

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 7, 2025

Sundar Pichai
CEO
Google
1600 Amphitheatre Parkway
Mountain View, CA 94043

Neal Mohan
CEO
YouTube
901 Cherry Avenue
San Bruno, CA 94066

Dear Mr. Pichai and Mr. Mohan:

We write regarding the possibility that Google subsidiary YouTube may be preparing to settle a dubious¹ lawsuit filed by President Trump in exchange for favorable action by his administration. We have criticized actions by other corporations that look like payoffs to President Trump,² and now we are concerned that Google could be engaged in similar behavior.

Recent reporting indicates that YouTube's and President Trump's personal lawyers are "engaged in productive discussions" regarding President Trump's 2021 lawsuit against the company.³ The President, in his capacity as a private citizen, alleged that YouTube engaged in unlawful censorship when the company banned him from the platform following the January 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol "over concerns that he would incite further riots."⁴ At the same time that YouTube is reportedly discussing next steps in the case, its parent company, Google, is facing multiple antitrust and labor enforcement actions by the federal government.⁵ If YouTube settles President Trump's dubious lawsuit⁶ in exchange for favorable action by the Trump administration in other matters, the company and its executives may be in violation of federal anti-bribery laws and related state laws such as California's Unfair Competition Law.⁷

¹ The Guardian, "Will Trump's big tech lawsuits succeed? Experts say chances are slim," Kari Paul, July 7, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2021/jul/07/will-trumps-big-tech-lawsuits-succeed-experts-say-chances-are-slim>.

² Letter from Senator Elizabeth Warren to Skydance CEO David Ellison, July 21, 2025, https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/warren_sanders_wyden_letter_to_skydance_on_paramount_settlement.pdf; Letter from Senator Elizabeth Warren to Paramount Chair Shari Redstone, May 19, 2025, https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/letter_to_paramount_re_cbs_lawsuit_and_corruption.pdf.

³ The Hill, "YouTube in 'productive discussions' with Trump over Jan. 6 ban lawsuit," Julia Shapero, July 3, 2025, <https://thehill.com/policy/technology/5384572-youtube-trump-january-6-ban-lawsuit/>.

⁴ Donald J. Trump et al. v. YouTube, LLC and Sundar Pichai, August 23, 2021, p. 1, <https://www.courthousenews.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/trump-sues-youtube.pdf>; Law360, "Trump Hits Big Tech Platforms With Censorship Class Actions," Kelcee Griffis, July 7, 2021, <https://www.law360.com/articles/1400928>.

⁵ Public Citizen, "Tracker: Corporate Enforcement at Risk," updated June 25, 2025, <https://www.citizen.org/article/corporate-enforcement-trump-tracker/>.

⁶ Politico, "Appeals court doubtful on Trump's lawsuit against Twitter," Josh Gerstein, October 4, 2023, <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/10/04/appeals-court-doubtful-on-trumps-lawsuit-against-twitter-00119981>.

⁷ California Business & Professional Code, 17200 et seq.

In 2021, Trump sued tech giants Twitter (now X), Facebook (now Meta), and YouTube, alleging “impermissible censorship” when the platforms banned the President’s accounts after the January 6 storming of the U.S. Capitol.⁸ President Trump has suffered significant setbacks in court: a federal judge initially dismissed Trump’s lawsuit against Twitter,⁹ and an appeals court panel later appeared unlikely to revive the case.¹⁰ Nevertheless, following President Trump’s inauguration in January 2025, X owner Elon Musk and Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg — whose company previously called the case “meritless”¹¹ — settled with President Trump in exchange for \$10 million and \$25 million respectively.¹² This is in addition to media companies’ settlements of various questionable lawsuits brought by President Trump, including ABC News’s \$15 million deal¹³ and, most recently, Paramount’s agreement to pay \$16 million to President Trump’s future Presidential Library,¹⁴ after which Paramount and Skydance received Trump administration approval of their multi-billion-dollar merger.¹⁵

Now, reports suggest that you may be the next Big Tech executives ready to capitulate to President Trump. YouTube appears to be in active discussions regarding the President’s case against the company.¹⁶ Google has already been cozying up to the Trump administration: the company donated \$1 million to President Trump’s inaugural fund,¹⁷ and Mr. Pichai attended the President’s inauguration¹⁸ and dined with him at Mar-a-Lago.¹⁹

Meanwhile, Google continues to face federal labor and antitrust enforcement cases, among other matters. Following the Department of Justice’s victories against Google for the company’s

⁸ The Hill, “YouTube in ‘productive discussions’ with Trump over Jan. 6 ban lawsuit,” Julia Shapero, July 3, 2025, <https://thehill.com/policy/technology/5384572-youtube-trump-january-6-ban-lawsuit/>.

⁹ Politico, “Judge tosses Trump suit against Twitter,” Josh Gerstein, May 6, 2022, <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/05/06/judge-tosses-trump-suit-against-twitter-00030825>.

¹⁰ Politico, “Appeals court doubtful on Trump’s lawsuit against Twitter,” Josh Gerstein, October 4, 2023, <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/10/04/appeals-court-doubtful-on-trumps-lawsuit-against-twitter-00119981>.

¹¹ Trump v. Facebook, Inc., September 17, 2021, p. 1, <https://www.courtlistener.com/docket/60041057/75/trump-v-facebook-inc/>.

¹² NPR, “Trump says Elon Musk’s \$10 million settlement over Twitter suit was ‘a big discount,’” Bobby Allyn, February 18, 2025, <https://www.npr.org/2025/02/18/nx-s1-5295068/x-musk-trump-settlement>.

