



May 11, 2021

***Portland (ME) Press***

***Herald***

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***Next TV***

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***The Hill***

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A group of 40 state attorneys general on Monday urged Facebook Chief Executive Mark Zuckerberg to abandon plans to launch a version of Instagram for children under the age of 13. "Use of social media can be detrimental to the health and well-being of children, who are not equipped to navigate the challenges of having a social media account," the officials said in a letter. "Further, Facebook has historically failed to protect the welfare of children on its platforms," they said.

The letter also signed by the attorneys general of the District of Columbia and three U.S. territories. A Facebook spokesman said the company has "just started exploring a version of Instagram for kids" and said it was committing "to not showing ads in any Instagram experience we develop for people under the age of 13".

The company said it agreed any version of the photo-sharing app Instagram "must prioritize their safety and privacy, and we will consult with experts in child development, child safety and mental health, and privacy advocates to inform it". The bipartisan letter, which was signed by the attorneys general of New York, Texas, California, Massachusetts, Nebraska, Michigan, Ohio, Utah, Vermont, Kentucky and others said "it appears that Facebook is not responding to a need, but instead creating one".

Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey said on Twitter that a children's Instagram "is a shameful attempt to exploit and profit off vulnerable people". The letter said media reports from 2019 showed that Facebook's Messenger Kids app, intended for kids between the ages of six and 12, "contained a significant design flaw that allowed children to circumvent restrictions on online interactions and join group chats with strangers that were not previously approved by the children's parents". Last month, the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood also called on Zuckerberg not to create a kids version, saying it would put them at "great risk." – **Reuters**

NBC said it will not broadcast the **Golden Globes** next year after several major entertainment companies and stars indicated that they would not participate in the awards show or work with the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, the organization that oversees the event.

At issue is how the HFPA runs the Globes. The organization, comprised of 87 foreign journalists, has long been criticized by Hollywood executives for its small size and outsize influence. Specifically, the organization has been criticized for accepting paid trips and other perks from studios and cozying up

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to big stars in return for access. The group has also been under fire for its lack of diversity and earlier this year confirmed it had no Black members.

The concerns surrounding the HFPA operations were raised again earlier this year in a Los Angeles Times report. In response to the Los Angeles Times, the HFPA said, "None of these allegations has ever been proven in court or in any investigation, [and they] simply repeat old tropes about the HFPA and reflect unconscious bias against the HFPA's diverse membership."

The HFPA last week announced a new set of changes to address its diversity and oversight, including expanding its membership by 50% over the next 18 months and making changes within its executive ranks. "We understand that the hard work starts now and we remain dedicated to becoming a better organization and an example of diversity, transparency, and accountability in this industry," the HFPA posted on its website last week.

Those efforts were not enough to appease its critics. In the past few days, Netflix, Amazon and WarnerMedia said they would not participate in the Golden Globes unless the organization initiated a substantial overhaul of its operations. Celebrities including Scarlett Johansson and Mark Ruffalo also have spoken out against the group in recent days. Tom Cruise returned his three Golden Globe trophies for "Born on the Fourth of July," "Jerry Maguire" and "Magnolia" in protest, according to a person with knowledge of the matter.

NBC said it believes the HFPA wants to reform but "change of this magnitude takes time and work, and we feel strongly that the HFPA needs time to do it right." NBC said it will not broadcast the Globes in 2022 and is "hopeful we will be in a position to air the show in January 2023."

In a statement Monday, HFPA board members said it vowed to reform. "Regardless of the next air date of the Golden Globes, implementing transformational changes as quickly—and as thoughtfully—as possible remains the top priority for our organization." An NBC spokeswoman declined to comment on whether its contract with the Globes would allow HFPA to move the show to another outlet next year.

The Golden Globes for decades has been criticized by the Hollywood establishment. Hosts of the show, particularly Ricky Gervais, have made jokes about the organization during the broadcasts of the awards. "Many talented people of color were snubbed in major categories. Unfortunately, there's nothing we can do about that. The Hollywood Foreign Press are all very, very racist," he said during his 2020 monologue. Despite all of that, the show has been a solid performer in the ratings. It is seen as less stuffy than the Oscars with host and guest drinking throughout the event.

**This year's show however sustained a 62% drop in viewers,** much of which could be attributed to disinterested audiences during the Covid pandemic and a glitchy show mostly done online. NBC's current deal still has several years left to run and the network pays \$60 million annually in rights fees for the show, people familiar with the matter said. By comparison the Oscars are in the \$100 million range. – ***Wall Street Journal***

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If you're still interested in a mail or absentee ballot for the May 18 primary election, the last day to apply for one is Tuesday, May 11. State Act 77, which was passed in 2019, allows for no excuse mail-in voting.

Registered voters have until 5 p.m. on Tuesday, May 11, to request a mail-in or absentee ballot. You can request a ballot [online through the state here](#). You will need a valid Pennsylvania driver's license, a Department of Transportation photo ID or the last 4 digits of your Social Security number. To be counted, a mail-in ballot must be returned to your county election's office by 8 p.m., Tuesday, May 18. Completed ballots can also be returned by mail, but May 18 postmarks will not be enough, according to election officials. The ballot must be sealed inside of a privacy envelope and the outer return envelope properly

signed and dated. For full instructions on how to properly return your ballot, [go here](#). A [sample ballot is available here](#).

If there is anything wrong with your ballot, including a missing secrecy envelope, [contact your county election office](#) so it can send you a replacement or provide other guidance on casting your ballot. Voters may only drop off their own ballots. Third-party return of ballots is prohibited unless the person returning the ballot is rendering assistance to a disabled voter or emergency absentee voter and has a signed "Certification of Designated Agent" or "Declaration of Need of Assistance" form. A copy of these forms [can be downloaded here](#).

In Allegheny County, beginning Wednesday and continuing through May 18, voters will be able to pull up outside the County Office Building at 542 Forbes Ave. in Downtown and leave their car to go into the lobby to return their ballot. Attendants will be on duty to direct traffic and voters. Voters can [track the status](#) of their mail-in or absentee ballots at VotesPA.com. – **Pittsburgh Post-Gazette**



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