

¹ Amy Mitchell et al., “Americans Who Mainly Get Their News on Social Media Are Less Engaged, Less Knowledgeable” (Pew Research Center, July 30, 2020), <https://www.journalism.org/2020/07/30/americans-who-mainly-get-their-news-on-social-media-are-less-engaged-less-knowledgeable/>.

² Bill Keveney and Maria Puente, “How Conservative Media Stoked Baseless Election-Fraud Claims That Motivated DC Rioters,” *USA Today*, January 11, 2021,

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/entertainment/tv/2021/01/11/dc-riots-how-newsmax-oan-conservative-outlets-fueled-mob/6589298002/>; Jason Mittell, “America’s Fake News Problem Predates Facebook,” *Vox*, November 21, 2016, <https://www.vox.com/culture/2016/11/21/13682574/fake-news-facebook-fox-news-conservative-radio>.

³ Karen Attiah, “The Media Had a Role to Play in the Rise of Trump. It’s Time to Hold Ourselves Accountable.” *Washington Post*, January 20, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/20/media-had-role-play-rise-trump-its-time-hold-ourselves-accountable/>; Christopher Ingraham, “New Research Explores How Conservative Media Misinformation May Have Intensified the Severity of the Pandemic,” *Washington Post*, June 25, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/06/25/fox-news-hannity-coronavirus-misinformation/>.

⁴ Yochai Benkler, Robert Faris, and Hal Roberts, *Network Propaganda: Manipulation, Disinformation, and Radicalization in American Politics* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018), 13.

⁵ Renee DiResta and Alex Stamos, “The Insurrection Hiding in Plain Sight,” January 14, 2021, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-01-14/insurrection-hiding-plain-sight>; Peter Kafka, “Fox News Wants Its Viewers Angry Enough to Watch but Not Angry Enough to Riot,” *Vox Recode*, January 7, 2021, <https://www.vox.com/recode/22219026/fox-news-riot-capitol-maga-carlson-hannity>.

⁶ DiResta and Stamos, “The Insurrection Hiding in Plain Sight.”

⁷ Justin Peters, “How Newsmax Covered the Insurrection It Provoked,” *Slate*, January 7, 2021, <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2021/01/newsmax-capitol-siege-trump.html>.

⁸ Peter Kafka, “Fox News Wants Its Viewers Angry Enough to Watch but Not Angry Enough to Riot.”

⁹ Rob Savillo, “Fox News Pushed Coronavirus Misinformation 253 Times in Just Five Days” (Media Matters for America, July 16, 2020), <https://www.mediamatters.org/coronavirus-covid-19/fox-news-pushed-coronavirus-misinformation-253-times-just-five-days>.

¹⁰ Andrey Simonov et al., “The Persuasive Effect of Fox News: Non-Compliance with Social Distancing During the Covid-19 Pandemic” (National Bureau of Economic Research, May 25, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.3386/w27237>.

¹¹ Ashley Gold, “YouTube Temporarily Suspends, Demonetizes OANN,” *Axios*, November 24, 2020, <https://www.axios.com/youtube-temporarily-suspends-demonetizes-oann-420e8ea9-66c1-4eab-9754-6e3b708483c9.html>.

¹² Elizabeth Dvoskin and Josh Dawsey, “The Trump Administration Wants to Take Credit for a Covid Vaccine. Trump Supporters Are Undermining It.” *Washington Post*, December 24, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2020/12/24/trump-vaccine-misinformation/>.

¹³ “OAN,” *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (HBO, April 5, 2020), <https://www.hbo.com/last-week-tonight-with-john-oliver/2020/127-episode-186>.

¹⁴ Oliver Darcy, “Analysis: TV Providers Should Not Escape Scrutiny for Distributing Disinformation,” *CNN*, January 8, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/08/media/tv-providers-disinfo-reliable-sources/index.html>.

¹⁵ “Fire TV Apps (All Models),” (Amazon, accessed February 21, 2021), <https://www.amazon.com/Fire-TV-Apps-All-Models/b/?ie=UTF8&node=10208590011/>.

¹⁶ “Amazon.com Announces Financial Results and CEO Transition,” (Amazon, February 2, 2021), 5, https://s2.q4cdn.com/299287126/files/doc_financials/2020/q4/Amazon-Q4-2020-Earnings-Release.pdf.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 2021

Mr. Tim Cook, CEO
Apple Inc.
One Apple Park Way
Cupertino, California 95014

Dear Mr. Cook,

Our country's public discourse is plagued by misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and lies. These phenomena undergird the radicalization of seditious individuals who committed acts of insurrection on January 6th, and it contributes to a growing distrust of public health measures necessary to crush the pandemic. We are concerned about the role Apple plays in disseminating misinformation to millions of its Apple TV subscribers and users who stream video using apps from the App Store, and we write to you today to request additional information about what actions Apple is taking to address these issues.

Nearly half of Americans get their news primarily from TV.¹ However, not all TV news sources are the same. Some purported news outlets have long been misinformation rumor mills and conspiracy theory hotbeds that produce content that leads to real harm.² Misinformation on TV has led to our current polluted information environment that radicalizes individuals to commit seditious acts and rejects public health best practices, among other issues in our public discourse.³

Experts have noted that the right-wing media ecosystem is "much more susceptible...to disinformation, lies, and half-truths."⁴ Right-wing media outlets, like Newsmax, One America News Network (OANN), and Fox News all aired misinformation about the November 2020 elections.⁵ For example, both Newsmax and OANN "ran incendiary reports" of false information following the elections and continue to support "an angry and dangerous subculture [that] will continue to operate semi-openly."⁶ As a violent mob was breaching the doors of the Capitol, Newsmax's coverage called the scene a "sort of a romantic idea."⁷ Fox News, meanwhile, has spent years spewing misinformation about American politics.⁸

These same networks also have been key vectors of spreading misinformation related to the pandemic. A media watchdog found over 250 cases of COVID-19 misinformation on Fox News in just one five-day period,⁹ and economists demonstrated that Fox News had a demonstrable impact on non-compliance with public health guidelines.¹⁰ One online platform suspended and demonetized OANN's channel online because it was spreading COVID-19 misinformation.¹¹ Newsmax has amplified allegations that members of the Chinese Communist Party helped to develop the COVID-19 vaccine.¹²

Sadly, these facts are not new. One popular television show aired a segment about OANN last April that included a dire warning: "the kind of misinformation [OANN] is spewing right now could end up getting people killed."¹³


Yet, to our knowledge, the cable, satellite, and over-the-top companies that disseminate these media outlets to American viewers have done nothing in response to the misinformation aired by these outlets.¹⁴ Apple currently carries Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN on Apple TV and hosts those companies apps in its App Store.¹⁵ As a company that serves millions Americans,¹⁶ Apple

plays a major role in the spread of dangerous misinformation that enabled the insurrection of January 6th and hinders our public health response to the current pandemic.

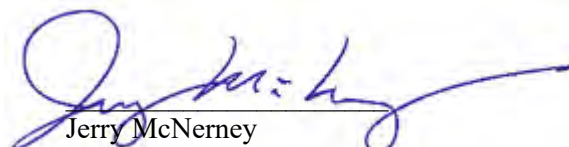
It is for these reasons we ask that you provide us with responses to the following questions about Apple’s policies toward content carried on Apple TV and its App Store by March 8, 2021:

1. What moral or ethical principles (including those related to journalistic integrity, violence, medical information, and public health) do you apply in deciding which video services to carry on Apple TV or when to take adverse actions against a video service?
2. Do you require, through contracts or otherwise, that the video services you carry abide by any content guidelines? If so, please provide a copy of the guidelines.
3. How many of your subscribers viewed Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN on Apple TV for each of the four weeks preceding the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks on the Capitol? Please specify the number of subscribers that tuned in to each channel.
4. What steps did you take prior to, on, and following the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks to monitor, respond to, and reduce the spread of disinformation, including encouragement or incitement of violence by video services your company disseminates to millions of Americans? Please describe each step that you took and when it was taken.
5. Have you taken any adverse actions against a video service, including Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN, for using your platform to disseminate disinformation related directly or indirectly to the November 3, 2020 elections, the January 6, 2021 Capitol insurrection, or COVID-19 misinformation? If yes, please describe each action, when it was taken, and the parties involved.
6. Have you ever taken any actions against a video service for using your platform to disseminate any disinformation? If yes, please describe each action and when it was taken.
7. Are you planning to continue carrying Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN on Apple TV both now and beyond any contract renewal date? Are you planning to continue carrying Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN apps in the App Store? If so, why?

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

¹ Amy Mitchell et al., “Americans Who Mainly Get Their News on Social Media Are Less Engaged, Less Knowledgeable” (Pew Research Center, July 30, 2020), <https://www.journalism.org/2020/07/30/americans-who-mainly-get-their-news-on-social-media-are-less-engaged-less-knowledgeable/>.

² Bill Keveney and Maria Puente, “How Conservative Media Stoked Baseless Election-Fraud Claims That Motivated DC Rioters,” *USA Today*, January 11, 2021, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/entertainment/tv/2021/01/11/dc-riots-how-newsmax-oan-conservative-outlets-fueled-mob/6589298002/>; Jason Mittell, “America’s Fake News Problem Predates Facebook,” *Vox*, November 21, 2016, <https://www.vox.com/culture/2016/11/21/13682574/fake-news-facebook-fox-news-conservative-radio>.

³ Karen Attiah, “The Media Had a Role to Play in the Rise of Trump. It’s Time to Hold Ourselves Accountable.,” *Washington Post*, January 20, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/20/media-had-role-play-rise-trump-its-time-hold-ourselves-accountable/>; Christopher Ingraham, “New Research Explores How Conservative Media Misinformation May Have Intensified the Severity of the Pandemic,” *Washington Post*, June 25, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/06/25/fox-news-hannity-coronavirus-misinformation/>.

⁴ Yochai Benkler, Robert Faris, and Hal Roberts, *Network Propaganda: Manipulation, Disinformation, and Radicalization in American Politics* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018), 13.

⁵ Renee DiResta and Alex Stamos, “The Insurrection Hiding in Plain Sight,” January 14, 2021, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-01-14/insurrection-hiding-plain-sight>; Peter Kafka, “Fox News Wants Its Viewers Angry Enough to Watch but Not Angry Enough to Riot,” *Vox Recode*, January 7, 2021, <https://www.vox.com/recode/22219026/fox-news-riot-capitol-maga-carlson-hannity>.

⁶ DiResta and Stamos, “The Insurrection Hiding in Plain Sight.”

⁷ Justin Peters, “How Newsmax Covered the Insurrection It Provoked,” *Slate*, January 7, 2021, <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2021/01/newsmax-capitol-siege-trump.html>.

⁸ Peter Kafka, “Fox News Wants Its Viewers Angry Enough to Watch but Not Angry Enough to Riot.”

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¹⁰ Andrey Simonov et al., “The Persuasive Effect of Fox News: Non-Compliance with Social Distancing During the Covid-19 Pandemic” (National Bureau of Economic Research, May 25, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.3386/w27237>.

¹¹ Ashley Gold, “YouTube Temporarily Suspends, Demonetizes OANN,” *Axios*, November 24, 2020, <https://www.axios.com/youtube-temporarily-suspends-demonetizes-oann-420e8ea9-66c1-4eab-9754-6e3b708483c9.html>.

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¹³ “OAN,” *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (HBO, April 5, 2020), <https://www.hbo.com/last-week-tonight-with-john-oliver/2020/127-episode-186>.

¹⁴ Oliver Darcy, “Analysis: TV Providers Should Not Escape Scrutiny for Distributing Disinformation,” *CNN*, January 8, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/08/media/tv-providers-disinfo-reliable-sources/index.html>.

¹⁵ “Fox News,” (Apple, accessed February 21, 2021), <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/fox-news-live-breaking-news/id367623543>; “Newsmax,” (Apple, accessed February 21, 2021), <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/newsmax/id1097041572>; “One America News Network” (Apple, accessed February 21, 2021), <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/one-america-news-network/id1074374051>.

¹⁶ David Bloom, “Apple TV Plus Finally Hits Its Stride,” *Next TV*, November 9, 2020, <https://www.nexttv.com/news/apple-tv-plus-finally-hitting-its-stride>.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 2021

Mr. Brian L. Roberts, CEO and Chairman
Comcast Corporation
1701 JFK Boulevard
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19103

Dear Mr. Roberts,

Our country's public discourse is plagued by misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and lies. These phenomena undergird the radicalization of seditious individuals who committed acts of insurrection on January 6th, and it contributes to a growing distrust of public health measures necessary to crush the pandemic. We are concerned about the role Comcast plays in disseminating misinformation to millions of its Xfinity subscribers, and we write to you today to request additional information about what actions Comcast is taking to address these issues.

Nearly half of Americans get their news primarily from TV.¹ However, not all TV news sources are the same. Some purported news outlets have long been misinformation rumor mills and conspiracy theory hotbeds that produce content that leads to real harm.² Misinformation on TV has led to our current polluted information environment that radicalizes individuals to commit seditious acts and rejects public health best practices, among other issues in our public discourse.³

Experts have noted that the right-wing media ecosystem is "much more susceptible...to disinformation, lies, and half-truths."⁴ Right-wing media outlets, like Newsmax, One America News Network (OANN), and Fox News all aired misinformation about the November 2020 elections.⁵ For example, both Newsmax and OANN "ran incendiary reports" of false information following the elections and continue to support "an angry and dangerous subculture [that] will continue to operate semi-openly."⁶ As a violent mob was breaching the doors of the Capitol, Newsmax's coverage called the scene a "sort of a romantic idea."⁷ Fox News, meanwhile, has spent years spewing misinformation about American politics.⁸

These same networks also have been key vectors of spreading misinformation related to the pandemic. A media watchdog found over 250 cases of COVID-19 misinformation on Fox News in just one five-day period,⁹ and economists demonstrated that Fox News had a demonstrable impact on non-compliance with public health guidelines.¹⁰ One online platform suspended and demonetized OANN's channel online because it was spreading COVID-19 misinformation.¹¹ Newsmax has amplified allegations that members of the Chinese Communist Party helped to develop the COVID-19 vaccine.¹²

Sadly, these facts are not new. One popular television show aired a segment about OANN last April that included a dire warning: "the kind of misinformation [OANN] is spewing right now could end up getting people killed."¹³

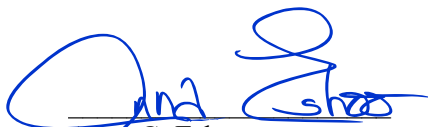
Yet, to our knowledge, the cable, satellite, and over-the-top companies that disseminate these media outlets to American viewers have done nothing in response to the misinformation aired by these outlets.¹⁴ Comcast currently carries Fox News and Newsmax on Xfinity.¹⁵ As a company that serves nearly 20 million Americans,¹⁶ Comcast plays a major role in the spread of dangerous

misinformation that enabled the insurrection of January 6th and hinders our public health response to the current pandemic.

