

House Judiciary Committee	House Oversight Committee	House Energy & Commerce Subcommittee on Health
Senate Judiciary Committee	Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs	Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions

October 23, 2026

Dear Committee Chairs and Ranking Members,

The undersigned groups urge you to immediately begin an investigation into Meta’s reported political interference with an active criminal investigation into the company’s role facilitating and profiting off of deadly illegal drugs on their platforms. This miscarriage of justice threatens basic trust in the judicial system, and Congress must act quickly to investigate. Rigorous investigation, oversight, and legislation to address the outsized influence of Big Tech over every tendrill of this Administration is absolutely essential to protect children, consumers, and the broader public.

Last week, Bloomberg reported that Department of Justice leadership including Deputy Attorney General Trent McCotter and Associate Deputy Attorney General Aakash Singh ordered prosecutors from the Western District of Virginia to cease their longstanding investigation following “advocacy from Meta’s legal team” immediately after the investigation progressed to subpoena company executives.¹ This case began after years of reports of dangerous products being sold both through advertisements across Meta platforms and directly through Facebook Marketplace,² and of kids who died after buying fentanyl-laced drugs from dealers found on Facebook and Instagram.³ As survivor parent group Parents RISE! said, “If this report is true, it is a betrayal of every family who has buried a child poisoned by a fentanyl-laced counterfeit pill sold on Instagram or Facebook as a prescription drug.”⁴ Shutting down the case mid-investigation is an insult to the parents and families the Department of Justice is charged with protecting.

¹ Ben Penn, *Meta Platforms Drug Sale Criminal Case Halted by DOJ Leaders (1)*, Bloomberg, Oct. 15, 2026, <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/meta-platforms-drug-sale-criminal-probe-halted-by-doj-officials>; John Shinal, *Mark Zuckerberg Is Surprised at the Extent of the Opioid Problem — but Facebook Is Full of Illegal Opioid Marketing*, CNBC, Nov. 14, 2017, <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/11/14/facebook-full-of-illegal-opioids.html>.

² *Meta Has Collected Money and Shown Ads for Drugs on Facebook, Instagram - WSJ*, Get Smart About Drugs, <https://www.getsmartaboutdrugs.gov/news-statistics/2024/08/09/meta-has-collected-money-and-shown-ads-drugs-facebook-instagram-wsj> (last visited Oct. 20, 2026).

³ *Mom Blames Instagram for Her Teen Daughters’ Death*, KSAT San Antonio(2026), <https://www.ksat.com/video/news/2026/01/27/mom-blames-instagram-for-her-teen-daughters-death/>.

⁴ Julianna Arnold, *Parents RISE Statement on DOJ Halting the Meta Drug Sale Investigation. Justice Should Not Be for Sale*, Parents RISE!, <https://parentsrise.org/justice-should-not-be-for-sale/> (last visited Oct. 20, 2026).

This is just one of many instances of Big Tech’s outsized influence in the White House and by extension what have historically been independent agencies.⁵ Just this week, it was revealed that the Federal Trade Commission killed a pending investigation into [Character.AI](#), the company whose products repeatedly have allegedly caused mental health issues and multiple suicides of both children and adults.⁶ Public Citizen has also tracked canceled federal enforcement actions against 205 corporations since 2025. Up to 44% of those corporations have financial, business, or personnel ties to the President or his administration, and Big Tech makes up 28 of the 205 companies.⁷ Taken together, these actions send the message that the most powerful companies in the world can leverage political access to avoid following the rule of law. Families who lost children to drugs purchased through social media or whose children have been harmed by an AI chatbot receive an entirely different message.

Especially as meaningful social media, privacy, and AI regulations have stalled throughout Congress and been squashed by the current administration, it is absolutely essential to ensure the current laws designed to protect Americans are actually being carried out.

If any of the signatories can be helpful in oversight and investigation, or there are other questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ben Winters, Director of AI and Privacy at the Consumer Federation of America, bwinters@consumerfed.org.

Signed,
Consumer Federation of America
AFT
Alexander Neville Foundation
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Carson J. Bride
Center for Organizing
Demand Progress
Devin J Norring Foundation
Electronic Privacy Information Center
Emmy’s Champions
Indivisible

⁵ Ben Winters, *Article - Quid Bro Quo: Tracking How Big Tech and the Trump White House Keep Exchanging Gifts*, Consumer Federation of America, <https://consumerfed.org/news/blogs/quid-bro-quo-tracking-how-big-tech-and-the-trump-white-house-keep-exchanging-gifts/> (last visited Oct. 20, 2026).

⁶ Douglas Farrar (@DouglasLFarrar) on X, *Douglas Farrar (@DouglasLFarrar) on X* (formerly Twitter) (Oct. 19, 2026), <https://x.com/DouglasLFarrar/status/2112176091213533242>; Bobby Allyn, *Lawsuit: A Chatbot Hinted a Kid Should Kill His Parents over Screen Time Limits*, NPR, Dec. 10, 2024, <https://www.npr.org/2024/12/10/nx-s1-5222574/kids-character-ai-lawsuit>.

⁷ *Trump’s Cascade of Canceled Corporate Enforcement Against over 200 Corporations*, Public Citizen (Oct. 7, 2026), <https://www.citizen.org/article/trump-cascade-canceled-enforcement-200-corporations/>.

Oregon Consumer Justice
Parents RISE
Public Citizen
The Revolving Door Project
The Tech Oversight Project
Virginia Citizens Consumer Council