

# 'Truly Frightening:' Feds Give Tech Companies Until May 2 to 'Turn Over COVID-19 Misinformation'

Two U.S. Senators this week introduced a bill that could criminalize First Amendment rights, while the U.S. Surgeon General formally demanded tech companies turn over data on organizations and individuals who post "COVID-19 misinformation" on social media platforms.

[Meryl Nass, M.D.](#)



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Two news stories this week reveal how the federal government plans to treat [COVID](#) "misinformation" as a crime, and what role [tech companies](#) will play in rounding up the "criminal."

This is truly frightening.

Two U.S. Senators this week introduced a bill to provide tech companies cover via legislation that could make it possible for Congress to "legalize" censorship and criminalize First Amendment rights to freedom of speech.

Here's a [press release](#) describing the bill:

"U.S. Senators Ben Ray Luján (D-N.M.) and Chris Murphy (D-Conn.), both members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, on Wednesday introduced [legislation](#) to counter the threat that [misinformation and disinformation](#) pose to public health as evidenced by the widespread false narratives throughout the [COVID-19 pandemic](#).

"The Promoting Public Health Information Act would support efforts across the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and with outside stakeholders to communicate effectively during a public health emergency and address health misinformation."

Here is what Murphy had to say about the bill:

"Throughout this pandemic, the impact of misinformation has been devastating. Rumors and conspiracy theories about the efficacy of masking or the safety of vaccines still run rampant on social media and have caused thousands of deaths that could have been prevented.

"This legislation will help us get smart about how to tackle misinformation and effectively promote science-based health information, especially as we continue fighting COVID-19 and prepare for future public health

emergencies."

In other words, the feds are asking detailed information about the demographics "exposed to misinformation," allowing them to determine who's reading what, and to obtain their names.

Next, in the last paragraph of this [New York Times article](#), "The surgeon general calls on Big Tech to turn over Covid-19 misinformation data," we learn that the federal government wants citizens to start "sharing" information on "misinformation:"

"'We're asking anyone with relevant insights — from original research and data sets to personal stories that speak to the role of misinformation in public health — to share them with us,' Dr. [Vivek] Murthy said."

Isn't that sweet?

This is how they dress up the [Stasi](#) in 21st-century euphemism to encourage ratting out your friends and neighbors: "Please share with the feds. They care what you think."

Sure they do.

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According to the Times:

"President Biden's surgeon general on Thursday [formally requested](#) major tech platforms submit information about the scale of COVID-19 misinformation on social networks, search engines, crowdsourced platforms, e-commerce platforms and instant messaging systems.

"The request for information from the surgeon general's office demanded

tech platforms send data and analysis on the prevalence of COVID-19 misinformation on their sites, starting with common examples of vaccine misinformation [documented](#) by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"The notice asks the companies to submit 'exactly how many users saw or may have been exposed to instances of COVID-19 misinformation,' as well as aggregate data on demographics that may have been disproportionately exposed to, or affected by, the misinformation.

"The surgeon general, Dr. Vivek Murthy, also demanded information from the platforms about the major sources of Covid-19 misinformation, including those that engaged in the sale of unproven Covid-19 products, services and treatments.

"Technology companies now have the opportunity to be open and transparent with the American people about the misinformation on their platforms," Murthy said in an emailed statement. He added: "This is about protecting the nation's health."

"Companies have until May 2 to submit the data. Denying requests for information does not carry a penalty, but the notice is the first formal request from the Biden administration of the tech companies to submit COVID-19 misinformation data, according to the surgeon general's office.

"Six months ago, Murthy used his first [formal advisory](#) to the U.S. to deliver a broadside against tech and social media companies, which he accused of not doing enough to stop the spread of dangerous health misinformation — especially about COVID-19. He called the misinformation "an urgent threat to public health."

"The request for information is part of President Biden's [National COVID-19](#)

[Preparedness Plan](#), which the White House detailed on Wednesday and which is a road map for a new stage of the pandemic where COVID-19 causes 'minimal disruption,' according to the White House.

"Biden first revealed details of the plan during his State of the Union [address](#) Tuesday night.

"In addition to demanding misinformation data from the tech platforms, the surgeon general called on healthcare providers and the public to submit information about how COVID-19 misinformation has negatively influenced patients and communities.

"'We're asking anyone with relevant insights — from original research and data sets to personal stories that speak to the role of misinformation in public health — to share them with us,'" Murthy said."

*The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of Children's Health Defense.*