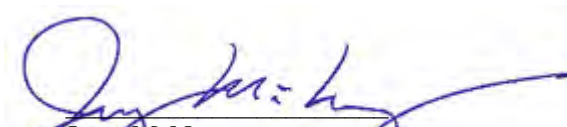
It is for these reasons we ask that you provide us with responses to the following questions about Comcast's policies toward content carried on Xfinity by March 8, 2021:

1. What moral or ethical principles (including those related to journalistic integrity, violence, medical information, and public health) do you apply in deciding which channels to carry or when to take adverse actions against a channel?
2. Do you require, through contracts or otherwise, that the channels you carry abide by any content guidelines? If so, please provide a copy of the guidelines.
3. How many of your subscribers tuned in to Fox News and Newsmax on Xfinity for each of the four weeks preceding the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks on the Capitol? Please specify the number of subscribers that tuned in to each channel.
4. What steps did you take prior to, on, and following the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks to monitor, respond to, and reduce the spread of disinformation, including encouragement or incitement of violence by channels your company disseminates to millions of Americans? Please describe each step that you took and when it was taken.
5. Have you taken any adverse actions against a channel, including Fox News and Newsmax, for using your platform to disseminate disinformation related directly or indirectly to the November 3, 2020 elections, the January 6, 2021 Capitol insurrection, or COVID-19 misinformation? If yes, please describe each action, when it was taken, and the parties involved.
6. Have you ever taken any actions against a channel for using your platform to disseminate any disinformation? If yes, please describe each action and when it was taken.
7. Are you planning to continue carrying Fox News and Newsmax on Xfinity both now and beyond any contract renewal date? If so, why?

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

¹ Amy Mitchell et al., "Americans Who Mainly Get Their News on Social Media Are Less Engaged, Less Knowledgeable" (Pew Research Center, July 30, 2020), <https://www.journalism.org/2020/07/30/americans-who-mainly-get-their-news-on-social-media-are-less-engaged-less-knowledgeable/>.

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¹⁴ Oliver Darcy, “Analysis: TV Providers Should Not Escape Scrutiny for Distributing Disinformation,” *CNN*, January 8, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/08/media/tv-providers-disinfo-reliable-sources/index.html>.

¹⁵ “Xfinity Channel Lineup and TV Guide by Comcast,” (Comcast, accessed February 20, 2021), <https://www.xfinity.com/support/local-channel-lineup>.

¹⁶ “Comcast Reports 4th Quarter and Full Year 2020 Results,” (Comcast, January 28, 2021), 4, <https://www.cmcsa.com/static-files/6bd6afa4-b4b1-4d29-8630-b41a753a1ccc>.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 2021

Mr. Thomas M. Rutledge, CEO and Chairman
Charter Communications, Inc.
400 Atlantic Street
Stamford, Connecticut 06901

Dear Mr. Rutledge,

Our country's public discourse is plagued by misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and lies. These phenomena undergird the radicalization of seditious individuals who committed acts of insurrection on January 6th, and it contributes to a growing distrust of public health measures necessary to crush the pandemic. We are concerned about the role Charter plays in disseminating misinformation to millions of its Spectrum subscribers, and we write to you today to request additional information about what actions Spectrum is taking to address these issues.

Nearly half of Americans get their news primarily from TV.¹ However, not all TV news sources are the same. Some purported news outlets have long been misinformation rumor mills and conspiracy theory hotbeds that produce content that leads to real harm.² Misinformation on TV has led to our current polluted information environment that radicalizes individuals to commit seditious acts and rejects public health best practices, among other issues in our public discourse.³

Experts have noted that the right-wing media ecosystem is "much more susceptible...to disinformation, lies, and half-truths."⁴ Right-wing media outlets, like Newsmax, One America News Network (OANN), and Fox News all aired misinformation about the November 2020 elections.⁵ For example, both Newsmax and OANN "ran incendiary reports" of false information following the elections and continue to support "an angry and dangerous subculture [that] will continue to operate semi-openly."⁶ As a violent mob was breaching the doors of the Capitol, Newsmax's coverage called the scene a "sort of a romantic idea."⁷ Fox News, meanwhile, has spent years spewing misinformation about American politics.⁸

These same networks also have been key vectors of spreading misinformation related to the pandemic. A media watchdog found over 250 cases of COVID-19 misinformation on Fox News in just one five-day period,⁹ and economists demonstrated that Fox News had a demonstrable impact on non-compliance with public health guidelines.¹⁰ One online platform suspended and demonetized OANN's channel online because it was spreading COVID-19 misinformation.¹¹ Newsmax has amplified allegations that members of the Chinese Communist Party helped to develop the COVID-19 vaccine.¹²

Sadly, these facts are not new. One popular television show aired a segment about OANN last April that included a dire warning: "the kind of misinformation [OANN] is spewing right now could end up getting people killed."¹³

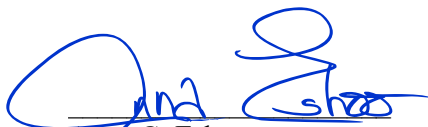
Yet, to our knowledge, the cable, satellite, and over-the-top companies that disseminate these media outlets to American viewers have done nothing in response to the misinformation aired by these outlets.¹⁴ Charter currently carries Fox News and Newsmax on Spectrum.¹⁵ As a company that serves 16 million Americans,¹⁶ Charter plays a major role in the spread of dangerous

misinformation that enabled the insurrection of January 6th and hinders our public health response to the current pandemic.

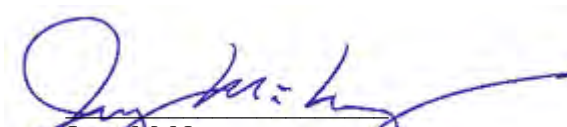
It is for these reasons we ask that you provide us with responses to the following questions about Charter’s policies toward content carried on Spectrum by March 8, 2021:

1. What moral or ethical principles (including those related to journalistic integrity, violence, medical information, and public health) do you apply in deciding which channels to carry or when to take adverse actions against a channel?
2. Do you require, through contracts or otherwise, that the channels you carry abide by any content guidelines? If so, please provide a copy of the guidelines.
3. How many of your subscribers tuned in to Fox News and Newsmax on Spectrum for each of the four weeks preceding the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks on the Capitol? Please specify the number of subscribers that tuned in to each channel.
4. What steps did you take prior to, on, and following the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks to monitor, respond to, and reduce the spread of disinformation, including encouragement or incitement of violence by channels your company disseminates to millions of Americans? Please describe each step that you took and when it was taken.
5. Have you taken any adverse actions against a channel, including Fox News and Newsmax, for using your platform to disseminate disinformation related directly or indirectly to the November 3, 2020 elections, the January 6, 2021 Capitol insurrection, or COVID-19 misinformation? If yes, please describe each action, when it was taken, and the parties involved.
6. Have you ever taken any actions against a channel for using your platform to disseminate any disinformation? If yes, please describe each action and when it was taken.
7. Are you planning to continue carrying Fox News and Newsmax on Spectrum both now and beyond any contract renewal date? If so, why?

