

September 27, 2018

Chairman Steve King  
Ranking Member Steven Cohen  
House Judiciary Committee  
Constitution and Civil Justice Subcommittee  
2138 Rayburn House Office Bldg  
Washington, DC 20515

**RE: Adriana Cohen Testimony to be given at September 27, 2018 hearing titled “The State of Intellectual Freedom in America.”**

Members of the Committee thank you for inviting me here this morning to share my personal experience with social media censorship and discrimination.

I am a Conservative opinion columnist with the Boston Herald. My popular columns championing traditional Republican values and the Trump Administration are nationally syndicated. I’m also a Boston Herald Radio host who interviews Congressional lawmakers, leaders of government including the President who’s been a guest on my internet radio show. I’m also a Fox News commentator who appears regularly on the network.

I am being discriminated against by social media networks who are censoring my Conservative columns, radio interviews and posts on its platforms. This is a daily occurrence on Twitter and has been happening for a long time. My well received Conservative column is often the front page feature in the Boston Herald and gets heavy traction and readership everywhere except Twitter. Virtually every week, if not bi-weekly, when the Herald publishes my column it becomes the #1 most read and shared piece on the Herald’s website or close to it.

But the **same exact column** isn’t getting hardly any traction when I post it on Twitter because it’s being secretly censored by Twitter which is why many of my Twitter followers report they don’t see my columns and posts in their feeds.

For example, my Boston Herald Column titled “Russia Truth Coming Out” dated May 22, 2018 was the #1 “Trending” piece on its site. It got **62.3k Facebook shares** on the Herald’s site and hundreds of comments but the same column on Twitter got virtually zero traction. To be exact it got **only 11 shares (retweets), 26 “likes” and 2 comments**. On April 5, 2018 my column titled “Trump Exactly Who We Need vs. China,” was the #1 trending column on the Boston Herald’s website getting heavy traction but on Twitter the same column got 9 “likes” and 5 shares (retweets). Last week on September 20, 2018 my column titled “No Holds Barred In Democrats’ Attacks” was again the #1 trending piece on the Herald’s site but on Twitter the same column got 15 “likes,” 6 shares (retweets) and 5 comments.

This is just a small sample of the blatant censorship and egregious discrimination I am being subjected to on a regular basis on Twitter. Please note that not only are my popular columns leading the Herald’s website and getting heavy traction and readership there, it’s often picked up by other major media outlets including USA today, the Washington Post, Real Clear News, Fox News and many other outlets and getting significant traction virtually everywhere except Twitter.

I can provide scores of additional examples but given the limited time I have for oral testimony I am sharing just a tiny fraction of the censorship I am experiencing on Twitter. I am happy to provide additional corroborating evidence for the record upon request.

I have over 16k Twitter followers and the vast majority of them aren't seeing my columns and posts because they're being blocked by Twitter. Here are a few examples:

On March 25, 2018 I asked **Tony Shaffer** @T\_S\_P\_O\_O\_K\_Y (Blue Checkmark Verified) in a direct message (DM) if he's seeing my columns in his feed.

Mr. Shaffer said, "Nope, not seeing them." (Please see attached Screenshot)

On March 25, 2018 I asked **Dan Bongino** @dbongino (Blue Checkmark Verified) if he's seeing my columns in his feed.

Mr. Bongino responded "I have not been seeing the columns. They're messing with me too. It's a cesspool." (See attached screenshot).

On September 5, 2018 I sent another direct message (DM) to Dan Bongino on Twitter to see if he saw a tweet I posted about Nike.

Mr. Bongino responded "I didn't see it either." (See Screenshot)

On September 6, 2018 I asked **Tom Borelli** @tomborelli (Blue Checkmark Verified on Twitter) if he saw my column I posted on Judge Kavanaugh in his Twitter feed.

Mr. Borelli responded "Hey Adriana — I did not see it and I just looked at my feed since last night and didn't see it either." (See Attached Screenshot)

On June 4, 2018 a Twitter follower named **RightSideofReagan** @goshenhawk1 told me "I've been following you but you never come up on my feed, fyi." (See attached screenshot).

On March 26, 2018 **Jeff Katz** @jeffkatzshow told me via Direct Message on Twitter, "No, not seeing your stuff in my feed."

On September 6, 2018 **Steve Tomkowicz** @smtEphHamP posted on Twitter "Wow! I check my feed every day and scroll wayyyy down. I can't remember the last time I've see a tweet from you. This is the first (on my feed) in quite awhile."

On March 29, 2018 Potus45 @MichaelSantoro said " I follow you but never see your columns. This also happens with other Conservatives I follow."

On September 6, 2018 **Susie Light** @susielight72 posted on Twitter "I NEVER see your tweets...unless you say something like this. I'm sorry this happens to you."

There are many other Twitter followers who tell me they don't see my posts in their feeds. I am submitting additional evidence for the record.

I ask the Committee to consider this scenario:

Imagine if the phone company refused to connect phone calls between two parties because they didn't like the opinions expressed in the conversation. This is exactly what Twitter is doing to me and thousands of Conservatives like me every single day throughout the nation.

This type of egregious censorship is trampling on my Constitutional rights, including my rights to free speech. It's also censoring lawmakers and heads of government agencies because I interview important members of our government and often include excerpts from those radio interviews in my columns. That means when social media networks block distribution of my Conservative columns and podcasts, they're also censoring members of Congress. This discrimination is hurting the American people who are being denied access to vital information from government officials. Information that impacts their lives.

On Facebook my posts are also being censored. Many of my Facebook followers tell me they don't see my columns and posts in their feeds. I've reached out to Twitter and Facebook for an explanation on multiple occasions and have not received a response.

By censoring my columns, podcasts and tv appearances these social networks are damaging my career as a female columnist, tv commentator and radio personality. They're also hurting other Conservatives whose voices are also being silenced. And they are hurting the business sector including my employer the Boston Herald and Creators Syndicate and other outlets who are being denied clicks to its websites every time my column and content is censored by these social media networks.

But mostly importantly **social media networks are meddling in U.S. Elections** by allowing its users who possess liberal viewpoints unfettered access to its platforms —and voters —while silencing scores of Conservatives. This rigs the electoral system because Twitter and Facebook are giving Democrats the ability to shape public opinion and connect with million of voters while denying that same opportunity to scores of Conservatives including myself. I've written several columns on this topic which I'd like to submit to the Committee for inclusion in the record.

Twitter and Facebook are deceiving the American people when they claim they're only blocking hate speech. That's not true. There's nothing that I've ever written or said that's hate speech. Social media networks —run by liberal activists who despise the President and Republican values — are secretly censoring mainstream Conservatives, not just members of fringe organizations.

Although hearings like this one are a good first step, Congress and the DOJ must do more. They should conduct an independent analysis of Twitter & Facebook's algorithms and source code. Congress and the Department of Justice should subpoena Twitter and Facebook's programmers and executives and find out —under oath —who is responsible and what programming code is being written to censor my content and thousands of other Conservatives. It should also subpoena its content "monitors" and find out if they've been given marching orders by their bosses at Twitter and Facebook to target and discriminate against Conservative voices. And Congress should subpoena all relevant emails and communications from said employees who are censoring content and stifling free speech on its platforms.

I'll close by asking the Committee this question: Would Congress allow the U.S. Postal service to pick up mail from millions of Americans and instead of delivering them the postman secretly threw the mail in the trash because the mail carrier didn't like the opinions contained in those letters?

Of course not. Well that is exactly what Twitter and Facebook are doing to Conservatives in America today and it's the government's job to stop it.

I welcome questions from the Committee.

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