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Violent Threats Against US Judges Are Skyrocketing Online

Threatening social media posts targeting US judges have increased by more than 300 percent since last year, a new report shows.



PHOTO-ILLUSTRATION: WIRED STAFF; HAROLD M. LAMBERT/GETTY IMAGES



VIOLENT THREATS AND calls for impeachment on social media platforms against US judges have skyrocketed by 327 percent since last year, according to new research from the Global Project Against Hate and Extremism (GPAHE).

Many of the posts are violent and politically charged. “THIS JUDGE NEEDS TO BE REMOVED AND CHARGED W TREASON,” one user posted on TikTok in March, referring to [Judge James Boasberg](#), who found probable cause for contempt against the Trump administration after it refused to turn around deportation flights on March 15.

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“That bitch is guilty of treason, sedition and insurrection; lock up that bitch and send her to gitmo,” a user called Old School Cowboy wrote on Gab about California judge Jennifer Thurston, who [ruled last month](#) that Customs and Border Protection agents could no longer stop undocumented immigrants without reasonable suspicion that they were in violation of the law.

While threats of this nature were previously limited to fringe corners of the internet, GPAHE researchers found that they are now openly shared on mainstream platforms like TikTok. Along with TikTok, the researchers also compiled instances of violent threats and calls for impeachment against judges on President Donald Trump’s Truth Social platform, the anonymous message board 4chan, in the comments of video posts on the video-sharing site Rumble, and on Gab, a far-right social network.

This uptick in posts comes as Trump, [Elon Musk](#), and other major figures on the right have shared [inflammatory rhetoric](#) about the judiciary, especially in cases where judges have ruled against the current administration. In a Truth Social post in March, Trump called [Boasberg](#) a “radical left lunatic” who “should be IMPEACHED!!!” Musk

called the court decisions impeding his so-called Department of Government Efficiency a “judicial coup,” adding in a post on X: “impeach the judges.”

White House chief of staff Stephen Miller and US attorney general Pam Bondi have expressed similar views in recent months. Andy Ogles, a Republican congressman from Tennessee, introduced articles to impeach Judge John Bates after Bates ruled against the Trump administration’s removal of the government’s public health websites. Ogles posted on X, without evidence, that the judge was a “predator” and a “RADICAL LGBTQ activist.”

“These anti-Trump browbeaters have zero credibility and were conveniently silent when the former president weaponized his administration against his political opponents, Catholics, parents, and doctors who opposed his radical agenda. President Trump will always stand for law and order and the US Constitution,” White House spokesperson Harrison Fields tells WIRED.

There are real-world impacts of these posts. Judge John Coughenour was subjected to a bomb threat and a swatting attack in January after ruling against the Trump administration. Boasberg’s brother, a former school superintendent, was given a security detail in March after far-right activist Laura Loomer made baseless allegations against him.

“There’s no question that we’re seeing a normalization of bigoted, violent, and other harmful speech on mainstream platforms,” Wendy Via, the CEO and president of GPAHE tells WIRED. “Trump and other extreme influencers’ threatening and mean-spirited posts and public comments has moved the once unthinkable to commonplace, online, in our communities, and in our political discourse, without thought to the very real dangers of regularly demonizing those that oppose you.” The researchers found that the social platforms they examined all saw a significant spike in threatening posts in March.

“This report relies on anecdotal observations and exaggerated data to distort the reality of our platform,” TikTok spokesperson Ben Rathe tells WIRED. “Nevertheless, we continue to enforce our policies which strictly prohibit violent threats.”

In May last year, the researchers found just 35 threatening posts about US judges on TikTok. In March this year, they say that number had risen to 223 instances, marking

a 537 percent increase.

“Given the large user base of TikTok, it’s likely that it was only a matter of time before some content creators started to carve out a niche for users that sought the sort of threats we see today,” says Luke Baumgartner, a research fellow at George Washington University’s Program on Extremism. “I think it’s broadly a reflection of how some of those that occupy the highest political positions in the country are comfortable with openly threatening judges, giving ordinary social media users a chance to pass on the message.”

On Truth Social, where threats against judges were already commonplace, the number of posts, according to GPAHE, rose from 2,232 in May 2024 to 9,462 in March 2025, with an increase of 324 percent. Many of these posts were written directly in response to Trump’s own threats against judges.

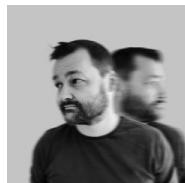
The largest increase in threatening posts was recorded on Gab, a platform favored by white supremacists and antisemites, with threatening posts rising from 273 in May 2024 to 3,210 in March 2025, a 1,076 percent increase. 4chan and Rumble also saw significant increases in posts.

“All of a sudden you people are against calling for the impeachment of government officials or calling for them to be tried and convicted for treason? That’s funny,” Andrew Torba, the Christian nationalist who runs Gab, tells WIRED. Torba did not respond when asked specifically about the violent threats posted on his platform.

Truth Social, 4chan, and Rumble did not respond to WIRED’s request for comment.

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[David Gilbert](#) is a reporter at WIRED covering disinformation, online extremism, and how these two online trends impact people's lives across the globe, with a special focus on the 2024 US presidential election. Prior to joining WIRED, he worked at VICE News. He lives in Ireland. ... [Read more](#)

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