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

¹ Amy Mitchell et al., “Americans Who Mainly Get Their News on Social Media Are Less Engaged, Less Knowledgeable” (Pew Research Center, July 30, 2020), <https://www.journalism.org/2020/07/30/americans-who-mainly-get-their-news-on-social-media-are-less-engaged-less-knowledgeable/>.

² Bill Keveney and Maria Puente, “How Conservative Media Stoked Baseless Election-Fraud Claims That Motivated DC Rioters,” *USA Today*, January 11, 2021,

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/entertainment/tv/2021/01/11/dc-riots-how-newsmax-oan-conservative-outlets-fueled-mob/6589298002/>; Jason Mittell, “America’s Fake News Problem Predates Facebook,” *Vox*, November 21, 2016, <https://www.vox.com/culture/2016/11/21/13682574/fake-news-facebook-fox-news-conservative-radio>.

³ Karen Attiah, “The Media Had a Role to Play in the Rise of Trump. It’s Time to Hold Ourselves Accountable.” *Washington Post*, January 20, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/20/media-had-role-play-rise-trump-its-time-hold-ourselves-accountable/>; Christopher Ingraham, “New Research Explores How Conservative Media Misinformation May Have Intensified the Severity of the Pandemic,” *Washington Post*, June 25, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/06/25/fox-news-hannity-coronavirus-misinformation/>.

⁴ Yochai Benkler, Robert Faris, and Hal Roberts, *Network Propaganda: Manipulation, Disinformation, and Radicalization in American Politics* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018), 13.

⁵ Renee DiResta and Alex Stamos, “The Insurrection Hiding in Plain Sight,” January 14, 2021, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-01-14/insurrection-hiding-plain-sight>; Peter Kafka, “Fox News Wants Its Viewers Angry Enough to Watch but Not Angry Enough to Riot,” *Vox Recode*, January 7, 2021, <https://www.vox.com/recode/22219026/fox-news-riot-capitol-maga-carlson-hannity>.

⁶ DiResta and Stamos, “The Insurrection Hiding in Plain Sight.”

⁷ Justin Peters, “How Newsmax Covered the Insurrection It Provoked,” *Slate*, January 7, 2021, <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2021/01/newsmax-capitol-siege-trump.html>.

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⁹ Rob Savillo, “Fox News Pushed Coronavirus Misinformation 253 Times in Just Five Days” (Media Matters for America, July 16, 2020), <https://www.mediamatters.org/coronavirus-covid-19/fox-news-pushed-coronavirus-misinformation-253-times-just-five-days>.

¹⁰ Andrey Simonov et al., “The Persuasive Effect of Fox News: Non-Compliance with Social Distancing During the Covid-19 Pandemic” (National Bureau of Economic Research, May 25, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.3386/w27237>.

¹¹ Ashley Gold, “YouTube Temporarily Suspends, Demonetizes OANN,” *Axios*, November 24, 2020, <https://www.axios.com/youtube-temporarily-suspends-demonetizes-oann-420e8ea9-66c1-4eab-9754-6e3b708483c9.html>.

¹² Elizabeth Dvoskin and Josh Dawsey, “The Trump Administration Wants to Take Credit for a Covid Vaccine. Trump Supporters Are Undermining It.” *Washington Post*, December 24, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2020/12/24/trump-vaccine-misinformation/>.

¹³ “OAN,” *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (HBO, April 5, 2020), <https://www.hbo.com/last-week-tonight-with-john-oliver/2020/127-episode-186>.

¹⁴ Oliver Darcy, “Analysis: TV Providers Should Not Escape Scrutiny for Distributing Disinformation,” *CNN*, January 8, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/08/media/tv-providers-disinfo-reliable-sources/index.html>.

¹⁵ “Spectrum Channel Lineup & Channel Guide,” (Spectrum, accessed February 20, 2021), <https://www.spectrum.com/cable-tv/channel-lineup?opredirect=browse-content-new-channel-lineup>.

¹⁶ “About Charter,” (Charter Communications, accessed February 20, 2021), <https://corporate.charter.com/about-charter>.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 2021

Mr. W. Erik Carlson, CEO and President
Dish Network
9601 South Meridian Boulevard
Englewood, Colorado 80112

Dear Mr. Carlson,

Our country's public discourse is plagued by misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and lies. These phenomena undergird the radicalization of seditious individuals who committed acts of insurrection on January 6th, and it contributes to a growing distrust of public health measures necessary to crush the pandemic. We are concerned about the role Dish Network plays in disseminating misinformation to millions of its Dish and SlingTV subscribers, and we write to you today to request additional information about what actions Dish Network is taking to address these issues.

Nearly half of Americans get their news primarily from TV.¹ However, not all TV news sources are the same. Some purported news outlets have long been misinformation rumor mills and conspiracy theory hotbeds that produce content that leads to real harm.² Misinformation on TV has led to our current polluted information environment that radicalizes individuals to commit seditious acts and rejects public health best practices, among other issues in our public discourse.³

Experts have noted that the right-wing media ecosystem is "much more susceptible...to disinformation, lies, and half-truths."⁴ Right-wing media outlets, like Newsmax, One America News Network (OANN), and Fox News all aired misinformation about the November 2020 elections.⁵ For example, both Newsmax and OANN "ran incendiary reports" of false information following the elections and continue to support "an angry and dangerous subculture [that] will continue to operate semi-openly."⁶ As a violent mob was breaching the doors of the Capitol, Newsmax's coverage called the scene a "sort of a romantic idea."⁷ Fox News, meanwhile, has spent years spewing misinformation about American politics.⁸

These same networks also have been key vectors of spreading misinformation related to the pandemic. A media watchdog found over 250 cases of COVID-19 misinformation on Fox News in just one five-day period,⁹ and economists demonstrated that Fox News had a demonstrable impact on non-compliance with public health guidelines.¹⁰ One online platform suspended and demonetized OANN's channel online because it was spreading COVID-19 misinformation.¹¹ Newsmax has amplified allegations that members of the Chinese Communist Party helped to develop the COVID-19 vaccine.¹²

Sadly, these facts are not new. One popular television show aired a segment about OANN last April that included a dire warning: "the kind of misinformation [OANN] is spewing right now could end up getting people killed."¹³

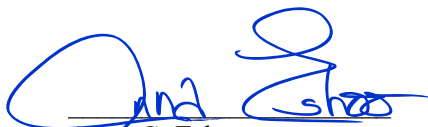
Yet, to our knowledge, the cable, satellite, and over-the-top companies that disseminate these media outlets to American viewers have done nothing in response to the misinformation aired by these outlets.¹⁴ Dish Network currently carries Fox News and Newsmax on Dish and SlingTV.¹⁵ As a company that serves over 11 million Americans,¹⁶ Dish Network plays a major role in the

spread of dangerous misinformation that enabled the insurrection of January 6th and hinders our public health response to the current pandemic.

