



May 21, 2025

Dear Chairman Ferguson:

We write jointly to alert the Federal Trade Commission to an increasingly prevalent practice: Big Tech suppression of conservative speech. In recent election cycles, the national party committees had a substantial number of the emails we send to our supporters routed to the recipients' spam folders where they are never viewed. This problem is particularly evident when the committees attempt to send emails to users of Google's Gmail service, which routinely delivers fewer emails to inboxes than do other email service providers. These emails are *not* spam; the committees that we lead only send emails to individuals who have voluntarily opted in to receive emails from us, and we respect every opt-out request that we receive.

The matter of whether emails are properly categorized as spam may sound inconsequential, but it is not. If party committees and candidates are unable to communicate with their supporters via email, then they are denied access to a critical channel for communicating essential election-related information that would aid voters in effectively casting their ballots. Because every party committee also relies upon email to generate small-dollar fundraising, Google's speech suppression also starves committees of revenue that could be spent on get-out-the-vote and voter assistance programs. The cost of Google's suppression should therefore be calculated not only in dollars never raised, but in votes never cast.

The specifics are addressed in greater detail in the accompanying public comment, but the fact that Google controls a vast majority of the American email market highlights the dire consequences if this arbitrary and discriminatory practice continues to go unchecked. A single company should not be permitted to stand between a political party and its supporters.

We thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Senator Tim Scott  
*Chairman, National Republican  
Senatorial Committee (NRSC)*

Rep. Richard Hudson  
*Chairman, National Republican  
Congressional Committee (NRCC)*



May 21, 2025

Federal Trade Commission  
Office of the Chairman  
600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20580

RE: Request for Information Regarding Technology Platform Censorship

The National Republican Senatorial Committee (NRSC) is the only national political party committee exclusively devoted to electing Republican candidates to the U.S. Senate from across the United States. The National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) is the only national political party committee exclusively devoted to electing Republican candidates to the U.S. House of Representatives from across the United States. These GOP party committees (hereinafter the “Committees”) write jointly to detail technology platform censorship that both have experienced.

The Committees submit this comment to inform the Commission about an unlawful speech suppression tactic that has been wielded by Google against multiple conservative organizations. Both Committees have experienced inexplicably low inbox placement rates when attempting to send emails to users of Google’s Gmail service. For example, in the 2024 election cycle, a mere 30 percent (30%) of NRSC emails were successfully delivered to the primary inboxes of Gmail users, with the vast majority directed into the intended recipients’ spam folders where they would never be viewed. This practice has no commercially reasonable explanation and has throttled the Committees’ ability to encourage voters to participate in elections, educate potential supporters about the benefits of Republican policies, and raise campaign funds.

As an initial matter, Google’s failure to deliver the Committees’ emails to Gmail inboxes is not attributable to any qualitative deficiency in the content of the emails themselves. The Committees utilize a variety of industry-standard tools to constantly evaluate user engagement with their emails and maintain a high reputation for their respective domains. Notably, the Committees only send emails from their domains to individuals who have voluntarily opted to receive Committee communications. Every email sent by the Committees gives recipients the opportunity to opt out of receiving future emails, and the Committees respect all opt-out requests.

Moreover, Gmail users typically have higher digital donation rates than users of other email services, meaning that Gmail users are *more* likely to make political contributions when an email successfully reaches their inbox. This further demonstrates that the Committees’ inbox placement rates are not attributable to any complaints from Gmail users about receiving political

messages. It is simply not plausible to claim that the low Gmail inbox placement rate experienced by the Committees is attributable to any content-specific issue or to user complaints, particularly since Google's inbox placement rate is a marked outlier from the routinely high rates observed when the Committees send identical emails to users of other email services.

Email is now one of the primary ways that political parties and candidates communicate with their supporters. The Committees use email to update voters on important election-related information such as early voting hours, state-specific deadlines for submitting absentee ballots, and the correct precinct for casting in-person ballots. This information is essential to encouraging voter participation and increasing voter turnout, both of which are essential to a healthy democracy.

The Committees also use email to educate voters on public policy issues, often targeting messages to individuals based on their demonstrated interest in specific issue areas. Without this avenue for communication, the Committees would be unable to share relevant policy research and educational content with their supporters, thereby depriving voters of the information necessary to make informed choices in the voting booth.

