July 8, 2020

House E&C Dems Seek Info on Online COVID-19 Disinformation

House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman Frank Pallone Jr. (D., N.J.), oversight and investigations subcommittee Chair Diana DeGette (D., Colo.), communications and technology subcommittee Chairman Mike Doyle (D., Pa.) and consumer protection and commerce subcommittee Chair Jan Schakowsky (D. Ill.) today asked the chief executive officers of Facebook, Inc., Google LLC, and Twitter, Inc., to report to the committee monthly on COVID-19 disinformation efforts on their companies' platforms.

The lawmakers asked that the reports be "similar in scope to what you are providing the European Commission regarding your COVID-19 disinformation efforts as they relate to United States users of your platform. In addition, we request your company brief Committee staff by July 22, 2020, to discuss the type and form of information [your company] plans to produce in these reports and to further describe the efforts currently underway to combat COVID-19 disinformation on your platform."

"Over the past several months, we have seen a troubling rise of false or misleading information related to COVID-19 disseminated by domestic and foreign actors on platforms such as yours. This disinformation has ranged from false statements about certain groups being immune from contracting the virus to unsubstantiated assertions about masks and vaccines. This type of disinformation is dangerous and can affect the health and well-being of people who use this false information to make critical health decisions during this pandemic," the lawmakers said. —Lynn Stanton, lynn.stanton@wolterksluwer.com

Copyright © 2020 CCH Incorporated, All Rights Reserved