

Senate Social Hearings Do Little to Reassure Facebook Users

Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg appeared in front of the Senate Intelligence Committee last Wednesday with Twitter founder Jack Dorsey in the latest hearing on Russian interference in the 2016 election. The leaders of the two largest social media companies in America testified about their process in determining which accounts are real, and which are potentially dangerous to mechanisms such as the American electoral system.

While Dorsey apologized, saying they were not prepared for the wave of troll armies, Sandberg stood defiant, saying, "We are more determined than our opponents, and we will keep fighting."

Sandberg also updated Congress on Facebook's progress on stopping fraudulent pages from surfacing and said they are working with other entities to stop the further spread of misinformation.

<https://twitter.com/CNBC/status/1037341477326807040>

There was one key moment when Sandberg told the committee, "Our focus [when looking for foreign accounts] is inauthenticity." Matt Binder, a reporter for Mashable [made an important point](#) on Sandberg's statement.

"When asked to approximate just how many Facebook accounts are 'inauthentic,' Sandberg replied between 3 and 4 percent. At Facebook's reported 2.23 billion active users, that would mean somewhere between 66,900,000 and 89,200,000 are inauthentic."

That staggering number may have some users of the site concerned over viewing their content. However,

Both Dorsey and Sandberg were also grilled by Sen. Kamala Harris (D-CA) on hate speech on their respective platforms. While both apologized and claimed to be on top of this issue, just this weekend, bots attacked users yet again.

<https://twitter.com/QEPLisaSpeaks/status/1038987221150261248>

Despite the updates, the hearings did little to re-assure the American people that leaders at both companies were on top of the situation, and with no clear way to determine which accounts are inauthentic, it will still be easy for hate and misinformation to slip through the cracks.