

Congress Demands Action from Elon Musk as Hate Speech Soars on Twitter Under His Leadership



Two US Representatives, Adam Schiff and Mark Takano of California, have called on Twitter CEO Elon Musk to address the growing issue of hate speech on social media since he purchased it in October 2022. Schiff and Takano had originally called on Musk to investigate the increase in hate speech on the platform in December, where they reported a 61.3% increase in anti-Semitic speech. Since Musk's purchase, the Center for Countering Digital Hate (CCDH) has reported that anti-Semitic speech on Twitter has increased by 106%, and anti-LGBTQ+ speech has increased by 119%.

The representatives stressed the power that one tweet containing hate speech can have on Twitter and its negative impact on marginalized communities. According to their letter, ten accounts promoting hate speech have garnered 2.5 million impressions since December. Despite Musk's public condemnation of hate speech, Schiff and Takano argue that Twitter has not taken adequate measures to decrease it and have requested that Musk outline his plan to mitigate hate speech on the platform.

One concern raised by the Representatives is that Musk has drastically reduced Twitter's staff, including those whose roles contributed to the reduction of hate speech. Therefore, they have asked Musk to identify how he plans to address the issue of hate speech without the same staffing level. In addition, Schiff and Takano have also asked Musk to outline Twitter's plan to increase user safety, particularly for the Jewish and LGBTQ+ communities.

Musk has also faced criticism over the suspension of journalists on Twitter, including VOA Chief National Correspondent and JURIST Journalist in Residence Steve Herman, whose suspension was upheld until February of this year. This has raised concerns over the human right to freely impart and receive information.

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The issue of hate speech on social media platforms is a growing concern worldwide, with many individuals and groups experiencing targeted harassment and abuse online. The rise in hate speech on Twitter since Musk's purchase of the platform highlights the need for social media companies to take proactive measures to tackle this issue.

While social media platforms such as Twitter have made some efforts to address the issue, the problem remains pervasive. Many argue that social media companies need to do more to combat hate speech and ensure the safety of all users. This includes providing clear guidelines on what constitutes hate speech and taking swift action against those who violate these guidelines.

In conclusion, the increasing prevalence of hate speech on Twitter is a serious concern, and the response of social media companies is crucial in addressing this issue. The call by Representatives Schiff and Takano for Elon Musk to take action and outline a plan to address the issue is an essential step in holding social media platforms accountable for their role in promoting or combating hate speech online.