# 6 Cringey Times Politicians Didn't Know Tech

## Tech companies use political idiocy to their advantage while members of congress are often more concerned with soundbites than real regulation.

Mark Zuckerberg testified in front of congress back in 2018, where congresspeople consistently showed they had little to no idea how that tech really worked.

Photo: SAUL LOEB/AFP (Getty Images)

Congresspeople—okay, let's just call them the more "seasoned" codgers of congress—have routinely shown they have very little conception of technology. And while it may be cute to watch your parents call your new Steam Deck a "Nintendo," it's much less funny when a politician in charge of creating legislation impacting the tech scene doesn't know which company makes Android phones and which makes iPhones.

Some have argued that tech companies actively benefit when older politicians make absurd statements about tech, especially as it promotes the idea that there shouldn't be any regulation if Congress itself doesn't understand what's going on. Sometimes CEOs want to mislead, so why are we blaming politicians for being misled?

Yes, it's hard for any individual to know everything, but as an aside, that's why congresspeople have aides who can assist them with understanding just what they're arguing and why. So, if congresspeople know they don't know something, why don't they simply search online for clarification before they put their lips to the microphone? We've seen this come up multiple times in the past, and in most cases, the execs get away with obfuscation

because politicians aren't focused on getting real answers.

Modern politicians know their role, especially at big publicized hearings meant to grill top tech execs. They don't always come to these hearings to gain insight on topics as much as to dunk on whoever shows up to cater to their base. Some might even make the case that some politicians try to sound dumb on purpose in order to court the anti-intellectual side of the party.

Of course, sometimes it blows up in politicians' faces, leaving big tech CEOs to return to their office towers with the calm sense their consistent (and sometimes looney) U.S. political critics seem to have no idea how to actually regulate them.

Tech regulation already moves at a glacial pace in the best of times, and that's only when legislators actually seem to have some idea of what they're talking about. President Joe Biden's nomination to the head of the Federal Communications Commission Gigi Sohn, and plans to reinstate net neutrality, have been held up in congress because of partisan wrangling, and now even the Fraternal Order of Police is getting involved. Meanwhile, Axios reported that tech antitrust legislation is still trying to crawl its way out of congressional committee when no bill by August likely means its death.

So while you're perhaps looking to laugh at regular legislative buffoonery, just remember as you read through that it's all part of a politico ecosystem that regularly stalls real tech industry regulation.