

GOA GUN OWNERS OF AMERICA™



Neal Mohan
Chief Executive Officer
YouTube, Inc.
901 Cherry Avenue
San Bruno, CA 94066

June 13th, 2024

Dear Mr. Mohan,

We write to address a matter of grave concern that has come to our attention regarding a formal change in YouTube's policies towards firearms-related content. The new retroactive policy will apply the following to all existing content on the platform:

- Content showing the use of homemade firearms, automatic firearms, and certain firearm accessories will be age restricted;
- Content showing how to remove so-called "safety devices" will be banned;
- But firearms in movies, video games, military footage, police footage, and warzone footage will not categorically be age restricted.

Restricting access to adults only—for content that depicts constitutionally-protected activity—is wrong. This policy change aims to push an ominous narrative to minors that firearms are evil while allowing Hollywood and the anti-gun corporate media to continue to push false narratives about firearms without restriction. Hence, as young Americans become adults, they will not question or push back on further violations of our Second Amendment rights because the truth has been censored.

YouTube bears a great responsibility to the public as the new "town square," where the public has a forum to debate and exchange ideas. But the use of so-called "age restrictions" for Second Amendment content, which removes content from the algorithm regardless of a user's age, weaponizes YouTube policies to censor information on a protected right and impedes the spreading of information directly related to the right to keep and bear arms.

We also fear these developments and changes to user agreements will have a chilling effect on the First and Second Amendments—which is highly troubling. We find the timing of this change of rules in the midst of an election cycle extremely suspect, as it will clearly impact each and every American. We are further concerned that this move was encouraged and orchestrated to favor the left side of the aisle in a disproportionate way through the issuance of rules which will solely affect the Second Amendment community within YouTube.

When looked at in its entirety, these changes to rules do not entirely appear to be of your own accord, but have an element of pressure from the forces that move against the American people's gun rights on a daily basis. While it is a matter of public policy around constitutional rights, we find the circumstances suspicious—at the very least—or coerced, at the very worst.

Anti-gun groups are continuing their crusade against online firearms content, with the hope of leveraging these efforts into censorship and lawsuits should social media companies refuse to comply. And at the behest of the gun control lobby, anti-gun politicians from Manhattan DA Alvin Bragg to Senators Elizabeth Warren and Richard

Blumenthal have weaponized their governmental office to threaten YouTube. GOA—which runs a YouTube channel with over 175,000 subscribers and counting— will continue to push back.

It is because of the above reasons that we request an answer to the following questions in a prompt manner as the enactment of your new policies will infringe and impede the rights of millions of Americans and YouTube viewers:

- 1) What influence has the gun control groups of Giffords Law Center, Brady for Gun Safety, Moms Demand Action, Everytown for Gun Safety, and March for our Lives had on the development and implementation of these new rules?
- 2) Has the Biden Administration or White House been involved any communications or input into this decision and or development of new YouTube policies?
- 3) What influence, if any, has the Office of Gun Violence Prevention or the Vice President who heads the office had in the development of these rules and policy changes?
- 4) What influence have Democrat senators and representatives of the Congress of the United States or other Democrats like Manhattan DA Alvin Bragg had on the development and implementation of these new rules / community agreement?
- 5) Have there been any lawsuits from the gun control groups or Democrat side of the aisle to pressure YouTube into this action?
- 6) What actions, if any, has YouTube taken to mitigate any and all impacts on the general election to take place in a matter of months? Have you commissioned any studies or analysis to gauge such an impact of your actions? Has this been considered or is YouTube concerned about how this could potentially impact or influence the 2024 election?
- 7) The effects of this action seem highly political given its timing. Why has YouTube decided to issue this change now rather than wait until after the election to guarantee avoidance of any perception of election interference?

As the issue at hand is one of such pivotal importance to the rights of millions of Americans concerning both their First and Second Amendment Rights, we look forward to your prompt response to address our concerns.

Sincerely,



Sam Paredes
Board Member
Gun Owners of America

cc: Matt Halprin
Senior Vice President of Trust and Safety

Matthew Grosack
Vice President of Trust and Safety