Finally, email is a significant fundraising tool for party committees and candidates. Many of the most prominent Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle derive a substantial share of their total political contributions from people who give less than \$200, most of whom are contacted via email or text messages.<sup>1</sup> These are the everyday Americans who make our democracy work, and if parties are restricted in their ability to contact these voters then they will be starved of the resources that are necessary to run effective campaigns.

To communicate with voters via email, the Committees and other political groups are largely dependent on Google's email service, Gmail. In the United States, Google is overwhelmingly dominant in the market for email services, with approximately 130.9 million active users amounting to a **75.78%** American market share.<sup>2</sup> Even if the sender of an email uses a different email service provider, they still must rely upon Google to deliver their message to the intended recipient and to route that message into the recipient's inbox rather than categorize it as spam. Put simply, if Gmail is delivering your emails to users' spam folders rather than their inboxes, then your ability to effectively communicate with the American public is severely hobbled. This is precisely what has happened to the Committees.

In recent years, Google has weaponized its immense market power over email delivery to arbitrarily punish conservative groups and silence their political speech. During the 2022 midterm election cycle, the Republican National Committee (RNC) experienced months of

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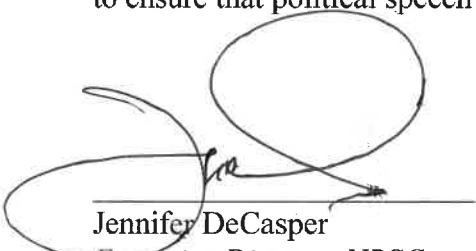
<sup>1</sup> OpenSecrets, *Large Versus Small Individual Donations*, <https://www.opensecrets.org/elections-overview/large-vs-small-donations>.

<sup>2</sup> Harsha Kiran, *Gmail's Impact in 2025: A Comprehensive Overview* (Jan. 3, 2024), <https://techjury.net/industry-analysis/gmail-usage/#:~:text=As%20of%20April%202025%2C%20Gmail,popularity%20in%20the%20business%20sector>.

unexplained email delivery issues, with its Gmail inbox placement rate routinely crashing to 0% in the final days of each month during the period when most donors typically choose to contribute.<sup>3</sup> The RNC made repeated good-faith attempts to resolve this problem with Google to no avail, only for the suppression to inexplicably cease immediately after the RNC sued Google over the practice.<sup>4</sup> Based upon its 30% Gmail inbox placement rate, NRSC estimates that it will miss out on a cumulative \$10 million of potential fundraising revenue across the 2024 and 2026 election cycles. Over the same period, NRCC estimates that it will miss out on a cumulative \$7 million. That foregone revenue could have been used to fund get-out-the-vote efforts and voter education programs, meaning that the cost of Google's speech suppression should be measured not only in dollars never raised but also in votes never cast.

Federal law prohibits all persons and companies, including Google, from engaging in "[u]nfair methods of competition in or affecting commerce, and unfair or deceptive acts or practices in or affecting commerce."<sup>5</sup> Google has repeatedly violated this prohibition by discriminating against politically disfavored organizations like the Committees and deliberately suppressing their speech to prevent their messages from reaching voters. As demonstrated by the data, Google's unfair and deceptive acts have prevented the Committees from communicating with more than three-quarters of American email users, harming not only the Committees but every voter who has been arbitrarily prevented from receiving critical information about voting assistance and relevant public policy issues.

Google's speech suppression practices are detrimental to American democracy and should not be allowed to persist for another election cycle. Accordingly, the Committees request that the Commission investigate this practice and take whatever enforcement action is necessary to ensure that political speech is never arbitrarily silenced again.



Jennifer DeCasper  
*Executive Director, NRSC*



Micah Yousefi  
*Executive Director, NRCC*

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<sup>3</sup> See Opening Br. Of Pl.-Appt. Republican Nat'l Comm. at 1, *Republican Nat'l Comm. v. Google Inc., et al.*, No. 24-5858 (9th Cir.).

<sup>4</sup> *Id.* at 2.

<sup>5</sup> 15 U.S.C. § 45(a)(1).