

Democrats accuse X of profiting off misinformation in Israel-Gaza war

In a letter sent Tuesday to X owner Elon Musk, the lawmakers accused the social media platform of failing to follow its own policies to curb 'misinformation' and 'terroristic propaganda videos'

By [Azi Paybarah](#)
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More than two dozen Democratic House members on Tuesday called for X, formerly Twitter, to answer for what they say is the social media platform's failure to remove from its site terrorist propaganda stemming from the Israel-Gaza war.

Keeping up with politics is easy with The 5-Minute Fix Newsletter, in your inbox weekdays. In a Nov. 21 letter sent to X owner Elon Musk and the company's chief executive, Linda Yaccarino, the lawmakers accused the social media platform of failing to follow its own policies to curb "misinformation and hateful, violent, and terroristic propaganda videos," and said the company is using that content "for profit."

The lawmakers also demanded that X explain why posts that violate the company's policy against extremist content were able to circulate so widely, and for the company to provide by Dec. 1 "all forms of written communications" relating to content moderation for any posts in any way related to Hamas, the militant group that set off the current conflict when it launched a surprise attack on Israel last month.

As proof of their complaints, the lawmakers cited reports from several organizations, including the nonprofit groups Tech Transparency Project and Institute for Strategic Dialogue, which they said showed "X Premium accounts spreading Hamas terrorist propaganda videos glorifying barbaric acts of violence against Israelis." The lawmakers went on to write that "Given the many flagrant examples of X profiting off this content, we need detailed answers from X in considering potential legislation that would prevent such activity in the future."

Signers of the letter include Reps. Daniel S. Goldman (D-N.Y.), Jamie B. Raskin (D-Md.), Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.), Bennie G. Thompson (D-Miss.), Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-Fla.) and Jasmine Crockett (D-Tex.).

A spokesman for X did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The letter comes more than a month after Hamas militants attacked Israel, killing more than 1,000 people and taking more than 200 people hostage. The attack touched off a military response from the

Israeli government that has led to more than 11,000 deaths in Gaza, according to health officials in the Hamas-controlled area.

The lawmakers wrote that the platform had been awash in misinformation and antisemitism and that after the Oct. 7 Hamas attack, “we’ve seen an inexcusable situation become outright indefensible.”

The letter also comes days after Musk amplified an antisemitic message to his nearly 164 million followers, when he replied to an X user who said a rise in online antisemitism was the fault of Jews for supporting “hordes of minorities” and promoting “hatred against whites.” The user said they have no sympathy for Jews who face hateful comments such as “Hitler was right.” Musk, who took over the site in October 2022, replied, “You have said the actual truth.” The White House condemned Musk’s post and called his actions an “abhorrent promotion of antisemitic and racist hate.”

The letter also noted that the United States designated Hamas a foreign terrorist organization in 1997. According to the State Department it is illegal to knowingly provide “material support or resources” to such organizations.

Reports cited in the letter echo the findings from the D.C.-based nonprofit organization Media Matters, which reported last week that X had “been placing ads for Apple, Bravo, IBM, Oracle, and Xfinity next to pro-Nazi content.”

X posted a statement on its website on Saturday calling the report inaccurate and an attempt to “undermine freedom of speech and mislead advertisers.” On Monday, the company sued Media Matters and its writer over what X called an “intentionally deceptive report.” The company claims business disparagement and interference with prospective economic advantage, and said in its lawsuit that some of its largest advertisers were among the companies withdrawing their ads.

X’s lawsuit also said that Media Matters manipulated the X algorithm by following only 30 accounts of controversial users and large companies, then doing “excessive” scrolling and refreshing. The suit was filed in Texas, where, according to the filing, X said it does significant business, even though it is incorporated in Nevada and its principal place of business is San Francisco.

Also on Monday, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton (R) opened an investigation into “potential fraudulent activity” by Media Matters, and said in a statement his office was looking into the issue “to ensure that the public has not been deceived by the schemes of radical left-wing organizations who would like nothing more than to limit freedom by reducing participation in the public square.”