

March 24, 2021

Hon. Frank Pallone
Chairman
Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2107 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Hon. Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Ranking Member
Energy and Commerce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
1035 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Pallone, Ranking Member McMorris Rodgers, and Members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee,

The undersigned organizations commend the Committee for holding today's hearing entitled "Disinformation Nation: Social Media's Role in Promoting Extremism and Misinformation" and for giving our communities the chance to hear from tech CEOs on a national stage. Our organizations write today to reiterate the urgent need for action against Spanish-language disinformation on social media platforms. Disinformation is a tactic of white supremacy and oppression, and manifests into tangible harms, including voter suppression and hate crimes. It is beyond time for social media platforms to be held accountable for their role in the harassment endured and lives lost at the hands of disinformation, hate, and extremism.

In November 2020, many of the undersigned organizations [sent a letter](#) to Facebook founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg, raising the issue of rampant Spanish-language disinformation on the platform. In particular, our groups highlighted consistent inaction by

Facebook to address election, voting, and pandemic-related misinformation, including content with calls to arms that fuel the fires of white supremacy and hate. In February 2021, we received a response from Kevin Martin, Facebook Vice President of Public Policy, in lieu of a response from Mr. Zuckerberg. Mr. Martin's response, while thorough on other Facebook-led initiatives, did not fully address the scope of our concerns, and did not prioritize the seriousness of the ongoing issue. For example, Mr. Martin referenced an account flagged by the undersigned groups merely to reiterate that the account *did not* violate Facebook's content policies, despite it being a repeat spreader of false information and hate. This, unfortunately, is one link in a long chain of Facebook's empty promises and rehearsed responses.

For the better part of the last year, our organizations have used our limited resources, during a global pandemic, to garner action from Facebook's leadership. It should be incumbent upon Facebook to take action to protect all of its users from white supremacy, instead of brushing off civil rights and social justice advocates who continue to spend our emotional, physical, and political capital to repeatedly inform Facebook that white supremacy and disinformation online are killing our communities.

After months of inaction and lackluster dialogue from Facebook, the National Hispanic Media Coalition, Free Press, and the Center for American Progress developed a [Spanish-language Disinformation Action Plan](#), making the following demands from Facebook:

1. Hire and publicly identify a C-suite position to oversee U.S. Spanish-language content moderation policy and enforcement.
2. Publicly explain the translation process of the content moderation algorithms, including how the algorithms are trained and audited to ensure proactive detection, reporting, and processing of Spanish-language content.
3. Clarify whether Facebook's content moderators evaluate content in-language, via translation, or both. Explain precisely how many US-based Spanish-language content

moderators the company employs, as well as the overall number of US-based content moderators. In each case, provide the breakdown of between direct employees and contractors involved in moderation.

4. Publicly share the materials that are used to train content moderators of U.S.-based Spanish-language content.

At the time of this letter's drafting, Facebook has not committed to any of our demands, nor have they provided any new information or detail (neither publicly nor privately) as to their internal progress to address Spanish-language disinformation.

We would like to thank Congressman Tony Cárdenas and Congressman Darren Soto for their support in the fight to close the Spanish-language misinformation gap on Facebook. We urge the Members of this Committee to support our Action Plan, and to consider actions in addition to this hearing to hold Facebook and all social media companies accountable for the real-life harm created by their business models. We thank the Committee for their commitment to the Spanish-speaking and Latinx communities, and ask that you join us in saying: *Ya Basta, Facebook—enough is enough.*

Sincerely,

Anti-Defamation League

Free Press Action

Fundamedios, Inc.

Global Project Against Hate and Extremism

MediaJustice

National Hispanic Media Coalition

National Latinx Psychological Association

TransLatin@ Coalition

UnidosUS

United Church of Christ, OC Inc.

United States Hispanic Leadership Institute