

# How GOP Senators Can Defund Biden's Dystopic 'Disinformation Board'

In an apparent homage to George Orwell's dystopian novel "1984" — one the rest of us realize is a pointed political allegory but the Biden administration apparently views as a handbook — the Biden White House is [establishing](#) a Disinformation Governance Board.

Yes, you read that correctly. The government is going to decide what's true and what's false, and punish disseminators accordingly. The bureaucrats who run the Department of Homeland security, where this board will be housed, are going to be parsing fact from fiction, obviously to keep us all safe from the scourge of independent judgment and thought.

Naturally, Nina Jankowicz, the woman they've put in charge of this board, thinks America is a little too "free spirited." Apparently, her life's work has been focused on doing something about that. White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki has [cited](#) Jankowicz's "extensive qualifications," which include being a disinformation fellow (whatever that is) at the Wilson Center and advising the Ukrainian foreign minister (about who knows what, exactly).

Notably, however, and perhaps predictably, the White House's new disinformation czar spent months [dis-informing the public](#) that the contents of Hunter Biden's laptop — now quietly confirmed to be real even by the likes of The New York Times and the Washington Post — was in fact Russian disinformation.

Jankowicz also [spread misleading claims](#) about the Christopher Steele dossier, funded by Hillary Clinton's campaign with the goal of undermining the Trump campaign (and [spying on its employees](#)). The dossier has been widely discredited by the Department of Justice and its main source was [arrested and charged](#) with five counts of making false claims to the FBI.

Jankowicz has also appeared in TikTok videos [singing flippantly](#) about how Americans shouldn't vote for those who spread disinformation. Jankowicz sings a lot, actually, and is a big fan of Harry Potter. She founded and sang in a band called [The Moaning Myrtles](#), which contributed songs to albums like "Wizards and Muggles Rock for Social Justice" and in 2007 won Best Music Video in Wizard Rock People's Choice Awards for a song called "Sitting On the Toilet."

In 1793, enemies of the French state were carted off to the guillotine by Robespierre and his Committee on Public Safety during the Reign of Terror. In 2022 America, our reign of terror will apparently be overseen by a deranged woke

theater kid. The gulags, but with jazz hands.

## A Literal Speech Police

The sheer absurdity and spectacle, however, shouldn't distract from the seriousness of what the Biden administration is attempting to undertake. The formation of a disinformation board within the Department of Homeland Security is a specific choice: to place government speech regulations within the context of law enforcement. The "speech police" is now less metaphorical phrasing than actual reality.

Jankowicz appears to support contextualizing speech into a law enforcement frame. In April, she [told](#) National Public Radio that "law enforcement" needs to do more about "free speech absolutism" on social media before speaking approvingly about a bill in the United Kingdom that would empower law enforcement to enforce speech codes.

It's also no coincidence that Barack Obama recently [gave a speech](#) at Stanford University outlining the dangers of disinformation online and calling on the government to act. The former president, who is now a podcaster and a Netflix producer, elected to nothing, has committed himself to pushing an agenda aimed at controlling the flow of speech and information in America, particularly on social media.

Obama's administration was [infamously cozy](#) with the Silicon Valley tech titans and [materially contributed](#) to their rise. The Democratic Party, faced with evidence that its [message is losing](#), is now bent on controlling the parameters of the debate itself in the name of "free speech."

There is added urgency to their task now that billionaire Elon Musk is seeking to acquire Twitter, take the company private, and reform its content moderation practices. Twitter is the centerpiece of elite narrative formation, and the left does not appear willing to let control of "their" platform go without using every financial, governmental, and cultural lever under their power.

## **Congress Must Respond**

But the executive branch does not exist in a vacuum. The legislature still has a say. And the formation of a government speech board, months before an election cycle and within days of Musk's free speech-driven audacious bid for Twitter, should prompt an urgent response.

The most powerful weapon the legislature has is the power of the purse. Agencies cannot carry out their directives or initiate their programs without Congress first authorizing the money for them to do so. House Republicans are reportedly already drafting legislation to defund the formation and maintenance of this disinformation board. But their efforts

are not likely to get stand-alone traction in a Democratically controlled House.

Senators, however, have far more options. Regardless of which party is in the majority, each senator has the power to make the body vote on any proposal of his choosing.

Senators can circumvent the committee process under the Senate's [Rule 14](#), and place legislation directly onto the Senate's calendar, where they can then move to proceed to it. Provided there is no other business pending, that motion — known as a motion to proceed — automatically is made pending before the Senate, and requires the Senate to vote. Unless cloture is filed, the vote is considered at a 51-vote threshold.

In other words, Republican senators have an option their House colleagues do not. They can force every senator to be on record regarding the Biden administration's effort to police speech from the Department of Homeland Security.

Creating a public record on such a controversial issue is important in and of itself, but it should also form the basis for both Senate and House Republicans to demand that the effort be defunded as part of the forthcoming omnibus spending legislation, which must be passed in the fall (unless it is replaced by a straight extension of funding known as a continuing resolution).

These must-pass spending bills represent significant points of leverage, particularly for Senate Republicans, whose votes are required for passage. In the split Senate where spending bills require 60 votes, 10 GOP votes are required.

That these leverage points exist, however, doesn't always mean they're used. Earlier this year Democrats passed a \$1.5 trillion omnibus spending package with GOP votes, but with very few GOP wins beyond preserving a handful of policies that never appeared to be under serious threat.

But appropriators — the legislators tasked with drafting spending legislation — have already [begun to meet](#) to discuss the outlines of what the next package will look like. Now is the time for the GOP to make their redlines clear: from the border, to vaccine mandates, to defunding Biden's speech police, Republicans need to draw their lines now and refuse to provide votes for any funding legislation that includes these provisions.

There is a material difference between hot rhetoric and actual engagement in the policy process. Every Republican rightly denouncing Biden's speech police needs to back up that opposition by using the tools available to him — in the Senate, that means showing the public where Democrats, in particular, stand on the issue by forcing a vote, or several. Among Republicans in the House and Senate, it also means staring down the funding process and refusing to move until

funding for this speech board, and the disinformation agent who will run it, is removed.

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