

NRB Commends House Judiciary Committee for Scheduling Online Censorship Hearing

A week after National Religious Broadcasters renewed its call for congressional hearings focused solely on online censorship in the wake of Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg's congressional appearances, the House Judiciary Committee announced it will hold a hearing this week featuring two victims of online censorship—Rep. Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn., and social media commentators Diamond and Silk.

Charisma News posted this story from CBN News earlier Friday about Diamond and Silk.

At the April 26 hearing, the committee also invited representatives of Facebook, Google and Twitter to appear, and scheduled representatives from two other organizations.

"I commend Chairman Bob Goodlatte for scheduling this hearing so quickly after Mr. Zuckerberg's appearances," said NRB President & CEO Dr. Jerry A. Johnson. "Mr. Zuckerberg's testimony only briefly touched on the growing problem of online censorship. The American people deserve answers to their questions about why Christian and conservative viewpoint is being censored by big tech. I urge Facebook, Google and Twitter to accept Chairman Goodlatte's invitation to appear before his committee."

Before Zuckerberg's April 10 and 11 appearances before three congressional committees about online privacy concerns, NRB urged members of Congress also to question him about online censorship.

Nearly 75 years ago, NRB was formed in response to corporate censorship of evangelical preachers who were removed from

national radio networks. The problem of online censorship today is very similar, as many NRB members are heavily engaged in social media platforms to advance their ministries.

“Much like radio in the 1940s, the internet is a dominant element of the public square,” Johnson added. “It is wrong to squelch the viewpoints of some Americans on these platforms because they don’t conform to Silicon Valley’s preferred ideologies.”

While Johnson was grateful to senators and representatives for pressing Zuckerberg about censorship, he reiterated his concerns: “Why does religious and conservative content seem to fall in the cross-hairs? Is it algorithmic or human discrimination? What is being done to correct this problem in either case? We need more answers, and we need more hearings with all the big players.”

During a December press conference at the National Press Club, NRB launched a new initiative—Internet Freedom Watch (IOW)—to draw greater attention to the problem of online censorship. NRB also released letters it sent to the CEOs of Facebook, Twitter, Google and Apple requesting dialogue about the organization’s concerns.

To date, none of the CEOs has formally responded to the letters. {eo}