¹³ NPR, “ABC settles with Trump for \$15 million. Now, he wants to sue other news outlets,” David Folkenflik, December 16, 2024, <https://www.npr.org/2024/12/16/nx-s1-5230274/abc-settles-with-trump-for-15-million-now-he-wants-to-sue-other-news-outlets>.

¹⁴ Associated Press, “Paramount will pay \$16 million in settlement with Trump over ‘60 Minutes’ interview,” David Bauder and the Associated Press, July 2, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/trump-media-harris-minutes-paramount-6415042fe910ae60b432dd8c73ef61b2>.

¹⁵ Associated Press, “The FCC approves Paramount’s \$8B deal with Skydance after months of chaos and political intrigue,” Wyatt Grantham-Philips and Michael Liedtke, July 25, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/paramount-skydance-merger-fcc-approval-74836c0da9dc0b33f580f714a3f2bfbb>.

¹⁶ The Atlantic, “Trump Targets Google After Meta and X Payouts,” Michael Scherer, July 3, 2025, <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2025/07/trump-google-lawsuit-settlement/683420/>.

¹⁷ CNBC, “Google donates \$1 million to Trump’s inauguration fund, joining other tech giants,” Ashley Capoot, January 9, 2025, <https://www.cnbc.com/2025/01/09/google-donates-1-million-to-trumps-inauguration-fund.html>.

¹⁸ Associated Press, “Trump, a populist president, is flanked by tech billionaires at his inauguration,” Ali Swenson, January 20, 2025, <https://apnews.com/article/trump-inauguration-tech-billionaires-zuckerberg-musk-wealth-0896bfc3f50d941d62cebc3074267ecd>.

¹⁹ New York Times, “In Display of Fealty, Tech Industry Curries Favor With Trump,” Theodore Schleifer and David Yaffe-Bellany, December 14, 2024, <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/12/14/technology/trump-tech-amazon-meta-openai.html>.

illegal monopolization of the open-web digital advertising and the online search markets, both sides are now litigating what penalties Google will face, which may include a break-up of the company.²⁰ Google also has over a dozen open cases in front of the National Labor Relations Board alleging unfair labor practices.²¹ And the company has substantial interests in almost every aspect of the federal government, from tax policy to energy and environmental policy, and much more.²² Google stands to benefit from how the federal government proceeds in these matters, and Google may settle this lawsuit in the hopes of securing outcomes favorable to the company.

Under the federal bribery statute, it is illegal to corruptly give anything of value to public officials with the intent to influence an official act.²³ We are concerned about the possibility that Google could settle the lawsuit against YouTube in a quid-pro-quo arrangement to avoid full accountability for violating federal competition, consumer protection, and labor laws, circumstances that could result in the company running afoul of federal bribery laws and related state laws.

To help determine whether Google and YouTube are complying with our nation's anti-bribery laws, We ask that you answer the following questions by September 3, 2025:

1. Have you, any other executives, and/or Board Members discussed settling President Trump's lawsuit against YouTube as a way to garner more favorable treatment from the administration on DOJ's pending matters involving Google or potential future matters? If so, please provide information regarding the timing, nature of, and participants in these discussions.
2. Is Google or YouTube otherwise engaging the Trump administration in any way to secure favorable treatment in any pending legal matters or potential future matters? If so, please describe Google's and YouTube's actions.
3. Have you, any other executives, and/or Board Members discussed a settlement to the YouTube litigation that includes a payment to President Trump's presidential library fund?
4. Does Google have any policies, procedures, or guidance related to compliance with 18 U.S.C. 201 or any other federal or state laws governing public corruption, including

²⁰ Department of Justice, "Department of Justice Prevails in Landmark Antitrust Case Against Google," press release, April 17, 2025, <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/departments-justice-prevails-landmark-antitrust-case-against-google>; NPR, "The Justice Department and Google battle over how to fix a search engine monopoly," Jaclyn Diaz, April 21, 2025, <https://www.npr.org/2025/04/21/nx-s1-5369404/google-doj-opening-statements-remedies-trial>; American Economic Liberties Project, "DOJ Commits to Breaking Up Google Adtech Monopoly; Google Proposes to Rig Ad Auctions a Little Less, Temporarily," press release, May 6, 2025, <https://www.economicliberties.us/press-release/doj-commits-to-breaking-up-google-adtech-monopoly-google-proposes-to-rig-ad-auctions-a-little-less/>.

²¹ National Labor Relations Board, "Case Search," [https://www.nlr.gov/search/case/google?f\[0\]=case_type:C&s\[0\]=Open](https://www.nlr.gov/search/case/google?f[0]=case_type:C&s[0]=Open).

²² Letter from Senator Elizabeth Warren to Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai, June 30, 2025, https://www.warren.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/letter_to_big_tech_ceos.pdf; The New York Times, "Emboldened by Trump, A.I. Companies Lobby for Fewer Rules," Cecilia Kang, March 24, 2025, <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/03/24/technology/trump-ai-regulation.html>.

²³ 18 U.S.C. 201.

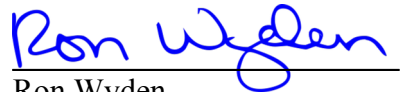
California's Unfair Competition Law? If so, please provide a copy of those policies, procedures, or guidance documents.

5. Does Google conduct any trainings for its staff or executives related to compliance with 18 U.S.C. 201 or any other federal or state laws governing public corruption, including California's Unfair Competition Law? If so, please provide details regarding these trainings.

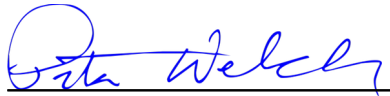
Sincerely,



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Peter Welch
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator