

April 27, 2022

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

I write to request information regarding the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) plans to create a "Disinformation Governance Board" to purportedly counter misinformation related to homeland security issues. On April 27, 2022, *Politico* reported DHS is particularly focused on information related to "irregular migration and Russia."¹ Nina Jankowicz confirmed reports that she will serve as this board's executive director.²

The Biden Administration has not proven itself to be a credible arbiter of "disinformation." Instead, it has taken steps to silence information that is unflattering to this Administration under the guise of "disinformation." For example, unnamed intelligence officials, the media, and social media platforms engaged in a coordinated effort to censor stories about Hunter Biden's laptop and his questionable financial dealings under the false label of "disinformation."³

In fact, Ms. Jankowicz herself has been a beacon of misinformation online. She has published multiple tweets furthering the false media narrative about the Hunter Biden laptop.⁴ In one tweet she wrote, "IC has a high degree of confidence that the Kremlin used proxies to push influence narratives, including misleading or unsubstantiated claims about President Biden, to US media, officials, and influencers, some close to President Trump. A clear nod to the alleged Hunter laptop."⁵ In another, she referred to the origins of how the media came into possession of the contents of Hunter Biden's laptop as a "fairy tale about a laptop repair shop."⁶ She has also

¹ Eugene Daniels, Rachael Bade, and Ryan Lizza, "POLITICO Playbook: Fauci Pulls out of WHCD. Is Biden next?" *POLITICO*, April 27, 2022, <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/playbook/2022/04/27/fauci-pulls-out-of-whcd-is-biden-next-00028131>.

² Nina Jankowicz (@wiczipedia), Twitter (April 27, 2022, 7:17 AM), <https://twitter.com/wiczipedia/status/1519274470049042432>

³ Tyler Olsen, President Biden said Hunter laptop was Russian disinformation, but son now says it "could" be his," *Fox News*, Apr. 2, 2021, available at <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/president-biden-said-hunter-laptop-was-russian-disinformation-but-son-now-says-it-could-be-his>.

⁴ See Nina Jankowicz (@wiczipedia), Twitter (Oct. 22, 2020, 8:15 AM), <https://twitter.com/wiczipedia/status/1319251093298302976> (promoting an article that questioned the accuracy of the *New York Post's* reporting on the Hunter Biden laptop); see also Nina Jankowicz (@wiczipedia), Twitter (Oct. 22, 2020, 10:18 PM), <https://twitter.com/wiczipedia/status/1319463138107031553>.

⁵ Nina Jankowicz (@wiczipedia), Twitter (March 16, 2021, 2:22 PM), <https://twitter.com/wiczipedia/status/1371889543582990336>.

⁶ Nina Jankowicz (@wiczipedia), Twitter (Oct. 22, 2020, 8:39 AM), <https://twitter.com/wiczipedia/status/1319257015651368960>.

posted tweets pushing the Trump-Russia collusion hoax and another implying the United States is as corrupt as Ukraine.⁷

Now, DHS is creating a board to counter misinformation focusing on irregular migration and Russia and appointing a purveyor of misinformation to lead that effort.⁸ DHS is taking this action just weeks after announcing its plans to stop Title 42 expulsions at the southwest border, which has sparked a surge of illegal migrant crossing at the border, with CBP reporting an average of over 7,000 encounters a day in March 2022 compared with over 5,900 a day in February 2022.⁹ DHS even concedes it needs to be prepared to encounter 18,000 migrants a day at the southwest border once Title 42 is lifted.¹⁰

You claim this Administration's border policies are humane, but the crises caused by your policies have only added to the many tragedies caused by illegal immigration. I am concerned DHS's Disinformation Board will only serve to silence or censor those voices critical of your disastrous policies and serve a political cover for your failure to secure the border.

1. Provide the statute allowing DHS to create the Disinformation Board, appoint board members, and assign or hire staff.
2. How does DHS define "misinformation"?
3. What does DHS consider to be "irregular migration"?
4. What does DHS consider to be misinformation about irregular migration?
5. What DHS component or office is responsible for monitoring and collecting data on "misinformation"? How many staff are tasked with this assignment? What are their job descriptions and classifications?
6. What specific actions does DHS intend to take to "counter misinformation"?

⁷ See Nina Jankowicz (@wicipedia), Twitter (May 1, 2018, 6:50 AM), <https://twitter.com/wicipedia/status/991268617965600768>, see also Nina Jankowicz (@wicipedia), Twitter (Jan. 6, 2021, 3:50 PM) <https://twitter.com/wicipedia/status/1346922196476706819>.

⁸ Eugene Daniels, Rachael Bade, and Ryan Lizza, "POLITICO Playbook: Fauci Pulls out of WHCD. Is Biden next?" POLITICO, April 27, 2022, <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/playbook/2022/04/27/fauci-pulls-out-of-whcd-is-biden-next-00028131>.

⁹ "Southwest Land Border Encounters," U.S. Customs and Border Protection, accessed April 27, 2022, <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-land-border-encounters>.

¹⁰ Maria Sacchetti and Nick Miroff, "CDC to Phase out Border Restrictions; Increase in Crossings Expected," The Washington Post (WP Company, April 4, 2022), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2022/04/01/cdc-phase-out-border-restrictions-increase-crossings-expected/>.

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Please provide this information as soon as possible but no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 6, 2022. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Ron Johnson
U.S. Senator