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October 14, 2020

Mark Zuckerberg
Chief Executive Officer
Facebook, Inc.
1 Hacker Way
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Dear Mr. Zuckerberg:

Today, the *New York Post* released a story revealing that Hunter Biden facilitated a meeting with a Ukrainian energy executive and his father, who was then serving as Vice President. In it, the *Post* offers evidence that directly contradicts the claims of the Democratic nominee for president, who had previously stated that he has “never spoken to my son about his overseas business dealings.” Yet it has come to my attention that this news report—one clearly relevant to the public interest—has been censored on Facebook.

A representative from your company has publicly stated that Facebook will be “reducing [the story’s] distribution on our platform” while a third-party fact-check takes place.” The seemingly selective nature of this public intervention suggests partiality on the part of Facebook. And your efforts to suppress the distribution of content revealing potentially unethical activity by a candidate for president raises a number of additional questions, to which I expect responses immediately.

- 1) Is it your normal policy to reduce the distribution of stories on your platform *before* they have been fact-checked? If so, what is your specific policy and where is such policy stated?
- 2) If you have evidence that this news story contains “disinformation” or have otherwise determined that there are inaccuracies with the reporting, will you disclose them to the public so that they can assess your findings?
- 3) Why did you endeavor to publicly state that such a story was subject to a fact-check? Isn’t such a public intervention itself a reflection of Facebook’s assessment of a news report’s credibility?
- 4) Did any member of the Biden-Harris presidential campaign team or any person representing themselves as a representative of the campaign’s interests ask, encourage, or direct Facebook to suppress the *New York Post* story?
- 5) The *New York Post* previously reported that employees of the six largest Silicon Valley tech firms – including Facebook – have donated nearly \$5 million to the Biden-Harris campaign, compared to just \$239,000 to President Trump’s campaign. What steps has Facebook taken to ensure that your employees’ political preferences don’t influence decisions to suppress content?

Thank you for your attention to this matter important to fairness and impartiality in our presidential election process.

Sincerely,



Josh Hawley
United States Senator