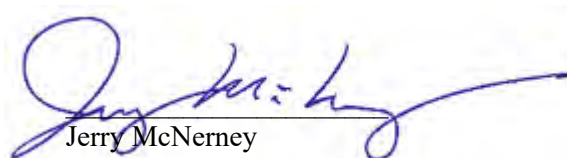
It is for these reasons we ask that you provide us with responses to the following questions about Dish Network's policies toward content carried on Dish and SlingTV by March 8, 2021:

1. What moral or ethical principles (including those related to journalistic integrity, violence, medical information, and public health) do you apply in deciding which channels to carry or when to take adverse actions against a channel?
2. Do you require, through contracts or otherwise, that the channels you carry abide by any content guidelines? If so, please provide a copy of the guidelines.
3. How many of your subscribers tuned in to Fox News and Newsmax on Dish and SlingTV for each of the four weeks preceding the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks on the Capitol? Please specify the number of subscribers that tuned in to each channel.
4. What steps did you take prior to, on, and following the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks to monitor, respond to, and reduce the spread of disinformation, including encouragement or incitement of violence by channels your company disseminates to millions of Americans? Please describe each step that you took and when it was taken.
5. Have you taken any adverse actions against a channel, including Fox News and Newsmax, for using your platform to disseminate disinformation related directly or indirectly to the November 3, 2020 elections, the January 6, 2021 Capitol insurrection, or COVID-19 misinformation? If yes, please describe each action, when it was taken, and the parties involved.
6. Have you ever taken any actions against a channel for using your platform to disseminate any disinformation? If yes, please describe each action and when it was taken.
7. Are you planning to continue carrying Fox News and Newsmax on Dish and SlingTV both now and beyond any contract renewal date? If so, why?

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

¹ Amy Mitchell et al., "Americans Who Mainly Get Their News on Social Media Are Less Engaged, Less Knowledgeable" (Pew Research Center, July 30, 2020), <https://www.journalism.org/2020/07/30/americans-who-mainly-get-their-news-on-social-media-are-less-engaged-less-knowledgeable/>.

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³ Karen Attiah, “The Media Had a Role to Play in the Rise of Trump. It’s Time to Hold Ourselves Accountable.” *Washington Post*, January 20, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/20/media-had-role-play-rise-trump-its-time-hold-ourselves-accountable/>; Christopher Ingraham, “New Research Explores How Conservative Media Misinformation May Have Intensified the Severity of the Pandemic,” *Washington Post*, June 25, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/06/25/fox-news-hannity-coronavirus-misinformation/>.

⁴ Yochai Benkler, Robert Faris, and Hal Roberts, *Network Propaganda: Manipulation, Disinformation, and Radicalization in American Politics* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018), 13.

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⁶ DiResta and Stamos, “The Insurrection Hiding in Plain Sight.”

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¹⁰ Andrey Simonov et al., “The Persuasive Effect of Fox News: Non-Compliance with Social Distancing During the Covid-19 Pandemic” (National Bureau of Economic Research, May 25, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.3386/w27237>.

¹¹ Ashley Gold, “YouTube Temporarily Suspends, Demonetizes OANN,” *Axios*, November 24, 2020, <https://www.axios.com/youtube-temporarily-suspends-demonetizes-oann-420e8ea9-66c1-4eab-9754-6e3b708483c9.html>.

¹² Elizabeth Dvoskin and Josh Dawsey, “The Trump Administration Wants to Take Credit for a Covid Vaccine. Trump Supporters Are Undermining It.” *Washington Post*, December 24, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2020/12/24/trump-vaccine-misinformation/>.

¹³ “OAN,” *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (HBO, April 5, 2020), <https://www.hbo.com/last-week-tonight-with-john-oliver/2020/127-episode-186>.

¹⁴ Oliver Darcy, “Analysis: TV Providers Should Not Escape Scrutiny for Distributing Disinformation,” *CNN*, January 8, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/08/media/tv-providers-disinfo-reliable-sources/index.html>.

¹⁵ “Dish Channel Guide,” (Dish, accessed February 21, 2021), <https://www.dish.com/downloads/channel-lineup/channellineup.pdf>; “Stop paying too much for TV,” Dish, accessed February 21, 2021, <https://www.sling.com/channels>.

¹⁶ “DISH Network reports third quarter 2020 financial results,” (Dish, November 6, 2020), <https://ir.dish.com/news-releases/news-release-details/dish-network-reports-third-quarter-2020-financial-results>.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 2021

Mr. Pat Esser, CEO and President
Cox Communications , Inc.
6205-B Peachtree Dunwoody Road NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30328

Dear Mr. Esser,

Our country's public discourse is plagued by misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and lies. These phenomena undergird the radicalization of seditious individuals who committed acts of insurrection on January 6th, and it contributes to a growing distrust of public health measures necessary to crush the pandemic. We are concerned about the role Cox plays in disseminating misinformation to millions of its Cox Cable subscribers, and we write to you today to request additional information about what actions Cox is taking to address these issues.

Nearly half of Americans get their news primarily from TV.¹ However, not all TV news sources are the same. Some purported news outlets have long been misinformation rumor mills and conspiracy theory hotbeds that produce content that leads to real harm.² Misinformation on TV has led to our current polluted information environment that radicalizes individuals to commit seditious acts and rejects public health best practices, among other issues in our public discourse.³

Experts have noted that the right-wing media ecosystem is "much more susceptible...to disinformation, lies, and half-truths."⁴ Right-wing media outlets, like Newsmax, One America News Network (OANN), and Fox News all aired misinformation about the November 2020 elections.⁵ For example, both Newsmax and OANN "ran incendiary reports" of false information following the elections and continue to support "an angry and dangerous subculture [that] will continue to operate semi-openly."⁶ As a violent mob was breaching the doors of the Capitol, Newsmax's coverage called the scene a "sort of a romantic idea."⁷ Fox News, meanwhile, has spent years spewing misinformation about American politics.⁸

These same networks also have been key vectors of spreading misinformation related to the pandemic. A media watchdog found over 250 cases of COVID-19 misinformation on Fox News in just one five-day period,⁹ and economists demonstrated that Fox News had a demonstrable impact on non-compliance with public health guidelines.¹⁰ One online platform suspended and demonetized OANN's channel online because it was spreading COVID-19 misinformation.¹¹ Newsmax has amplified allegations that members of the Chinese Communist Party helped to develop the COVID-19 vaccine.¹²

Sadly, these facts are not new. One popular television show aired a segment about OANN last April that included a dire warning: "the kind of misinformation [OANN] is spewing right now could end up getting people killed."¹³

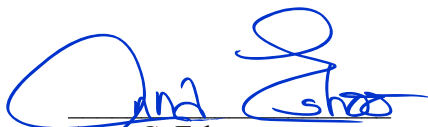
Yet, to our knowledge, the cable, satellite, and over-the-top companies that disseminate these media outlets to American viewers have done nothing in response to the misinformation aired by these outlets.¹⁴ Cox currently carries Fox News and Newsmax.¹⁵ As a company that serves millions Americans,¹⁶ Cox plays a major role in the spread of dangerous misinformation that

enabled the insurrection of January 6th and hinders our public health response to the current pandemic.

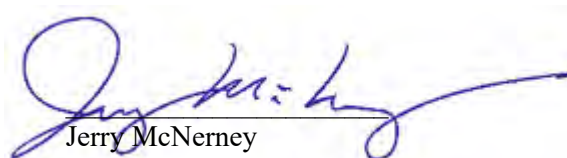
It is for these reasons we ask that you provide us with responses to the following questions about Cox's policies toward content carried on Cox Cable by March 8, 2021:

1. What moral or ethical principles (including those related to journalistic integrity, violence, medical information, and public health) do you apply in deciding which channels to carry or when to take adverse actions against a channel?
2. Do you require, through contracts or otherwise, that the channels you carry abide by any content guidelines? If so, please provide a copy of the guidelines.
3. How many of your subscribers tuned in to Fox News and Newsmax on Cox Cable for each of the four weeks preceding the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks on the Capitol? Please specify the number of subscribers that tuned in to each channel.
4. What steps did you take prior to, on, and following the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks to monitor, respond to, and reduce the spread of disinformation, including encouragement or incitement of violence by channels your company disseminates to millions of Americans? Please describe each step that you took and when it was taken.
5. Have you taken any adverse actions against a channel, including Fox News and Newsmax, for using your platform to disseminate disinformation related directly or indirectly to the November 3, 2020 elections, the January 6, 2021 Capitol insurrection, or COVID-19 misinformation? If yes, please describe each action, when it was taken, and the parties involved.
6. Have you ever taken any actions against a channel for using your platform to disseminate any disinformation? If yes, please describe each action and when it was taken.
7. Are you planning to continue carrying Fox News and Newsmax on Cox Cable both now and beyond any contract renewal date? If so, why?

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

¹ Amy Mitchell et al., "Americans Who Mainly Get Their News on Social Media Are Less Engaged, Less Knowledgeable" (Pew Research Center, July 30, 2020), <https://www.journalism.org/2020/07/30/americans-who-mainly-get-their-news-on-social-media-are-less-engaged-less-knowledgeable/>.

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¹⁵ “Cox TV Channel Guide For Your Area,” (Cox, accessed February 21, 2021), <https://www.cox.com/residential/tv/channel-lineup.html>.

¹⁶ “Cox Communications Fact Sheet,” (Cox, accessed February 19, 2021), <https://newsroom.cox.com/company-overview>.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 2021

Mr. Dexter Goei, CEO
Altice USA
One Court Square West
Long Island City, New York 11101

Dear Mr. Goei,

Our country's public discourse is plagued by misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and lies. These phenomena undergird the radicalization of seditious individuals who committed acts of insurrection on January 6th, and it contributes to a growing distrust of public health measures necessary to crush the pandemic. We are concerned about the role Altice plays in disseminating misinformation to millions of its Optimum and Suddenlink subscribers, and we write to you today to request additional information about what actions Altice is taking to address these issues.

Nearly half of Americans get their news primarily from TV.¹ However, not all TV news sources are the same. Some purported news outlets have long been misinformation rumor mills and conspiracy theory hotbeds that produce content that leads to real harm.² Misinformation on TV has led to our current polluted information environment that radicalizes individuals to commit seditious acts and rejects public health best practices, among other issues in our public discourse.³

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These same networks also have been key vectors of spreading misinformation related to the pandemic. A media watchdog found over 250 cases of COVID-19 misinformation on Fox News in just one five-day period,⁹ and economists demonstrated that Fox News had a demonstrable impact on non-compliance with public health guidelines.¹⁰ One online platform suspended and demonetized OANN's channel online because it was spreading COVID-19 misinformation.¹¹ Newsmax has amplified allegations that members of the Chinese Communist Party helped to develop the COVID-19 vaccine.¹²

Sadly, these facts are not new. One popular television show aired a segment about OANN last April that included a dire warning: "the kind of misinformation [OANN] is spewing right now could end up getting people killed."¹³

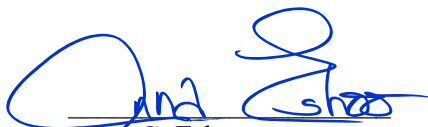
Yet, to our knowledge, the cable, satellite, and over-the-top companies that disseminate these media outlets to American viewers have done nothing in response to the misinformation aired by these outlets.¹⁴ Altice currently carries Fox News and Newsmax on Optimum and Suddenlink.¹⁵ As a company that serves nearly 3 million Americans,¹⁶ Altice plays a major role in the spread of

dangerous misinformation that enabled the insurrection of January 6th and hinders our public health response to the current pandemic.

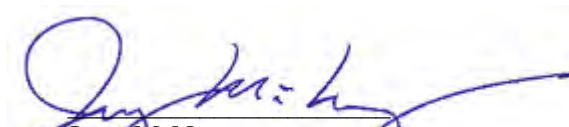
It is for these reasons we ask that you provide us with responses to the following questions about Altice’s policies toward content carried on Optimum and Suddenlink by March 8, 2021:

1. What moral or ethical principles (including those related to journalistic integrity, violence, medical information, and public health) do you apply in deciding which channels to carry or when to take adverse actions against a channel?
2. Do you require, through contracts or otherwise, that the channels you carry abide by any content guidelines? If so, please provide a copy of the guidelines.
3. How many of your subscribers tuned in to Fox News and Newsmax on Optimum and Suddenlink for each of the four weeks preceding the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks on the Capitol? Please specify the number of subscribers that tuned in to each channel.
4. What steps did you take prior to, on, and following the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks to monitor, respond to, and reduce the spread of disinformation, including encouragement or incitement of violence by channels your company disseminates to millions of Americans? Please describe each step that you took and when it was taken.
5. Have you taken any adverse actions against a channel, including Fox News and Newsmax, for using your platform to disseminate disinformation related directly or indirectly to the November 3, 2020 elections, the January 6, 2021 Capitol insurrection, or COVID-19 misinformation? If yes, please describe each action, when it was taken, and the parties involved.
6. Have you ever taken any actions against a channel for using your platform to disseminate any disinformation? If yes, please describe each action and when it was taken.
7. Are you planning to continue carrying Fox News and Newsmax on Optimum and Suddenlink both now and beyond any contract renewal date? If so, why?

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

¹ Amy Mitchell et al., “Americans Who Mainly Get Their News on Social Media Are Less Engaged, Less Knowledgeable” (Pew Research Center, July 30, 2020), <https://www.journalism.org/2020/07/30/americans-who-mainly-get-their-news-on-social-media-are-less-engaged-less-knowledgeable/>.

² Bill Keveney and Maria Puente, “How Conservative Media Stoked Baseless Election-Fraud Claims That Motivated DC Rioters,” *USA Today*, January 11, 2021,

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/entertainment/tv/2021/01/11/dc-riots-how-newsmax-oan-conservative-outlets-fueled-mob/6589298002/>; Jason Mittell, “America’s Fake News Problem Predates Facebook,” *Vox*, November 21, 2016, <https://www.vox.com/culture/2016/11/21/13682574/fake-news-facebook-fox-news-conservative-radio>.

³ Karen Attiah, “The Media Had a Role to Play in the Rise of Trump. It’s Time to Hold Ourselves Accountable.” *Washington Post*, January 20, 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/01/20/media-had-role-play-rise-trump-its-time-hold-ourselves-accountable/>; Christopher Ingraham, “New Research Explores How Conservative Media Misinformation May Have Intensified the Severity of the Pandemic,” *Washington Post*, June 25, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2020/06/25/fox-news-hannity-coronavirus-misinformation/>.

⁴ Yochai Benkler, Robert Faris, and Hal Roberts, *Network Propaganda: Manipulation, Disinformation, and Radicalization in American Politics* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018), 13.

⁵ Renee DiResta and Alex Stamos, “The Insurrection Hiding in Plain Sight,” January 14, 2021, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-01-14/insurrection-hiding-plain-sight>; Peter Kafka, “Fox News Wants Its Viewers Angry Enough to Watch but Not Angry Enough to Riot,” *Vox Recode*, January 7, 2021, <https://www.vox.com/recode/22219026/fox-news-riot-capitol-maga-carlson-hannity>.

⁶ DiResta and Stamos, “The Insurrection Hiding in Plain Sight.”

