

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 22, 2026

Mr. Mark Zuckerberg  
Founder, Chairman, and Chief Executive Officer of Meta  
1 Meta Way  
Menlo Park, California 94025

Dear Mr. Zuckerberg,

We are writing to seek answers regarding the removal of the No Kings Coalition Instagram account in the middle of nationwide protest demonstrations organized by the group.

On October 17, 2026, Americans from all around the country gathered together in political demonstrations expressing support for democracy, the right to vote, and our democratic institutions organized by the No Kings Coalition. The No Kings Coalition uses Instagram as one of their primary platforms for communicating with participants, the public, and for hosting livestreams of their events. During the middle of these nationwide demonstrations, the No Kings Coalition's Instagram account was mysteriously made invisible to the public, and the administrators were not able to access their account.

The shutdown of the public page lasted well over an hour. Making matters worse, the lockout that prevented the account holders from even accessing their own page stretched for hours after the public page was restored, restricting their ability to communicate with supporters and protesters during the demonstrations despite the page being live.

We are especially troubled by Meta's changing explanation for removing the account's public visibility and the organizers' access during a nationally attended and well-publicized event. Andy Stone, Vice President of Communications at Meta, first shared that the account was shut down because very high frequencies of posting, sharing, or commenting triggered automated systems.<sup>1</sup> The next day, Mr. Stone claimed that it had nothing to do with the account's posting, sharing, or commenting but on their "reading" behavior and the rate at which they were "reading profiles, posts, and hashtags" on October 17.<sup>2</sup> He also recognized that it "took additional time for [Meta] to straighten out the situation with admin access to the IG account."<sup>3</sup> Not only are Meta's shifting explanations alarming, the substance of the claims paint the picture that one of the largest social media companies in the world is somehow incapable of handling technical concerns about an account without shutting it down for hours.

This is not the first time that Meta has experienced shutdowns or lapses around political speech leading up to the 2026 elections. In September, Ohio Democratic Senate nominee Sherrod Brown

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<sup>1</sup>X, Andy Stone, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026: <https://x.com/andymstone/status/2111579972116824545>.

<sup>2</sup>X, Andy Stone, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026: <https://x.com/andymstone/status/2111920686306627816>.

<sup>3</sup>The Guardian, "Outrage after Meta Suspends No Kings Instagram Account During Protests," October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2026/oct/18/no-kings-instagram-account-suspended-during-protests>.

shared that a technical glitch with Facebook’s advertising platform caused about half of his campaign advertisements on the platform to be taken down for over a day without notice.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, in Brazil, President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva was unable to boost his Instagram posts for almost 24 hours, while his opponent, who is known to be connected with the Trump Administration, was able to boost posts during the same time span.<sup>5</sup>

Meta’s own Oversight Board raised concerns over “recurring enforcement failures in Meta’s election integrity efforts.”<sup>6</sup> Specifically, the Oversight Board argued that “the enforcement error regarding the No Kings account should have been caught by Meta’s mistake-prevention systems. It remains unclear why Meta’s election integrity efforts did not lead to a much quicker resolution or why No Kings accounts were not included in Meta’s cross-check program – which allows the company to designate important civic entities to ensure human review before a decision is made that could severely jeopardize participation in a significant political event.”<sup>7</sup> As we approach the 2026 midterm elections, your company must ensure that critical information for voters is not censored.

Furthermore, at a time when billionaires and big business, including Meta, are cozying up to the Trump Administration, we cannot ignore that it was a grassroots organization that is standing up to President Trump’s corruption that experienced this blackout. Meta’s close relationship with the Trump Administration is well documented. The company donated one million dollars to an inauguration fund for President Trump and five million dollars for Trump’s ballroom project.<sup>8,9</sup> In settling a lawsuit, Meta also agreed to pay President Trump \$25 million. The relationship between the Trump Administration, big business, and the media that these businesses run raises serious concerns over freedom of speech and the press.

While the No Kings Coalition has regained access to their account, the public deserves answers to why the No Kings Coalition’s account was shut down in the middle of a national grassroots protest and how Meta will ensure that this will not happen again. Due to the time-sensitive nature of ensuring the availability of election and civic information, please respond to the following questions by October 29, 2026:

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<sup>4</sup>Politico, “Sherrod Brown says Facebook ‘Glitch’ Cost Campaign Money, Votes,” September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026: <https://www.politico.com/live-updates/2026/09/30/congress/sherrod-brown-facebook-glitch-01100898>.

<sup>5</sup>The Guardian, “Battle Over Meta’s Alleged Bolsonaro Bias Intensifies Days Before Brazil Presidential Runoff,” October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2026: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/oct/21/battle-meta-alleged-bolsonaro-bias-intensifies-days-before-brazil-presidential-runoff>.

<sup>6</sup>Oversight Board, “Oversight Board Statement on Protecting Election Integrity on Meta’s Platforms,” October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026: <https://www.oversightboard.com/news/oversight-board-statement-on-protecting-election-integrity-on-metas-platforms/>.

<sup>7</sup>Oversight Board, “Oversight Board Statement on Protecting Election Integrity on Meta’s Platforms,” October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026: <https://www.oversightboard.com/news/oversight-board-statement-on-protecting-election-integrity-on-metas-platforms/>.

<sup>8</sup>BBC, “Mark Zuckerberg’s Meta Donates \$1m to Trump Fund,” December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c8j9e1x9z2xo>.

<sup>9</sup>The Washington Post, “Secret Documents Reveal Donors Behind \$330 Million for Trump’s Ballroom,” October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/2026/10/15/secret-documents-reveal-donors-behind-330-million-trumps-ballroom/>.

1. Did Meta or its representatives have any communication with the Trump Administration regarding No Kings or other pro-democracy protests? If so, who did you speak with and what did you discuss? Please provide all records of these interactions.
2. As raised by Meta's Oversight Board, why was the No Kings Coalition's account not included in Meta's cross-check program?
  - a. After an issue with the account was discovered, why did resolution not occur more quickly?
  - b. Was the decision to remove the No Kings Coalition account made by a human or by an automated process?
3. Given the changing explanations for removing the No Kings page, what is the official position of Meta as to why the account was removed from public access and the account administrators were prevented from accessing the account?
4. How will you guarantee that accounts sharing critical election and civic information are not incorrectly shutdown in the future? What steps will Meta take between now and election day to ensure that accounts sharing this information are not taken offline without notice?

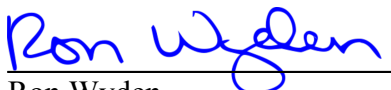
Sincerely,



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



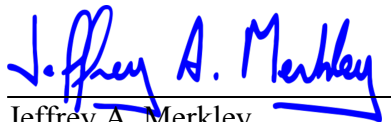
Christopher S. Murphy  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator