

GOOGLE, FACEBOOK AND BIG TECH HIRE CIA AND NSA BOSSES TO STOP CONGRESS FROM PROTECTING THE PUBLIC

Intelligence Officials Secretly Paid by Big Tech to Fight Antitrust Reforms

The former officials claimed that allowing competition in Silicon Valley would help China and undermine national security.



[Lee Fang](#)

High-level former intelligence and national security officials have provided crucial assistance to Silicon Valley giants as the tech firms fought off efforts to weaken online monopolies and force competition on major platforms.

“We need to keep Big Tech strong — so it can keep America strong,” [claimed](#) Robert O’Brien, the former White House National Security Advisor to President Trump. O’Brien has [appeared](#) on cable news programs and penned [several opinion columns](#) rallying

opposition to tech antitrust reforms in Congress.

John Ratcliffe, the former Director of National Intelligence, Brian Kavanaugh, a former intelligence aide in the White House, and O'Brien jointly wrote to congressional leaders, warning darkly that certain legislative proposals to check the power of Amazon, Google, Meta, and Apple would embolden America's enemies.

"We note with certainty that our adversaries – especially China – will welcome any federal government actions that diminish the strength of the U.S. tech industry," the former intelligence officials wrote. The 2022 [letter](#) warned that reforms such as the Open App Markets Act and the American Innovation and Choice Online Act would leave the "tech industry weakened and vulnerable to the CCP.

The letter left unmentioned that the former officials were paid by tech industry lobbyists at the time as part of a campaign to suppress support for the legislation.

Tax disclosures show that the tech giants paid O'Brien's consulting firm, American Global Strategies LLC, at least [\\$1,012,500](#) through a group that lobbied policymakers on major tech policies.

5 Did any person listed on line 1a receive or accrue compensation for services rendered to the organization? *If "Yes," complete 3*

Section B. Independent Contractors

1 Complete this table for your five highest compensated independent contractors who received compensation from the organization. Report compensation for

(A)

Name and business address

AMERICAN GLOBAL STRATEGIES LLC, 3146 RED HILL AVE STE 125, C

HAMILTON PLACE STRATEGIES, 805 15TH ST NW STE 200, WASHINGT

FIREHOUSE STRATEGIES LLC, 1501 M ST NW STE 1100, WASHINGTON

GLOBAL STRATEGIES GROUP LLC, 215 PARK AVE S FL 15, NEW YORK

ARENT FOX LLP, 1717 K ST NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20006-5344

2 Total number of independent contractors (including but not including those who received more than \$100,000 of compensation from the organi

O'Brien, Ratcliffe, and Cavanaugh did not disclose the payments in the letter to congressional leaders. AGS did not respond to a request for comment.

The payments were made through The Computer and Communications Industry Association, a trade group that represents Amazon, Google, Apple, Meta, Uber, eBay, Intel, and other major technology firms. The CCIA annual report clarifies that defeating antitrust reforms such as the AICOA was among the top priorities for the group, which spent \$77 million in 2022, much of that budget going to lobbyists, public relations firms, and outside strategists.

The disclosures show that the tech group not only paid a group of former Trump intelligence officials but also retained the services of Global Strategy Group, a polling and consulting firm that advises the Democratic National Committee. CCIA, notably, [repeatedly cited](#) O'Brien's concerns around national security and China, casting him as a neutral expert rather than a paid consultant.

The Open App Markets App was designed to break Apple and Google's duopoly over the

smartphone app store market. Both companies maintain total control over which apps can appear on iPhone or Android devices. The companies use their control over the app markets to force app developers to pay as much as 30 percent in fees on every transaction.

The arrangement generates immense profits. Last year, Apple collected over \$23.7 billion in revenue from the app store, while Google made \$13.5 billion from its Android app store.

Far from empowering China, many Republican proponents of the Open App Markets App legislation noted that breaking up Apple and Google's hold over the smartphone app store would enable greater free expression and innovation. In the past, the two tech giants have removed conservative apps such as Parler from the app store, depriving users of the ability to download alternative forms of social media. The calls for reform have come from a [bipartisan](#) mix of lawmakers, start-ups, and other business groups that have contested the exorbitant fees and arbitrary processes used to screen apps.

The American Innovation and Choice Online Act similarly encourages competition by preventing tech platforms from self-preferencing their own products. The bill was designed to curb the practices of firms such as Google and Amazon from using their dominant position to crush potential adversaries.

The Silicon Valley giants deployed hundreds of millions of dollars in lobbying efforts to stymie the reforms. For Republicans, they crafted messages on national security and jobs. For Democrats, as other reports have [revealed](#), tech giants paid LGBT, Black, and Latino organizations to lobby against the reforms, claiming that powerful tech platforms are beneficial to communities of color and that greater competition online would lead to a rise in [hate speech](#).

The lobbying tactics have so far paid off. Every major tech antitrust and competition bill in Congress has died over the last four years. That has left enforcement action with the Department of Justice, Federal Trade Commission, and a mix of other plaintiffs who have challenged the power of the tech giants in court.

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