

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Justin Sun
Chief Executive Officer
BitTorrent, Inc.
301 Howard Street #2000
San Francisco, CA 94105

Charles Wayn
Chief Executive Officer
DLive
19450 Stevens Creek Blvd #100
Cupertino, CA 95014

February 9, 2021

Dear Mr. Sun and Mr. Wayn,

We write to you expressing concern about recent user activity in DLive communities attempting to attract American citizens, and particularly adolescent users, to white supremacy and domestic extremism. We noted the company's internal governance actions taken on January 17th, 2021, in the wake of the riots at the U.S. Capitol Building on January 6th, 2021¹; however, it is evident that oversight from outside of the company's internal review body may be necessary. According to media reports, DLive CEO Charles Wayn stated last year in a set of emails that the company strategy to combat extreme right-wing content was to "tolerate" them and allow other more popular content producers to "dilute" their reach.² If true, this is unacceptable.

During the January 6th, 2021, storming of the United States Capitol, your platform live streamed a number of individuals who entered and were around the building. Several of these individuals earned thousands of dollars in DLive's digital currency that day, and a number received large donations through the platform ahead of the event. One individual received \$2,800 in a live stream on January 5th, 2021, in which he encouraged his viewers to murder elected officials.³ We understand that DLive has supposedly removed

¹ Wayn, Charles. "An Open Letter to the DLive Community." *DLive Community Announcements*, (January 17th, 2021). <https://community.dlive.tv/2021/01/17/an-open-letter-to-the-dlive-community/>

² Lorenz, Taylor and Browning, Kelly. "Pro-Trump Mob Livestreamed Its Rampage, and Made Money Doing It." *New York Times*. (January 8th, 2021) <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/08/technology/dlive-capitol-mob.html>

³Squire, Megan. *Twitter Post*. (January 5th, 2021) <https://bit.ly/36KIQ2J>

all accounts that streamed from the U.S. Capitol on January 6th and restricted the use of digital currency exchanges for all “non-gaming” content. However, there are still concerns that need to be addressed as youth users continue to utilize your platform.

As adolescents continue to spend large amounts of time online attending virtual class during the COVID-19 pandemic, academic experts warn that youth using your platform are being exposed to hateful, and in some cases targeted, rhetoric.⁴ The Federal Bureau of Investigation clearly states that white supremacists and domestic extremists utilize “social networking” and “internet games” to “lure, recruit, and train vulnerable individuals.”⁵ Content identified on the DLive platform by researchers at the Southern Poverty Law Center as influencing youth and adolescents with extremist views was mainly gaming content, not just “non-gaming” or “x-tag” content.⁶ We also note that there are no restrictions on viewing content labeled in the “x-tag” section.⁷ As domestic extremists attempt to expand their influence and reach, it is incumbent upon platforms such as DLive to actively mitigate these efforts.

As members of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, our concern is that online platforms such as DLive are being used to promulgate extremist views that incite offline conflict and violence. We have worked with other platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube to reform their governance practices around extremist content and that work is still ongoing. But it is clear that DLive is well behind its peers in platform governance and needs to take serious reformative actions.

We request the following information regarding ongoing efforts within DLive and its parent company, BitTorrent, to combat domestic extremism and white supremacy on the platform:

1. Does DLive CEO Charles Wayn still maintain that the company strategy to “tolerate” right-wing extremism is effective?
2. What proactive measures, if any, is DLive taking to protect youth and adolescent users from extremist content aimed to “lure” and “recruit” individuals?
 - a. Is “gaming” content being thoroughly reviewed for extremist content?
3. As DLive allows the exchange of digital currency facilitated by BitTorrent and their operational cryptocurrency exchange, Tron, what oversight mechanisms are used to identify individuals financing extremist content?
 - a. Are there any mechanisms in place to identify foreign-based blockchain donations to users?
 - b. Did DLive or BitTorrent identify any foreign-based blockchain donations to individuals who were subsequently removed from the platform after the January 6th Capitol riots?

⁴ Keierleber, Mark. “How white supremacists recruit teen culture warriors in gaming communities” *Fast Company*. (February 1st, 2021) <https://www.fastcompany.com/90599113/white-supremacists-gaming-sites-dlive>

⁵ Federal Bureau of Investigation Website. “Don’t Be A Puppet.” <https://www.fbi.gov/cve508/teen-website/how>

⁶ Keierleber, Mark. “How white supremacists recruit teen culture warriors in gaming communities” *Fast Company*. (February 1st, 2021) <https://www.fastcompany.com/90599113/white-supremacists-gaming-sites-dlive>

⁷ Wayn, Charles. “An Open Letter to the DLive Community.” *DLive Community Announcements*, (January 17th, 2021). <https://community.dlive.tv/2021/01/17/an-open-letter-to-the-dlive-community/>

The new rules outlined on January 17th, 2021, by DLive CEO Charles Wayn were a first step, but it is important that the effectiveness of these reforms is shared with Congressional authorities. Please reply to this request by February 12th, 2021 and contact our staff with any questions you may have on the specifics of the inquiry.

Sincerely,



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier
Member of Congress