

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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September 10, 2024

The Honorable Merrick B. Garland
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Garland:

The Committee on the Judiciary and the Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government continue to conduct oversight of how and to what extent the Executive Branch has coerced or colluded with companies and other intermediaries to censor lawful speech.¹ According to recent reports, a lead attorney defending Google in *United States v. Google LLC*, a high-profile antitrust case led by the Department of Justice, is simultaneously advising Vice President Harris ahead of the presidential debate.² In light of existing evidence that the Biden-Harris Administration pressured and colluded with Google to censor the lawful speech of American citizens,³ we write to request a briefing about how the Department of Justice is working to combat potential conflicts of interest and political bias in *United States v. Google LLC*.

According to recent press coverage, Karen Dunn, a “lead attorney” representing Google in the antitrust case *United States v. Google LLC*, is also simultaneously leading Vice President

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

² Brooke Singman, *Harris preps for debate with Google lawyer, creating ‘conflict of interest,’ Trump campaign says*, FOX NEWS (Aug. 26, 2024).

³ See, e.g., STAFF OF H. COMM. ON THE JUDICIARY AND THE SELECT SUBCOMM. ON THE WEAPONIZATION OF THE FED. GOV’T OF THE H. COMM. ON THE JUDICIARY, 118TH CONG., *THE CENSORSHIP INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX: HOW TOP BIDEN WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS COERCED BIG TECH TO CENSOR AMERICANS, TRUE INFORMATION, AND CRITICS OF THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION* (Comm. Print May 1, 2024); Rep. Jim Jordan (@Jim_Jordan), X (Nov. 30, 2023, 8:44 AM), https://twitter.com/Jim_Jordan/status/1730221179632226337; Rep. Jim Jordan (@Jim_Jordan), X (Dec. 1, 2023, 2:26 PM), https://twitter.com/Jim_Jordan/status/1730669728002142706; Rep. Jim Jordan (@Jim_Jordan), X (May 1, 2024, 4:09 PM), https://x.com/Jim_Jordan/status/1785763383142129733; see also Letter from Mark Zuckerberg, CEO, Meta, to Rep. Jim Jordan, Chairman, H. Comm. on the Judiciary (Aug. 26, 2024) (“In 2021, senior officials from the Biden Administration, including the White House, repeatedly pressured our teams for months to censor certain COVID-19 content, including humor and satire, and expressed a lot of frustration with our teams when we didn’t agree.”) (on file with the Comm.).


Harris's preparations for the September 10 presidential debate.⁴ This apparent conflict of interest raises serious concerns about whether Dunn's relationship with key figures in the Biden-Harris Administration creates a conflict of interest that could inappropriately bias the Department's approach in *United States v. Google LLC*.⁵

On the day that President Biden announced his intent to nominate you as Attorney General, you pledged to "guarantee[] the independence of the Department from partisan influence."⁶ This assertion is hard to square with reporting that Ms. Dunn is leading debate preparations for Vice President Harris while she also leads Google's defense against a Biden-Harris Administration lawsuit. Therefore, given this potential conflict of interest, we request a briefing on how the Department of Justice is working to combat this and other potential conflicts of interest and political bias in *United States v. Google LLC*. We respectfully ask that your staff arrange the briefing as soon as possible, but no later than 5:00 p.m. on September 24, 2024.

Pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee has jurisdiction to conduct oversight over the Department of Justice and of matters concerning "civil liberties" and antitrust to inform potential legislative reforms.⁷ In addition, House Resolution 12 authorized the Committee's Select Subcommittee on the Weaponization of the Federal Government to investigate "issues related to the violation of the civil liberties of citizens of the United States."⁸

If you have any questions about this matter, please contact Committee staff at (202) 225-6906. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jim Jordan
Chairman

cc: The Honorable Jerrold L. Nadler, Ranking Member

⁴ Brooke Singman, *Harris preps for debate with Google lawyer, creating 'conflict of interest,' Trump campaign says*, FOX NEWS (Aug. 26, 2024).

⁵ In addition, in 2021, Ms. Dunn helped to prepare you for your confirmation hearing, and employees of Ms. Dunn's law firm, Paul Weiss, have reportedly donated more money to Vice President Harris's presidential campaign than those of any other law firm this election cycle. See Jody Godoy and Karen Freifeld, *Harris presidential campaign finds legal world booster in Paul Weiss firm*, REUTERS (Aug. 12, 2024).

⁶ Merrick Garland, Remarks on Selection as Attorney General, C-SPAN (Jan. 7, 2021), <https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4935258/merrick-garland-remarks-selection-attorney-general>.

⁷ Rules of the House of Representatives R. X (2023).

⁸ H. Res. 12 § 1(b)(1).