

Todd Kaminsky

October 3, 2017

Mark Zuckerberg
Facebook
1 Hacker Way
Menlo Park, California 94025

To Mark Zuckerberg:

I am heartened to see that you have created a new, more responsible policy on political advertisements. I applaud the commitment your company has made to ensure voters are not influenced by false or misleading content on your platform.

Unfortunately, voters from my district are among the victims of anonymous and false political advertising on social media.

Last year, during my campaign for State Senate in New York, a continuous stream of anonymous, extremely misleading and downright false ads attacking my credibility ran on Facebook. Some of these ads asserted I had the opposite position on important issues than actually I do. Some claimed that I had done things which I have not.

These ads were “sponsored” by anonymously funded user groups such as “The Real Todd Kaminsky.” We do not know who paid for these messages and will likely never know who exactly spread these lies.

Merely by publishing the ads, some of which are attached, Facebook also created the false impression that they came from an actual organization— an appearance of credibility they should not be granted. In fact, no such groups or organizations exist.

As I run for re-election, I know these types of ads will inevitably pop up again. Indeed, new false ads targeting me have run on Facebook in the last few months. I trust Facebook will respond swiftly and accordingly when we notify you of these ads in the future and I trust that as you are formulating a policy on “fake news,” you take into account that ads should disclose on their face who actually pays for them.

Sincerely,



Todd Kaminsky
Senator, 9th District