

March 28, 2018

Mark Zuckerberg
Facebook

RE: Facebook Should Stop Electioneering and Be Monitored by Jimmy Carter

Mr. Zuckerberg,

Last week we learned the shocking news that Facebook violated the privacy of 50 million Americans by sharing their personal, private information, allowing detailed psychological profiles to be compiled about each user. In light of this technology's potential to swing elections, you expressed appropriate alarm.

"There is no doubt that in 2016 there were a number of issues, including foreign interference and false news, that we did not have as much of a handle on as we feel a responsibility to for our community," you told The New York Times. "At the same time, I think Russia and other governments are going to get more sophisticated in what they do, too. So we need to make sure that we up our game."

"This is a massive focus for us to make sure we're dialed in for not only the 2018 elections in the U.S., but the Indian elections, the Brazilian elections, and a number of other elections that are going on this year that are really important."

Yet, Facebook knew about the Cambridge Analytica breach for almost three years, but still continued to do business with both Professor Kogan and Cambridge Analytica itself, only expressing outrage after the data breach was publicized in the press. This does not instill confidence that Facebook's commitment to change springs from genuine remorse.

Our request is simple: a company whose platform is self-admittedly powerful enough to influence elections, must stay out of them.

Facebook clearly has a conflict of interest. By sharing users' deeply private information, you sold advertisements which enabled foreign actors to manipulate voters and influence our elections. Worse, through contributions to candidates and causes, Facebook itself is directly involved in politics.

In 2016, Facebook gave \$4.6 million to federal candidates and \$1.1 million to California candidates. Moreover, in February you contributed \$200,000 opposing a pending California statewide ballot measure, the California Consumer Privacy Act, which would require businesses to 1) tell users what personal information is being collected; 2) allow users to choose to stop the sale of their personal information; and 3) be liable for breaches of personal information caused by corporate negligence.

Such a gap between actions and words, increases distrust in Facebook. How can we be certain that in the next cycle it won't be the Russians we are concerned with, but Facebook itself

because it chooses to support or oppose only candidates and causes that help its bottom line, and minimize regulation? To restore trust, we call upon you to:

1. Cease all campaign contributions and electioneering activity immediately until you have ensured the integrity of all the apps on your platform, and until you can ensure total transparency with respect to all election-related activities.
2. Retain Jimmy Carter and the Carter Center, or another independent election monitor, to audit Facebook and its management of users' personal information with respect to election advertisements, so that the world can be sure Facebook is not divulging personal information to allow psychographic profiles to individually target voters.

If Facebook is committed to protect electoral integrity worldwide, it must be an impartial, neutral platform. A company that can influence the course of history by changing the outcome of an election, must put as its highest priority, total transparency, integrity and impartiality. The integrity of elections in this country and internationally, is at stake.

Mr. Zuckerberg, we call on you to restore users' trust in Facebook, instead of allowing it to be used to polarize an already dangerously divided world. Bringing in the Carter Center would be a great first step on this path.

Sincerely,

Consumer Watchdog

Electronic Privacy Information Center

Center for Digital Democracy

Consumer Federation of California

Californians for Consumer Privacy

Constitutional Alliance

