

SILICON VALLEY TECH OLIGARCHS RUN THE BIDEN WHITE HOUSE

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SILICON VALLEY TECH OLIGARCHS RUN THE BIDEN WHITE HOUSE

Biden administration's VERY cozy relationship with Big Tech: White House visitor logs show Silicon Valley execs - including Apple CEO Tim Cook - effectively have a 'staff badge' for West Wing

White House visitor logs showed between July 2021 and September 2022, Big Tech visited the White House at least 38 times, averaging around 2.5 meetings per month.

REVEALED - Biden administration's cozy relationship with Big Tech: White House visitor logs show Silicon Valley executives - including Apple CEO Tim Cook - effectively have a 'staff badge' for the West Wing, critics say

Analysis of White House visitor logs spanning from July 2021-Sept 2022 found Big Tech execs visited at least 38 times, averaging 2.5 meetings per month

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By Morgan Phillips, U.S. Political ReporterView comments

Big Tech executives have held a close-knit relationship with the White House, visiting 1600 Pennsylvania Ave with such regularity that could explain President Biden's lackluster push for anti-trust legislation, insiders say.

An analysis of White House visitor logs found that between July 2021 and September 2022, Big Tech's most senior executives visited at least 38 times, averaging around 2.5 meetings per month.

Apple CEO Tim Cook paid a visit to the White House five times over the 15-month sampling, and Apple sent high-level representatives 16 times in total. Google and its parent company Alphabet sent CEO Sundar Pichai and other top-level executives nine times, Facebook and parent company Meta visited seven times.

'The Biden Administration has essentially given Apple, Google, Facebook and Amazon a staff badge,' one former Republican House Judiciary aide told DailyMail.com. 'Instead of taking on Big Tech, they've allowed Big Tech to infiltrate the White House whenever they please.'

Tim Cook, Apple CEO, and Lisa Jackson, VP of Environment, Policy and Social Initiatives, arrive at the White House for a state dinner in December

On the campaign trail, Biden said he wanted to break up Big Tech monopolies and end Section 230. But the 2021-2022 Congress came and went and Big Tech legislation remained in limbo.

While it's normal for the White House to meet with business leaders, the frequency of such visits begs the question of what sort of closed-door promises were made, insiders say.

'The White House did very little to push Congress to move forward tech legislation anti-trust legislation, in 2021, and 2022,' one former Democratic congressional aide told DailyMail.com.

'They had all those meetings with Big Tech executives, but the real question is, how much were those executives successful in their private lobbying, in getting the White House not to escalate that fight?'

'The idea that this revolving door of tech lobbyists and executives are allowed to have access to officials who allegedly are working on reining in Big Tech who are allegedly going after some of the most egregious behavior, it's really problematic,' another former Democratic staffer on Capitol Hill told DailyMail.com.

Last Congress advocates criticized the White House for failing to utilize Democratic control of the White House and both chambers of Congress to prioritize legislation to take on Big Tech.

Apple CEO Tim Cook, IBM CEO Arvind Krishna and Google CEO Sundar Pichai listen as U.S. President Joe Biden speaks during a meeting about cybersecurity

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They failed to push through the American Innovation and Choice Online Act and the Open App Markets Act, both of which would have prevented tech companies from self-promoting their own products and thwarting competitors.

'You clearly have some gatekeepers in in the White House in the administration, who are preventing Biden's priorities as insofar as tech from moving forward,' said the staffer.

'Whenever Big Tech gets scared, they walk into the White House, they they meet with their friendly official and that gatekeeper says don't worry about it.'

Sens. Richard Blumenthal, D-Conn., and Marsha Blackburn, R-Tenn. said in a statement on their Kids Online Safety Act, which set new guardrails for sites likely to attract traffic from children, was cut out of FY 2023 spending bill due to industry lobbying.

The American Data Privacy and Protection Act overwhelmingly passed the Energy and Commerce Committee 53-2 last Congress, but never came up for a floor vote.

The must-pass FY 2023 spending bill did include a bill that will raise money for anti-trust agencies by raising merger filing fees and a ban of TikTok on government phones.

The source said the Biden administration gave high hopes to anti-trust proponents with bringing net neutrality advocate Tim Wu into the White House as an advisor and Big Tech foes Lina Khan to chair the Federal Trade Commission and Jonathan Cantor to lead the Justice Department's anti-trust division.

