

U.S. Sen. Johnson: Demands accountability from CDC on censorship efforts

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WASHINGTON - On Monday, U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.), ranking member of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, sent a letter to Dr. Mandy Cohen, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), requesting information related to CDC's coordination with social media companies to censor posts connected to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS), a U.S. government database.

After Twitter censored the senator's [Jan. 3, 2022 tweet](#) that cited VAERS data showing adverse events associated with the COVID-19 vaccines, the senator demanded answers from Twitter in a [September 2022](#) letter regarding its censorship policies and coordination with federal health agencies. In May 2023, Twitter Inc.'s successor, X Corp., responded.

X Corp. admitted to the senator that "...throughout 2021, Executive Branch officials, particularly from the Center [sic] for Disease Control (CDC) within the Department of Health & Human Services (HHS), communicated with social media companies, including Twitter, about 'COVID Vaccine Misinformation'; and that CDC identified 'misleading information about VAERS reports' as a specific subset of 'COVID Vaccine Misinformation' which they encouraged social media companies to address."

"Based on recent information I have received... it is clear that CDC abused its authority by engaging in a censorship campaign to suppress and discredit certain viewpoints it labeled as 'misinformation,'" **the senator wrote in his letter to CDC.**

The senator's letter included a timeline detailing CDC's efforts to coordinate with Twitter in 2021 to discredit posts about VAERS shortly following Sen. Johnson's public statements about that database.

The senator added, "CDC's campaign to encourage social media companies to suppress CDC's own data appears to be a blatant attempt to mislead the public about adverse events associated with the COVID-19 vaccines."

Sen. Johnson asked CDC to provide its employees' communications regarding social media posts from several individuals including Pierre Kory, Robert Malone, and Peter McCullough. In addition, Sen. Johnson also requested records relating to the CDC's interaction with employees of social media companies, private sector and third-party groups, and other federal agencies referring to "misinformation, disinformation, or generally disfavored speech."

The full letter can be found [here](#).