



CONGRESS

## Inside the Elon Musk-Jim Jordan 'mind meld' shaking up Capitol Hill

Musk has a White House office and growing pull across federal agencies. Now he's burrowed into the House Judiciary Committee.



As Elon Musk focuses on reducing spending and regulations, "We can be helpful," Rep. Jim Jordan said. | Francis Chung/POLITICO

By **HAILEY FUCHS**

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Elon Musk has a critical ally in Congress as he tries to slash federal bureaucracy at a break-neck pace: Rep. Jim Jordan.

The billionaire tech executive and the Ohio conservative hardliner have grown increasingly close since first being introduced by former Speaker Kevin McCarthy shortly after Musk's takeover of Twitter in late 2022. Musk and Jordan, who chairs House Judiciary, talk roughly once a month, according to a person with knowledge of their relationship granted anonymity to speak candidly. And Jordan has already helped Musk advance a number of his goals since they became acquainted.

Now, the friendship is set to help both men further their personal and political agendas in Trump's Washington.

For Musk, Jordan has a big say over legislation that could pave the way for more legal immigration in the high-skilled work sector, benefitting Musk's business interests — to say nothing of Jordan's subpoena power to go after Musk's enemies. For Jordan, a direct line to Musk is a chance to bolster his bonafides with the conservative movement that considers the Tesla founder a hero.

“This guy, you could argue, was the single biggest — had the single biggest influence — on saving and protecting free speech and the First Amendment, for goodness' sake,” Jordan said in an interview. “God bless Elon Musk.”

Jordan and Musk met at least twice post-election, first on Capitol Hill and then at Mar-a-Lago, Jordan said. In Washington, the two men discussed social media platforms, Musk's so-called Department of Government Efficiency and the Judiciary Committee's work digging into the Biden administration's Federal Trade Commission.

The meetings marked early opportunities for Jordan and Musk to explore how their dynamic was about to change as Republicans took control of Congress

and the executive branch under President Donald Trump. Jordan's committee has jurisdiction over a number of Musk's primary political and policy interests, including immigration, deregulation, antitrust and the policing of social media platforms like X and its competitors.

As Musk focuses on reducing spending and regulations, "We can be helpful," Jordan said.

Jordan is planning to use the Judiciary Committee to scrutinize companies and government officials that have allegedly suppressed conservative voices, including in Europe. Jordan last week [sent a letter](#) to the European Commission's chief tech regulator inquiring about how it plans to enforce social media law against American companies, like X.

And despite being a hardliner on immigration, Jordan now says he's open to working with Musk on legislation paving the way for more high-skilled immigrants to live and work in the country, although he has said they have not yet spoken about the topic. The [debate over expanding "H-1B visas"](#) for this purpose has long been a point of friction for conservatives who want to support emerging tech industries without being accused of displacing domestic workers.

"[We've] got to secure the border first," Jordan said in an interview last month. "Once you've demonstrated that the border is actually secure, then we can entertain questions about the other key issues ... whether it's H1-B visas or other visas."

Musk did not respond to a request for comment nor did a spokesperson for

DOGE. Judiciary Committee spokesperson Nadgey Louis-Charles said the panel's work on free speech issues started years ago.

“The Judiciary Committee’s investigation into censorship, which started in the 117th Congress, is all about defending the First Amendment and protecting free speech,” she said. “We’re standing up against any effort to silence Americans, and we’ve shown conclusively how Democrats colluded with Big Tech to censor Americans.”

But Jordan’s work has involved him wielding the gavel in Musk’s defense, such as when he called a Justice Department official in 2023 to testify over the government’s lawsuit against SpaceX, one of Musk’s companies, for allegedly discriminating in hiring against refugees and asylum seekers.

Jordan asked the official to testify after SpaceX raised the issue with Jordan’s office directly, according to a person granted anonymity to discuss the relationship between Jordan and Musk.

Their collaboration also culminated in the shutdown of the Global Alliance for Responsible Media. That coalition, which went by the acronym GARM, was a project of the World Federation of Advertisers that sought to fight “harmful” content online in the wake of the 2019 mass shooting at New Zealand mosques, which was partially livestreamed on Facebook.

GARM caught Musk’s ire when advertisers reportedly pulled back spending on X. Jordan said he’d never heard of the group before, but that he launched a Judiciary Committee inquiry after Musk told him about it.

A July 2024 staff report from the Judiciary Committee, which adapted Musk’s “GARM is Harm” catchphrase for its title, charged that the coalition had seemingly “anti-democratic views of fundamental American freedom” and likely coordinated illegally to flout antitrust laws. Shortly afterward, Musk’s X sued the World Federation of Advertisers over antitrust violations and GARM quickly dissolved, maintaining its innocence but conceding its resources had been drained.

“When they announced they were going out of business, I called Elon up and said, ‘It all started with your one sentence — when you, Kevin [McCarthy], and I met — and you told me, ‘GARM is harm,’” Jordan said.

Rep. Gerry Connolly, the top Democrat on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee who was blocked Wednesday from issuing a subpoena to force Musk to testify on Capitol Hill, said he was alarmed by the Musk-Jordan partnership.

“Elon Musk is an unelected, unaccountable billionaire with absolutely zero knowledge of how government works and rampant conflicts of interest,” the Virginia Democrat said in a statement. “He should be the subject of congressional investigations, not a beneficiary of politically motivated investigations into his opponents and competitors.”

When asked why Musk’s influence on the Hill was justified, Jordan said Musk deserved to be listened to as a leader on fighting censorship — plus, “he’s got the confidence of the president of the United States.”

“So I think that’s the key thing,” he added. “The guy who got elected by 77 million Americans wants him in this role.”

Jordan and Musk first entered into a “mind meld” — according to one former associate of Musk granted anonymity to talk about their relationship — following Musk’s acquisition of Twitter. McCarthy introduced the two men, who had a shared interest in the alleged suppression of speech on social media platforms.

Jordan had for years been railing against “Big Tech” and its treatment of conservatives. Musk’s Twitter takeover offered some momentum for the cause. Musk seemed particularly excited about someone in Congress focusing so closely on the issue, said the former Musk associate.

All signs indicate that Jordan’s efforts to go after Musk’s adversaries will only continue to escalate. Jordan has even floated plans to work with the State Department to restrict entry into the U.S. by individuals and entities with track records of suppressing speech.

In the meantime, Jordan said he’s glad to come to Musk’s defense.

“What he’s done on ... stopping censorship,” said Jordan, “has just been phenomenal.”

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