'That was all in early 2021. And then, you know, it didn't seem like they had that same level of commitment was to legislation.'

The White House declined to comment on the charges.

Biden waited until January of this year to make one of his most pointed calls yet in an op-ed he penned directing Congress to pass legislation to rein in tech platforms.

He first called for privacy protections that limit data collection and ban targeted advertising for kids and called for reform of Section 230 - which grants social media platforms immunity for what users post on their sites while preserving their ability to moderate content.

Referencing a line he made in both last year's and again in this year's State of the Union address, Biden said: 'We must hold social-media companies accountable for the experiment they are running on our children for profit.'

'Ban targeted advertising to children and impose stricter limits on the personal data the companies collect on all of us,' Biden said in his 2023 State of the Union Tuesday night.

'The idea that he's saying all of this during State of the Union and will again be talking about the dangers of Big Tech while officials in his own White House are allowing tech like Big Tech companies to just as effectively have open door access is is pretty egregious' the ex-Democratic congressional aide said.

In calling for 'fairer rules of the road' Biden made a nod at legislation that would ban Big Tech's self-promotion of its own products.

'When tech platforms get big enough, many find ways to promote their own products while excluding or disadvantaging competitors — or charge competitors a fortune to sell on their platform,' he wrote in his op-ed.

But Biden and Republican legislators on Capitol Hill are at odds over how best to tackle Big Tech's monopolistic tendencies.

House Republicans, freshly in the majority, are prioritizing censorship and anti-conservative bias. They have pushed back against legislation that prevents tech platforms from self-promoting their own products.

Both parties want to overhaul Section 230, but for different reasons. Democrats want to tackle the spread of misinformation on things like elections and Covid-19, Republicans want to ensure that social media companies don't censor posts that might involve things like vaccine or election skepticism.

'We need Big Tech companies to take responsibility for the content they spread and the algorithms they use,' Biden wrote in the Journal. 'That's why I've long said we must fundamentally reform Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, which protects tech companies from legal responsibility for content posted on their sites.'

Speaker Kevin McCarthy's office shot back that Biden wasn't addressing the real issue.

'House Republicans will confront Big Tech's abuses because the truth should not be censored,' McCarthy deputy spokesperson Chad Gilmartin said in a release. 'Americans should not be blocked or banned for sharing a link to a news article. But that's exactly what Big Tech has done, which Biden wants to ignore.'

On December 14, incoming Judiciary Chair Rep. Jim Jordan wrote to five of the largest tech companies demanding they hand over correspondence between their companies and Biden administration officials.

'Although the full extent of Big Tech's collusion with the Biden administration is unknown, there are prominent examples and strong indications of Big Tech censorship following directives or pressure from executive branch entities,' Jordan wrote. 'Because of Big Tech's wide reach, it can serve as a powerful and effective partisan arm of the 'woke speech police.'

But Jordan has opposed other anti-trust reform, including increasing the fees tech companies pay when they file a merger with the federal government to raise funds for the Federal Trade Commission's anti-trust division.

So far McCarthy has not prioritized anti-trust legislation aimed at Big Tech either.

In his 'Commitment to America' GOP agenda released ahead of midterms, McCarthy promised to 'confront Big Tech and advance free speech' by repealing Section 230 and bolstering anti-trust enforcement.

But he opposed a bipartisan pair of bills that would break up tech monopolies like Apple and Amazon and end their self-preferencing practices. Apple and Amazon's biggest defendant in Washington, Jeff Miller, is a close ally and personal friend of McCarthy.

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David Dayen

David Dayen is the executive editor of The American Prospect. His latest book, "Monopolized: Life in the Age of Corporate Power," was released in July 2020.

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Senator Kamala Harris has been selected as **the** running mate for Presidential hopeful Joe Biden, a decision which might pique **the** interest of **Silicon Valley**'s residents. Having said he would select a female running mate in March, Biden narrowed **the** field, though Harris has been one of **the** bookies favourites from **the** beginning of **the** process.



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[The White House](#) turned up [the](#) pressure on [Silicon Valley](#) to get a handle on vaccine misinformation Thursday, specifically singling out 12 people one group dubbed [the](#) "disinformation dozen," saying [they](#) were responsible for a great deal of misinformation about Covid-19.



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