



January 17, 2023

Mark Zuckerberg
Chief Executive Officer, Meta
1 Hacker Way
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Nick Clegg
President of Global Affairs, Meta
575 7th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Joel Kaplan
Vice President of Global Public Policy, Meta
575 7th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mr. Zuckerberg, Mr. Clegg, and Mr. Kaplan:

In January 2021, Facebook banned Donald J. Trump from its platform. At the time, Mr. Trump was the sitting President of the United States who had received the votes of more than 74 million American citizens in the recently contested election.

Facebook's decision immediately drew widespread criticism from across the political spectrum at home and around the world. In addition, Facebook's own Oversight Board raised concern about how the ban was implemented, advising the company to develop "clear, necessary, and proportionate policies that promote public safety and respect freedom of expression."

After internal deliberation, Facebook decided to limit the ban on President Trump to a period of two years after which time it would make a reassessment. As you know, that two-year period lapsed on January 7, 2023, and Facebook, now Meta, is reported to be deliberating whether to allow President Trump to return to its platform.

In recent remarks before the Council of Foreign Relations, Mr. Clegg acknowledged the momentous stakes of the decision that rests before you: "We believe that any private company — and this is really regardless of one's personal views about Donald Trump — should tread with great thoughtfulness when seeking to, basically, silence political voices."

We agree.

Donald J. Trump is a declared candidate for President of the United States. He is the leading contender for the Republican nomination in numerous public opinion polls. In other surveys, President Trump is beating several leading Democrats in general election matchups, including President Biden and Vice President Harris. Nevertheless, we believe that the ban on President Trump's account on Facebook has dramatically distorted and inhibited the public discourse. We also believe that a continued ban would basically constitute, in the words of Mr. Clegg, a deliberate effort by a private company to silence Mr. Trump's political voice. Moreover, every day that President Trump's political voice remains silenced furthers an inappropriate interference in the American political and election process.

Americans have always believed that democracy depends on broad and open discourse, and that the best way to form a more perfect Union is through vigorous public debate regarding the key issues facing the country so the people themselves can ultimately decide the way forward. Americans therefore have a natural abhorrence to limits on lawful speech, especially political speech. This bedrock belief is embodied in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, reflecting the Framers' insistence on protecting the right to free speech.

We have recently seen Twitter reassess its restrictions on lawful participation in public discussions, ultimately deciding to promote broad participation, including by reinstating President Trump to that platform.

At a time when the United States faces critical issues that impact its citizens and the world, and at a time when the country begins the process of choosing its next president, we believe that Meta should be encouraging a full and robust dialogue, not silencing presidential candidates.

We therefore write to request a meeting to discuss President Trump's prompt reinstatement to the platform.

Sincerely,

Scott Gast
General Counsel
Donald J. Trump for President 2024, Inc.

CC:

Hon. Kevin McCarthy
Speaker of the House of Representatives

Hon. Frank Lucas
Chair, House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology

Hon. Jim Jordan
Chair, House Committee on the Judiciary

Hon. James Comer
Chair, House Committee on Oversight and Accountability