

Sparks fly at hearing on anti-conservative bias in Silicon Valley social media

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15



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Lawmakers clashed Tuesday at a contentious hearing over claims that social media platforms and tech companies are biased against conservative viewpoints.

Republicans on the House Judiciary Committee said the hearing addressed a serious issue. But Democrats said the hearing, coming one day after President Trump dismissed Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election during a press conference with Russian President Vladimir Putin, was a waste of time.

“This committee has oversight of the Department of Justice,” said Rep. Ted Lieu (D-Calif.). “Our president also disparaged the Department of Justice. Are we having a hearing on that? No.” Rep. Jerrold Nadler (N.Y.), the panel's top Democrat, tried to end the hearing early by introducing a motion to end discussion of alleged bias and instead move to an executive session on Russian election interference.

The largely symbolic motion was voted down 12-10.

Fellow Democrats, such as Reps. Jamie Raskin (Md.) and David Cicilline (R.I.) joined Nadler and Lieu in railing against conservatives for not putting enough focus on Trump and Russia.

Raskin called the conservative fears about bias a “fantasy.”

But Republicans pressed ahead with the hearing over how platforms handle conservative content, grilling three Silicon Valley executives: