

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

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MINORITY (202) 225-5051
<https://oversight.house.gov>

December 7, 2023

Mr. Elon Musk
Chairman and Chief Technology Officer
X Corp.
701 S. Carson Street, Suite 200
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Mr. Musk:

We are troubled by the rapid spread of abortion misinformation and disinformation on your company's social media platform X, and the threat this development poses to safe abortion access in the United States. As you know, the Supreme Court's decision last year in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization (Dobbs)* struck down the constitutional right of a woman to choose an abortion in consultation with her physician that was established 50 years ago in *Roe v. Wade*. As the legal status of abortion changes across the country and a number of state legislatures impose drastic new restrictions on health care choices, people seeking information about abortion care and services turn to X for accurate and reliable information—not propaganda.

Yet individuals and groups that are anti-choice are promoting dangerously inaccurate medical information and false content about abortion online, including on X.¹ This flood of abortion misinformation and disinformation seeks to discourage people from getting abortion care and services by offering them bad medical advice.² As abortion misinformation and disinformation surge online, patients can come to doubt their health care institutions, their doctors, and themselves—putting their own health and safety at risk.

Your company's Terms of Service and policies governing advertisements do not adequately address the proliferation of abortion misinformation on your company's platform. Public reporting indicates that your company has removed posts for advocating access to

¹ Institute for Strategic Dialogue, *Evaluating Platform Abortion-Related Speech Policies: Were Platforms Prepared for the Post-Dobbs Environment?* (Oct. 11, 2022) (online at www.isdglobal.org/isd-publications/evaluating-platform-abortion-related-speech-policies-were-platforms-prepared-for-the-post-dobbs-environment/).

² *The Latest Social Media Misinformation: Abortion Pill Reversals*, Politico (Aug. 20, 2022) (online at www.politico.com/news/2022/08/20/abortion-misinformation-social-media-00052645).

abortion.³ Yet, posts spreading false information about abortion are allowed to remain on your platform. Posts indicating that medication abortion can be reversed and that people can carry a healthy fetus to term after having a so-called “abortion pill reversal” procedure are among the most inflammatory and harmful.⁴

Abortion pill reversal—administering high doses of the hormone progesterone after mifepristone, the first pill required for a medication abortion—is a disproven and dangerous medical procedure.⁵ In many instances, the abortion pill reversal procedure causes serious medical complications, including rapid blood loss.⁶ Medication abortion, in contrast, has long been recognized as safe and effective by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and other leading medical organizations.⁷

A major anti-abortion organization posted a video on your social media platform that falsely suggests Planned Parenthood is unwilling to provide abortion pill reversal procedures because they don’t care about women’s choice. The post’s misleading caption states:

Planned Parenthood doesn't care about a “women's right to choose.”

When women change their minds and want to stop their abortions, Planned Parenthood refuses to help.⁸

Other posts by anti-abortion organizations spread dangerous falsehoods, such as questioning the safety of medication abortion or indicating that it can cause cancer or even death.

³ *Twitter Halts Promotion of Campaign Video Due To ‘Abortion Advocacy’*, Huffington Post (June 15, 2023) (online at www.huffpost.com/entry/rachel-hunt-north-carolina-twitter-video-abortion_n_648b4257e4b0756ff8631dec).

⁴ National Right to Life (@nrlc), Twitter (Mar. 28, 2023) (online at <https://twitter.com/nrlc/status/1640579499585593345>); Live Action (@LiveAction), Twitter (May 26, 2023) (online at <https://twitter.com/LiveAction/status/1662184728756142114>).

⁵ *The Latest Social Media Misinformation: Abortion Pill Reversals*, Politico (Aug. 20, 2022) (online at www.politico.com/news/2022/08/20/abortion-misinformation-social-media-00052645); Media Matters, *Facebook Has Earned Tens of Thousands of Dollars Running Ads with Misinformation About Abortion Pills* (Aug. 3, 2022) (online at www.mediamatters.org/facebook/facebook-has-earned-tens-thousands-dollars-running-ads-misinformation-about-abortion-pills); Institute for Strategic Dialogue, *Evaluating Platform Abortion-Related Speech Policies: Were Platforms Prepared for the Post-Dobbs Environment?*, at Pages 19–22 (Oct. 11, 2022) (online at www.isdglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Evaluating-Platform-Abortion-Related-Speech-Policies.pdf). See also American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, *Facts Are Important: Medication Abortion “Reversal” Is Not Supported by Science* (online at www.acog.org/advocacy/facts-are-important/medication-abortion-reversal-is-not-supported-by-science) (accessed Oct. 20, 2023).

⁶ *Some Lawmakers Push ‘Abortion Reversal’ Treatments. A Study Shows How Dangerous They Are*, Washington Post (Dec. 2, 2019) (online at www.washingtonpost.com/health/2019/12/24/some-lawmakers-push-abortion-reversal-treatments-new-study-shows-how-dangerous-they-are/).

⁷ *Facts Are Important: Medication Abortion “Reversal” Is Not Supported By Science*, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (online at www.acog.org/advocacy/facts-are-important/medication-abortion-reversal-is-not-supported-by-science) (accessed Dec. 5, 2023).

⁸ Live Action (@LiveAction), Twitter (May 26, 2023) (online at <https://twitter.com/LiveAction/status/1662184728756142114>).

Additional posts from these same organizations claim that medication abortion is unsafe and that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) failed to consider risks and side effects when approving medication abortion, both of which are false.⁹

For example, one major anti-abortion organization posted on X stating false information about the risks associated with medication abortion:¹⁰

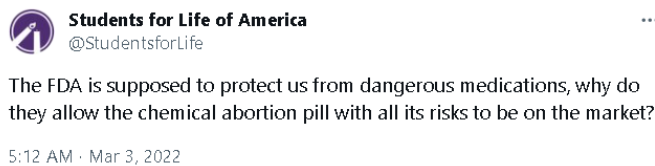


Another anti-abortion group promoted false information on your site alleging that abortion medication is dangerous, stating:

How dangerous is the abortion pill regimen?

Federal data show that the rate of chemical abortion related emergency room visits is up more than 500% since mifepristone was approved.¹¹

Another anti-abortion organization targeting American students promoted false claims on your site about abortion medication alleging that FDA is allowing a dangerous medication to remain on the market.¹²



Research shows that medication abortion is safe and highly effective, and major complications occur for less than 1% of women who receive a medication abortion.¹³

⁹ Food and Drug Administration, *Questions and Answers on Mifepristone for Medical Termination of Pregnancy Through Ten Weeks Gestation* (Jan. 4, 2023) (online at www.fda.gov/drugs/postmarket-drug-safety-information-patients-and-providers/questions-and-answers-mifepristone-medical-termination-pregnancy-through-ten-weeks-gestation).

¹⁰ Alliance Defending Freedom (@ADFLegal) (Nov. 9, 2023) (online at <https://twitter.com/ADFLegal/status/1722681717230608404>).

¹¹ SBA Pro-Life America (@sbaprolife) (Mar. 16, 2023) (online at <https://twitter.com/sbaprolife/status/1636364192071442435>).

¹² Students for Life (@StudentsforLife), Twitter (Mar. 3, 2022) (online at <https://twitter.com/StudentsforLife/status/1499326718045212672>).

¹³ *Research Shows That Medication Abortions Are Safe*, Associated Press (June 14, 2022) (online at <https://apnews.com/article/fact-check-medication-abortion-783874945633>). A 2015 study shows that major complications—including hospital admissions—occurred in 0.23% of women who received a medication abortion.

Your company's decision to keep these posts visible seems at odds with your Terms of Service that allow you to remove unlawful conduct on your platform.¹⁴ Even more concerning is your company's apparent double-standard when it comes to removing posts that you label "abortion advocacy" or posts that offer legitimate medical and logistical advice for someone considering abortion, while allowing crisis pregnancy centers and anti-abortion advocates to spread false and misleading information regarding abortion.¹⁵


To ensure that misinformation and disinformation does not further undermine the ability of people to obtain abortion care, we urge you to take immediate action to combat the spread of abortion misinformation on X, in all languages. Please also provide a briefing to Committee staff regarding the steps your company plans to take to address abortion misinformation on X by December 14, 2023.

The Committee on Oversight and Accountability is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate "any matter" at "any time" under House Rule X. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-5051.

Sincerely,



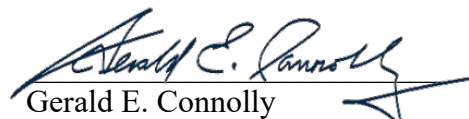
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Gerald E. Connolly
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Cybersecurity,
Information Technology, and
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Upadhyay UD, et al., *Incidence of Emergency Department Visits and Complications After Abortion*, *Obstet Gynecol.* (2015) (doi: 10.1097/AOG.0000000000000603) (online at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25560122/>).

¹⁴ X, *Terms of Service* (Sept. 29, 2023) (online at <https://twitter.com/en/tos>).

¹⁵ *Twitter Halts Promotion of Campaign Video Due To 'Abortion Advocacy'*, *Huffington Post* (June 15, 2023) (online at www.huffpost.com/entry/rachel-hunt-north-carolina-twitter-video-abortion_n_648b4257e4b0756ff8631dec).



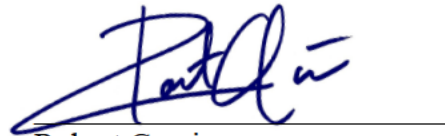
Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



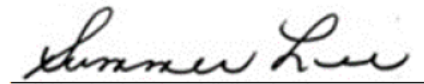
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the Border, and Foreign Affairs



Summer Lee
Member of Congress




Greg Casar
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable James Comer, Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Accountability

The Honorable Nancy Mace, Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Information Technology, and Government Innovation

The Honorable Lisa McClain, Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Health Care and Financial Services

The Honorable Glenn Grothman, Chairman
Subcommittee on National Security, the Border, and Foreign Affairs