⁷ Justin Peters, “How Newsmax Covered the Insurrection It Provoked,” *Slate*, January 7, 2021, <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2021/01/newsmax-capitol-siege-trump.html>.

⁸ Peter Kafka, “Fox News Wants Its Viewers Angry Enough to Watch but Not Angry Enough to Riot.”

⁹ Rob Savillo, “Fox News Pushed Coronavirus Misinformation 253 Times in Just Five Days” (Media Matters for America, July 16, 2020), <https://www.mediamatters.org/coronavirus-covid-19/fox-news-pushed-coronavirus-misinformation-253-times-just-five-days>.

¹⁰ Andrey Simonov et al., “The Persuasive Effect of Fox News: Non-Compliance with Social Distancing During the Covid-19 Pandemic” (National Bureau of Economic Research, May 25, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.3386/w27237>.

¹¹ Ashley Gold, “YouTube Temporarily Suspends, Demonetizes OANN,” *Axios*, November 24, 2020, <https://www.axios.com/youtube-temporarily-suspends-demonetizes-oann-420e8ea9-66c1-4eab-9754-6e3b708483c9.html>.

¹² Elizabeth Dvoskin and Josh Dawsey, “The Trump Administration Wants to Take Credit for a Covid Vaccine. Trump Supporters Are Undermining It.” *Washington Post*, December 24, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2020/12/24/trump-vaccine-misinformation/>.

¹³ “OAN,” *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (HBO, April 5, 2020), <https://www.hbo.com/last-week-tonight-with-john-oliver/2020/127-episode-186>.

¹⁴ Oliver Darcy, “Analysis: TV Providers Should Not Escape Scrutiny for Distributing Disinformation,” *CNN*, January 8, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/08/media/tv-providers-disinfo-reliable-sources/index.html>.

¹⁵ “Channel Guide Lineup,” (Optimum, October 2020), <https://www.optimum.net/cdn/static.tvlistings.optimum.net/oal/static/prod/documents/channel-listings/channel-lineup-Bayonne.pdf>; “Internet & Cable TV,” (Suddenlink, accessed February 21, 2021), <https://www.suddenlink.com/tv>.

¹⁶ Altice USA, Inc., “Form 10-K (for the period ending December 31, 2020),” (Securities and Exchange Commission, February 12, 2021), 3, <https://d18rn0p25nwr6d.cloudfront.net/CIK-0001702780/b070b9e3-2e49-4c48-aa8a-281fd8467b31.pdf>.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 2021

Mr. Sundar Pichai, CEO
Alphabet Inc.
1600 Amphitheater Parkway,
Mountain View, California 94043

Dear Mr. Pichai,

Our country's public discourse is plagued by misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and lies. These phenomena undergird the radicalization of seditious individuals who committed acts of insurrection on January 6th, and it contributes to a growing distrust of public health measures necessary to crush the pandemic. We are concerned about the role Alphabet plays in disseminating misinformation to millions of its YouTube TV subscribers and users who stream video using apps from the Google Play store, and we write to you today to request additional information about what actions Alphabet is taking to address these issues.

Nearly half of Americans get their news primarily from TV.¹ However, not all TV news sources are the same. Some purported news outlets have long been misinformation rumor mills and conspiracy theory hotbeds that produce content that leads to real harm.² Misinformation on TV has led to our current polluted information environment that radicalizes individuals to commit seditious acts and rejects public health best practices, among other issues in our public discourse.³

Experts have noted that the right-wing media ecosystem is "much more susceptible...to disinformation, lies, and half-truths."⁴ Right-wing media outlets, like Newsmax, One America News Network (OANN), and Fox News all aired misinformation about the November 2020 elections.⁵ For example, both Newsmax and OANN "ran incendiary reports" of false information following the elections and continue to support "an angry and dangerous subculture [that] will continue to operate semi-openly."⁶ As a violent mob was breaching the doors of the Capitol, Newsmax's coverage called the scene a "sort of a romantic idea."⁷ Fox News, meanwhile, has spent years spewing misinformation about American politics.⁸

These same networks also have been key vectors of spreading misinformation related to the pandemic. A media watchdog found over 250 cases of COVID-19 misinformation on Fox News in just one five-day period,⁹ and economists demonstrated that Fox News had a demonstrable impact on non-compliance with public health guidelines.¹⁰ In fact, Alphabet suspended and demonetized OANN's YouTube channel because it was spreading COVID-19 misinformation,¹¹ though the same content can be viewed in the OANN app available via the Google Play Store.¹² Newsmax has amplified allegations that members of the Chinese Communist Party helped to develop the COVID-19 vaccine.¹³

Sadly, these facts are not new. One popular television show aired a segment about OANN last April that included a dire warning: "the kind of misinformation [OANN] is spewing right now could end up getting people killed."¹⁴


Yet, to our knowledge, the cable, satellite, and over-the-top companies that disseminate these media outlets to American viewers have done nothing in response to the misinformation aired by these outlets.¹⁵ Alphabet currently carries Fox News on YouTube TV and hosts Fox News,

Newsmax, and OANN apps in its Play Store.¹⁶ As a company that serves millions of Americans,¹⁷ Alphabet plays a major role in the spread of dangerous misinformation that enabled the insurrection of January 6th and hinders our public health response to the current pandemic.

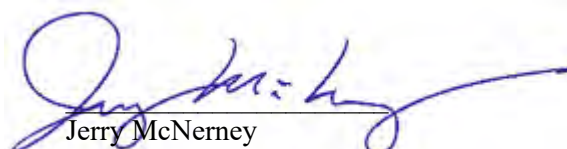
It is for these reasons we ask that you provide us with responses to the following questions about Alphabet's policies toward content carried on YouTube TV and in its Play Store by March 8, 2021:

1. What moral or ethical principles (including those related to journalistic integrity, violence, medical information, and public health) do you apply in deciding which channels to carry or when to take adverse actions against a channel?
2. Do you require, through contracts or otherwise, that the channels you carry abide by any content guidelines? If so, please provide a copy of the guidelines.
3. How many of your subscribers viewed Fox News on YouTube TV for each of the four weeks preceding the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks on the Capitol? Please specify the number of subscribers that tuned in to each channel.
4. What steps did you take prior to, on, and following the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks to monitor, respond to, and reduce the spread of disinformation, including encouragement or incitement of violence by channels your company disseminates to millions of Americans? Please describe each step that you took and when it was taken.
5. Have you taken any adverse actions against a channel, including Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN, for using your platform to disseminate disinformation related directly or indirectly to the November 3, 2020 elections, the January 6, 2021 Capitol insurrection, or COVID-19 misinformation? If yes, please describe each action, when it was taken, and the parties involved.
6. Have you ever taken any actions against a channel for using your platform to disseminate any disinformation? If yes, please describe each action and when it was taken.
7. Are you planning to continue carrying Fox News on YouTube TV both now and beyond any contract renewal date? Are you planning to continue carrying Fox News, Newsmax, and OANN apps in the Play Store? If so, why?

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

¹ Amy Mitchell et al., "Americans Who Mainly Get Their News on Social Media Are Less Engaged, Less Knowledgeable" (Pew Research Center, July 30, 2020), <https://www.journalism.org/2020/07/30/americans-who-mainly-get-their-news-on-social-media-are-less-engaged-less-knowledgeable/>.

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- ⁴ Yochai Benkler, Robert Faris, and Hal Roberts, *Network Propaganda: Manipulation, Disinformation, and Radicalization in American Politics* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018), 13.
- ⁵ Renee DiResta and Alex Stamos, “The Insurrection Hiding in Plain Sight,” January 14, 2021, <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2021-01-14/insurrection-hiding-plain-sight>; Peter Kafka, “Fox News Wants Its Viewers Angry Enough to Watch but Not Angry Enough to Riot,” *Vox Recode*, January 7, 2021, <https://www.vox.com/recode/22219026/fox-news-riot-capitol-maga-carlson-hannity>.
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- ⁷ Justin Peters, “How Newsmax Covered the Insurrection It Provoked,” *Slate*, January 7, 2021, <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2021/01/newsmax-capitol-siege-trump.html>.
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- ¹² “OANN: Live Breaking News” (Google Play, accessed February 21, 2021), <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=me.oann.news>.
- ¹³ Elizabeth Dwoskin and Josh Dawsey, “The Trump Administration Wants to Take Credit for a Covid Vaccine. Trump Supporters Are Undermining It.” *Washington Post*, December 24, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2020/12/24/trump-vaccine-misinformation/>.
- ¹⁴ “OAN,” *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (HBO, April 5, 2020), <https://www.hbo.com/last-week-tonight-with-john-oliver/2020/127-episode-186>.
- ¹⁵ Oliver Darcy, “Analysis: TV Providers Should Not Escape Scrutiny for Distributing Disinformation,” *CNN*, January 8, 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/08/media/tv-providers-disinfo-reliable-sources/index.html>.
- ¹⁶ “Watch live TV from 85+ channels,” (YouTube TV, accessed February 21, 2021), <https://tv.youtube.com/welcome/>; “Google Play App Store” (Alphabet, accessed February 21, 2021), <https://play.google.com/store>.
- ¹⁷ Abner Li, “YouTube TV now has 3 million paid subscribers, 30M for Music/Premium,” *9to5Google*, October 29, 2020, <https://9to5google.com/2020/10/29/youtube-tv-subscribers>.

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 2021

Ms. Kelly Cambell, President
Hulu, LLC
2500 Broadway 2nd Floor
Santa Monica, California 90404

Dear Ms. Campbell,

Our country's public discourse is plagued by misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories, and lies. These phenomena undergird the radicalization of seditious individuals who committed acts of insurrection on January 6th, and it contributes to a growing distrust of public health measures necessary to crush the pandemic. We are concerned about the role Hulu plays in disseminating misinformation to millions of its Hulu + Live TV subscribers, and we write to you today to request additional information about what actions Hulu is taking to address these issues.

Nearly half of Americans get their news primarily from TV.¹ However, not all TV news sources are the same. Some purported news outlets have long been misinformation rumor mills and conspiracy theory hotbeds that produce content that leads to real harm.² Misinformation on TV has led to our current polluted information environment that radicalizes individuals to commit seditious acts and rejects public health best practices, among other issues in our public discourse.³

Experts have noted that the right-wing media ecosystem is "much more susceptible...to disinformation, lies, and half-truths."⁴ Right-wing media outlets, like Newsmax, One America News Network (OANN), and Fox News all aired misinformation about the November 2020 elections.⁵ For example, both Newsmax and OANN "ran incendiary reports" of false information following the elections and continue to support "an angry and dangerous subculture [that] will continue to operate semi-openly."⁶ As a violent mob was breaching the doors of the Capitol, Newsmax's coverage called the scene a "sort of a romantic idea."⁷ Fox News, meanwhile, has spent years spewing misinformation about American politics.⁸

These same networks also have been key vectors of spreading misinformation related to the pandemic. A media watchdog found over 250 cases of COVID-19 misinformation on Fox News in just one five-day period,⁹ and economists demonstrated that Fox News had a demonstrable impact on non-compliance with public health guidelines.¹⁰ One online platform suspended and demonetized OANN's channel online because it was spreading COVID-19 misinformation.¹¹ Newsmax has amplified allegations that members of the Chinese Communist Party helped to develop the COVID-19 vaccine.¹²

Sadly, these facts are not new. One popular television show aired a segment about OANN last April that included a dire warning: "the kind of misinformation [OANN] is spewing right now could end up getting people killed."¹³

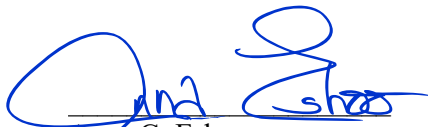
Yet, to our knowledge, the cable, satellite, and over-the-top companies that disseminate these media outlets to American viewers have done nothing in response to the misinformation aired by these outlets.¹⁴ Hulu currently carries Fox News on Hulu + Live TV.¹⁵ As a company that serves 4 million Americans,¹⁶ Hulu plays a major role in the spread of dangerous misinformation that

enabled the insurrection of January 6th and hinders our public health response to the current pandemic.

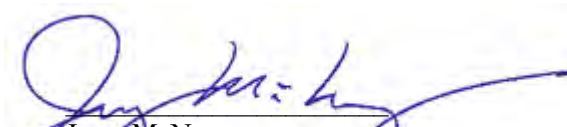
It is for these reasons we ask that you provide us with responses to the following questions about Hulu policies toward content carried on Hulu + Live TV by March 8, 2021:

1. What moral or ethical principles (including those related to journalistic integrity, violence, medical information, and public health) do you apply in deciding which channels to carry or when to take adverse actions against a channel?
2. Do you require, through contracts or otherwise, that the channels you carry abide by any content guidelines? If so, please provide a copy of the guidelines.
3. How many of your subscribers tuned in to Fox News on Hulu + Live TV for each of the four weeks preceding the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks on the Capitol? Please specify the number of subscribers that tuned in to each channel.
4. What steps did you take prior to, on, and following the November 3, 2020 elections and the January 6, 2021 attacks to monitor, respond to, and reduce the spread of disinformation, including encouragement or incitement of violence by channels your company disseminates to millions of Americans? Please describe each step that you took and when it was taken.
5. Have you taken any adverse actions against a channel, including Fox News, for using your platform to disseminate disinformation related directly or indirectly to the November 3, 2020 elections, the January 6, 2021 Capitol insurrection, or COVID-19 misinformation? If yes, please describe each action, when it was taken, and the parties involved.
6. Have you ever taken any actions against a channel for using your platform to disseminate any disinformation? If yes, please describe each action and when it was taken.
7. Are you planning to continue carrying Fox News on Hulu + Live TV both now and beyond any contract renewal date? If so, why?

Most gratefully,



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

¹ Amy Mitchell et al., “Americans Who Mainly Get Their News on Social Media Are Less Engaged, Less Knowledgeable” (Pew Research Center, July 30, 2020), <https://www.journalism.org/2020/07/30/americans-who-mainly-get-their-news-on-social-media-are-less-engaged-less-knowledgeable/>.

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¹³ “OAN,” *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver* (HBO, April 5, 2020), <https://www.hbo.com/last-week-tonight-with-john-oliver/2020/127-episode-186>.

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¹⁵ “Channels in your area,” (Hulu, accessed February 21, 2021), <https://www.hulu.com/live-tv>.

¹⁶ Sarah Perez, “Hulu’s live TV service gains 14 new channels as result of ViacomCBS deal,” *TechCrunch*, January 4, 2021, <https://techcrunch.com/2021/01/04/hulus-live-tv-service-gains-14-new-channels-as-result-of-viacombcs-deal/>.