



February 24, 2021

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives Committee on
Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives Committee on
Energy and Commerce
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Michael Doyle
Chairman
Subcommittee on Communications and
Technology
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Latta
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Communications and
Technology
2322A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Pallone and Doyle and Ranking Members Rodgers and Latta:

On September 16, 1998, I started the news and opinion website Newsmax. That site grew to include Newsmax Magazine, and more than a dozen health and financial newsletters. On June 16, 2014, Newsmax launched its flagship cable TV channel, Newsmax TV, which has grown to become 4th highest-rated cable news channel. Newsmax TV is available through all major cable operators and most OTT platforms. More than 100 million U.S. households have access to Newsmax TV, and more than 40 million Americans view Newsmax TV or visit Newsmax.com each month. And according to Nielsen data, approximately 30% of Newsmax TV viewers are Democrats, and another 30% are independents.

As both CEO and Editor & Chief, I am proud of the content Newsmax produces and fiercely protective of our First Amendment right to publish it through all our various media channels. As this Committee undertakes the slippery slope of deciding what speech is acceptable and what speech is not, it should be guided by the words of former Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black: “[The First Amendment] rests on the assumption that the widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources is essential to the welfare of the public, that a free press is a condition of a free society.”

With that in mind, I want to respectfully address some disinformation circulated by Members of this Committee in a recent letter to pay-TV operators and streaming technology companies. Newsmax *never* called the breach of the Capitol “a sort of romantic idea.” The claim was made on Newsmax by a Touro College law professor and prominent liberal, Thane Rosenbaum, who was describing the rally *before* any violence or illegal

activity had taken place at the Capitol. The letter's assertion to the contrary is deliberately misleading and intended to contribute to a false narrative about Newsmax's balanced coverage of the election and events on January 6th. In general, Newsmax reported fairly and accurately on allegations and claims made by both sides during the recent election contest. Newsmax called the election for President Joe Biden as soon as the states had certified their election results. Further, Newsmax forcefully and repeatedly used its airwaves to condemn the insurrection at the Capitol on January 6th. Below are some representative on-air quotes made by Newsmax's hosts during the course of the attack:

"We certainly hope that this does not get more violent, than we have already seen it..."
Tom Basile, host of "America Right Now"

"They are not supposed to be there, and we certainly don't condone that.... Hopefully, some of these folks will end up getting arrested, and we will know who they are.... Going through a police barricade, or overrunning a police line, is also something that is ... not to be encouraged"
Tom Basile, host of "America Right Now,"

"And let's be quite clear here: we condemn the violence, we condemn it. Alright? The people who did illegal things must be arrested."
Greg Kelly, host of "Greg Kelly Reports"

"The images that I've seen this afternoon at the Captiol, frankly disgust me...violence has no place in our society. Destruction of public property has no place, disrespecting law enforcement is not acceptable.... This is un-American, this is not what we do. We are better than this and we must denounce this."
Sean Spicer, host of "Spicer & Co."

As this Committee – the oldest in Congress – proceeds with the important work of the Nation, I would respectfully ask that its Members re-commit themselves to upholding the principle of freedom of the press embodied in the First Amendment. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Christopher Ruddy
CEO
Newsmax Media, Inc.