

Facebook Labels PragerU as 'Fake News'

Facebook announced Tuesday that it has reduced PragerU's reach and put restrictions on its page for "repeated sharing of false news." These restrictions include a forced reduction in News Feed distribution and a demonetization of PragerU content. Some users who've shared PragerU content have also received a warning claiming that "PragerU shares false information" and that they should think twice before posting its content.

The restrictions come less than two weeks after Facebook announced the first members of its new global oversight board, part of internal efforts toward greater equity in its content review process. But, once again, conservatives like PragerU find themselves the target of Big Tech censorship.

"Like other Big Tech giants, Facebook needed a believable way to justify censorship of ideas they disagree with, and have used a third party to do so," said Marissa Streit, PragerU CEO. "In less than two weeks, the promise of objectivity is broken, and the social media giant is effectively censoring conservatives more than ever before."

Streit believes Facebook's new content oversight board is simply an overhyped publicity move. The board, critics say, is a disingenuous commitment to self-regulate on issues of censorship—a conflict of interest at best. PragerU's tweet announcing the Facebook restrictions refers to the oversight board as "biased 3rd party fact-checkers" that effectively make Facebook its own "arbiter of truth."

The controversy started after Facebook censored a one-minute video posted by PragerU Monday titled "Remember This Starving Polar Bear?." In the video, PragerU challenges the misleading

use of images of an emaciated polar bear by climate change activists. PragerU's video also points out the *National Geographic* photographer who filmed the bear admitted her footage was misleading, saying a year after her clip went viral, "Perhaps we made a mistake in not telling the full story—that we were looking for a picture that foretold the future and that we didn't know what had happened to this particular bear."

Facebook's "fact-checkers" labeled PragerU's video as "false information" and pointed to a review of the video by Climate Feedback as proof. Climate Feedback, a group with direct ties to climate change proponents, accuses PragerU of "cherry-picking" information to support its arguments in the one-minute video.

"Our video exposes the left's deception," Streit added. "And that alone is why we've been censored."

The author of the scientific study behind PragerU's video, Dr. Susan Crockford, a scientist and well-known published expert who has studied the polar bear population for over a decade, released a statement refuting the claims of Climate Feedback's review. She also asserts that data used by herself and climate change activists is often contradictory, contributing to "a classic conflict that happens all the time in science but presents no proof that I'm wrong or that the PragerU video is inherently 'false'."

In other words, the data points to PragerU's assertion as true or, at worst, debatable but not false.

Streit suggests the real problem is Facebook's inability to allow debate and disagreement on its platform.

"Facebook's motto is 'give people the power to build community and bring the world closer together,'" Streit remarked. "What they're actually doing is creating strife, uncertainty and pushing people further apart."

PragerU has set up an online petition asking supporters to join it in standing against Facebook's censorship.