

Lawyer for Infowars broadcaster Alex Jones criticizes Sen. Richard Blumenthal's comments in Senate hearing, saying attacks are effort to 'chill speech'

By NICHOLAS RONDINONE

An attorney for Alex Jones, the conspiracy theorist and founder of Infowars, spoke out Wednesday about comments made by Sen. Richard Blumenthal, telling the head of the U.S. Senate judiciary committee that the senator's attacks are an effort to "chill speech."

During a subcommittee hearing on censorship through search engines Tuesday, Blumenthal, questioned a Google executive about why the company could not get rid of Jones' videos posted on YouTube that referred to the 2012 Sandy Hook shooting as a hoax.

"This stuff is not speech. It's incitement, harassment, defamation," Blumenthal said to Karan K. Bhatia, Google's vice president for public policy and government affairs.

Norm Pattis said Blumenthal's various attacks on Mr. Jones are part of a concerted effort to chill speech in anticipation of the 2020 general election.

Norm Pattis, Jones' lawyer, said in a letter to U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham, R- S.C., that he and Jones take "grave exception" to the remarks made by Blumenthal. "We do question why, in a hearing about censorship by Google, a United States Senator was calling for more effective silencing of the right to speak freely," Pattis wrote in the letter.

Pattis is representing Jones in a lawsuit filed in Superior Court by parents of the Sandy Hook victims that accuses Jones and his company of profiting from saying the 2012 school shooting was a hoax.

Pattis wrote that they are concerned that these attacks are being waged on Jones without an opportunity for him to appear and "set the record straight."

He said Blumenthal's "various attacks on Mr. Jones are part of a concerted effort to chill speech in anticipation of the 2020 general election."

Chris Collibee, a spokesman for Blumenthal, said Wednesday: "This letter is unworthy of dignifying with a response."

On Wednesday, Jones discussed Blumenthal's comments on his webcast show. Jones said: "He wants me shut down. How am I supposed to get a fair trial?"

Jones said it's "unAmerican" that he cannot respond to the attacks in these committee hearings. After writing the letter, Pattis, who called into the show, said he is hopeful Jones or a representative will get an invitation to speak to the committee.

The firm representing the Sandy Hook families, Koskoff, Koskoff & Beider, employs Blumenthal's son -- Matt Blumenthal -- something Richard Blumenthal acknowledged during the hearing and Pattis mentions in his letter to Graham, head of the judiciary committee.

Jones was sanctioned last month by a Bridgeport judge after a tirade on his webcast show targeted the attorney representing the Sandy Hook families. The state Supreme Court agreed to hear an appeal.

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