

Frances Haugen's lawyers accuse Facebook of misleading investors about covid and climate misinformation in Securities and Exchange Commission complaints | The Washington Post

By Cat Zakrzewski

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A pair of whistleblower complaints filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission this month allege Facebook misled investors about its efforts to combat climate change and covid-19 misinformation, according to redacted copies of the documents viewed by The Washington Post.

Filed by Whistleblower Aid, a nonprofit representing former Facebook employee Frances Haugen, the complaints allege that the company made “material misrepresentations and omissions in statements to investors” about its efforts to combat misinformation. The complaints, which have not been previously reported, build on Haugen’s congressional testimony and filings her lawyers submitted to the financial regulator last year, and they draw from thousands of internal documents that she took before leaving the company in May.

One complaint alleges that climate change misinformation was prominently available on Facebook and that the company lacked a clear policy on the issue as recently as last year, despite Facebook executives’ committing to fight the “global crisis” during earnings calls. A second, companion complaint argues that while Facebook executives were publicly touting their efforts to remove harmful covid misinformation, internal documents “paint a different story.” The complaint cites internal company communications about the spread of vaccine hesitancy in comments and internal surveys that showed the proliferation of covid misinformation on the service.

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