

Josh Hawley Opens Probe into Facebook, Continues to Battle Silicon Valley Corruption

Missouri AG demands all Facebook communications with Obama's 2012 campaign


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 Missouri Attorney General Josh Hawley

Missouri's Republican attorney general Josh Hawley delivered an investigative subpoena to Facebook's Menlo Park offices on Monday, demanding a wide-ranging group of documents related to the social media giant's handling of user data.



The civil investigative demand, which was provided by the attorney general's office and can be [viewed here](#), comes a

week after a group of 37 state attorneys general [sent a letter](#) asking for answers on how user data was shared with third party groups such as Cambridge Analytica. Hawley decided to follow-up on the letter with the subpoena to give Facebook a "legal consequence for failing to respond" by May 29, his office said.

The probe aims to determine whether Facebook exercised "appropriate care and protection over private consumer data" and whether the site's terms and conditions "accurately and adequately explained how consumers' data would be used."

The request focuses not just on Facebook's relationship with Cambridge Analytica but also asks for all communications between the company and the digital team for former President Barack Obama's 2012 reelection campaign.

It specifically asks for all communications between Facebook and Carol Davidsen, Obama's director of digital integration and media analytics, and for communications with "any employee, volunteer, independent contractor, or agent of the campaign Obama for America relating to the sharing of Facebook User Information."

Also requested are any calendar entries reflecting meetings between the Obama campaign and Facebook.

Hawley also asks for a list of every campaign and political action committee Facebook has provided user information to since January 1, 2012.

Facebook is also asked to identify all types of user data that have been collected and when it began collecting each type.

"There is no excuse for this irresponsible handling of user data," Hawley said after announcing the probe.

"Missourians need to know that they can trust the companies and platforms that have access to as much user information as Facebook does."

Hawley's office has active probes into other Silicon Valley companies, most notably into Google.

Last November Hawley **issued** an investigative subpoena to Google asking for information on both the way it handles user data and on whether it's using its search engine to direct traffic toward its own services.

His office also has investigations into **Equifax** and **Uber** related to data breaches at each company.

"As the chief law enforcement officer in Missouri, I must protect the privacy of internet users," Hawley said. "As technology develops at a rapid pace, Silicon Valley needs to ensure that the proper protections are in place to guard consumer privacy. If they do not do this, my office will pursue those responsible."

Hawley is currently running to unseat Democratic senator Claire McCaskill. Neither McCaskill's office nor her campaign responded to requests for comment on Hawley's decision to investigate Facebook.

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