

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

April 18, 2023

Clare Melford
4 Emmanuel Court
Reddicroft, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands
England, B73 6AZ

Dear Clare Melford,

We write to request full transparency regarding donors to the Global Disinformation Index (GDI) and answers about which steps your organization has taken to keep American taxpayers informed about the makeup of organizations that infringe on their free speech rights.

On March 8th of this year, I wrote to Secretary of State Antony Blinken, requesting that the State Department cease funding the GDI and any other organization that sought to blacklist, blackball, or censor free speech in the United States. As I wrote in my previous letter, “The GDI has used {taxpayer funding} to create a list of news organizations for advertisers and business interests to abstain from doing business with in an attempt to limit these organizations’ participation in the marketplace of ideas.”¹ Further, the GDI listed prominent right-leaning outlets on their blacklist sent to advertisers across the globe, a clear sign that your organization intended to silence conservative speech.²

According to recent reports, the GDI is now refusing to release its list of donors, even to the IRS. News reports allege that in IRS tax filings, both the Disinformation Index Foundation and the public charity Disinformation Index Inc, redacted the names of their biggest donors, hiding their main sources of funding from public view.³ This deprives interested parties of valuable information regarding ideological leanings and potential conflicts of interest. Most importantly, American taxpayers (who provided funding for your organization) are kept in the dark. American taxpayers have the right to know the makeup of organizations that impinge upon their free speech.

Our requests are simple: full transparency regarding donors to the GDI in FY 2021. Full transparency will require these three elements

1. A complete and unredacted list of donors to the Disinformation Index Foundation and Disinformation Index Inc.
2. A full explanation of the reasoning behind redacted donor information and the individuals responsible for making such a determination.

¹ <https://buck.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/congressman-buck-sends-letter-secretary-blinken-demanding-answers-us>

² <https://nypost.com/2023/02/12/how-your-tax-dollars-are-helping-censors-decide-what-you-can-read/>

³ <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/disinformation-inc-network-blacklisting-conservative-news-hides-tax-forms-harassment>

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3. Commitment to releasing unredacted information to the IRS as long as your organizations receive U.S. federal funding.

American taxpayers deserve full transparency from organizations that received U.S. taxpayer funding and seek to impinge on their constitutional rights.

Ken Buck
Member of Congress