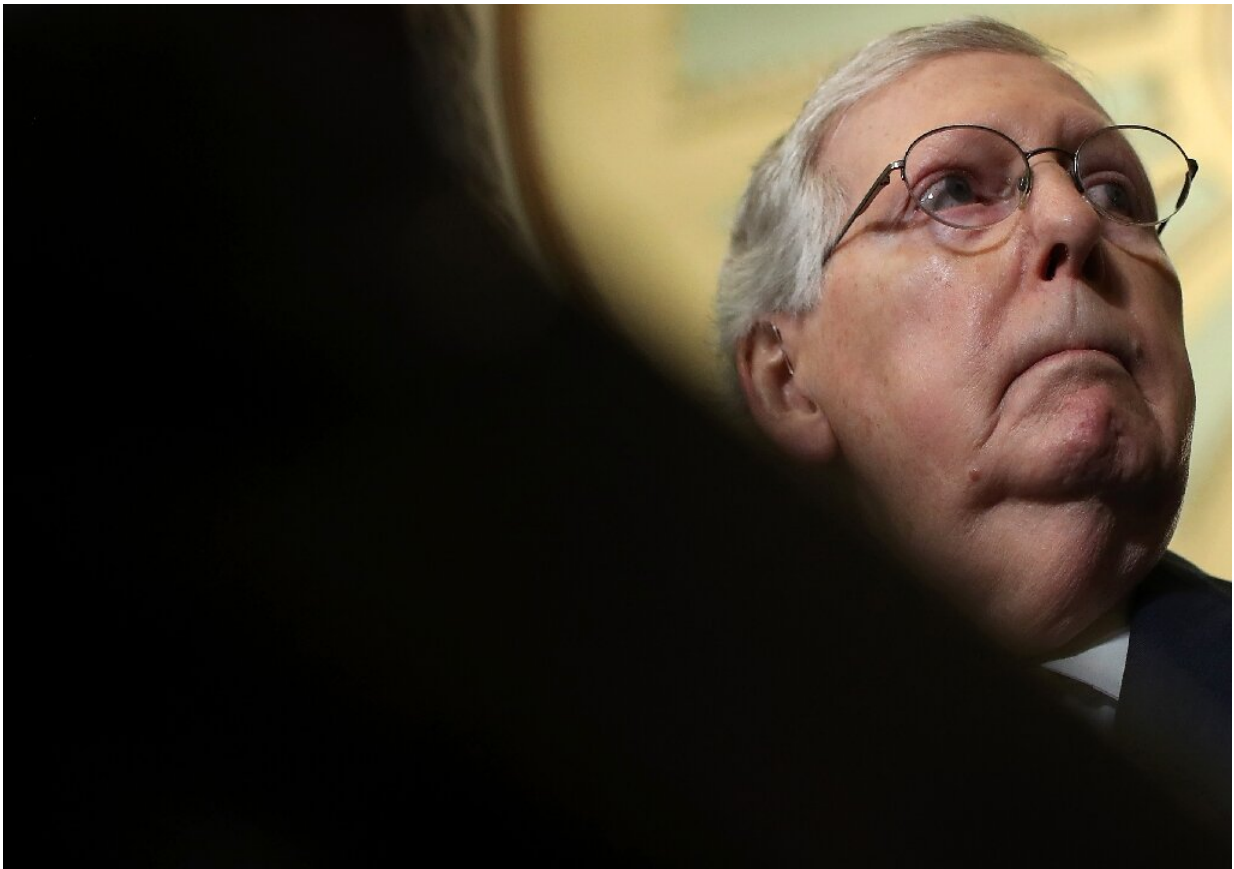


Republicans vow to not buy Twitter ads after McConnell blocked

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Twitter froze the "Team Mitch" account belonging to Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's re-election campaign for alleged abuses

President Donald Trump's re-election campaign and leading Republicans

on Thursday vowed to not buy Twitter ads after the social media platform froze Senator Mitch McConnell's re-election account for breaking site rules.

Twitter locked the "Team Mitch" account after it posted a video of protesters outside the Senate majority leader's home in Kentucky shouting that he should die.

The video violated Twitter's violent threats policy, "specifically threats involving physical safety," the social media platform said.

The demonstration came after a picture over the weekend went viral on social media of young McConnell supporters in "Team Mitch" t-shirts groping and choking a life-size cardboard cutout of New York Democrat Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez.

The conservative backlash over McConnell's frozen account was swift.

"Twitter's hostile actions toward Leader McConnell's campaign are outrageous, and we will not tolerate it," National Republican Senatorial Committee spokesman Jesse Hunt said in a statement.

He said his group "will suspend all spending with Twitter until further notice. We will not spend our resources on a platform that silences conservatives."

The Republican Party "and @TeamTrump stand with the @Team_Mitch and the @NRSC," tweeted Republican National Committee chief of staff Richard Walters.

"Any future ad \$ either organization was planning to spend with @Twitter has been halted until they address this disgusting bias," he wrote.

Republicans often complain that [social media platforms](#) try to silence conservative voices.

The weekend photo of Ocasio-Cortez led the congresswoman herself to fire back.

"Hey @senatemajldr - these young men look like they work for you," she tweeted Monday.

"Just wanted to clarify: are you paying for young men to practice groping & choking members of Congress w/ your payroll, or is this just the standard culture of #TeamMitch? Thanks."

The original Instagram photo was taken down and the user who posted it apologized.

McConnell's campaign manager, Kevin Golden, complained that "the far-left and the media" were working hard "to demonize, stereotype, and publicly castigate every young person who dares to get involved with Republican politics," noting that the young men in the photo were high school supporters.

Golden then condemned "aggressive, suggestive, or demeaning act toward life sized cardboard cut outs of any gender."

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