Congress asks 8chan's owner to testify following recent mass shootings

Congressional leaders are requesting that the owner of 8chan, Jim Watkins, testify before the House Homeland Security Committee to inform the body on what the fringe forum is doing to combat the proliferation of extremist content.

"Regrettably, this is at least the third act of white supremacist extremist violence linked to your website this year," Reps. Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS) and Mike Rogers (R-AL) wrote. "Americans deserve to know what, if anything, you, as the owner and operator, are doing to address the proliferation of extremist content on 8chan."

"Americans deserve to know"

Over the past four months, three suspected white supremacist terror attacks occurred after the shooters posted racist screeds describing their motives onto the fringe message board, 8chan. Two of those attacks took place in the United States. The initial American attack was a synagogue shooting in Poway, California, and the second occurring over the weekend in El Paso, Texas.

These two shootings were likely inspired by the Christchurch, New Zealand attacker who first published a racist, white supremacist essay on the message board this past April before killing dozens of people in a mosque. The Christchurch shooter live-streamed this attack on Facebook and re-uploads of the footage still show up on the platform and others like Twitter to this day.

As a response to Christchurch, Thompson reached out to the social media companies asking them to prioritize the removal of the footage and other far-right domestic terrorist content from their platforms.

The committee’s letter was sent to Watkins through the mail, email, and Twitter. 8chan and its representatives have yet to respond publicly to the request.

https://www.theverge.com/2019/8/6/20757675/8chan-el-paso-shooting-jim-watkins-congress-homeland