



## Tanden apologizes for Tweets disparaging GOP

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President Biden's nominee to lead the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Neera Tanden, on Tuesday apologized for her past tweets disparaging Republicans.

"I regret that language and take responsibility for it," Tanden said in a line added to the prepared opening statement released to the media ahead of her confirmation hearing with the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

"Over the last few years, it's been part of my role to be an impassioned advocate. I understand, though, that the role of OMB director calls for bipartisan action, as well as a nonpartisan adherence to facts and evidence," she said.

Republicans on the committee pilloried Tanden for scathing language she used against Republicans on Twitter while heading up the left-leaning Center for American Progress.

Sen. Rob Portman (Ohio), the panel's ranking Republican, went through a litany of tweets in which Tanden had referred to Sen. Susan Collins (R-Maine) as "the worst," said Sen. Tom Cotton (R-Ark.) was "a fraud," proclaimed that "vampires have more heart" than Texas Sen. Ted Cruz (R), and compared then-Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) to the villain in the "Harry Potter" series, Voldemort.

"I believe that the tone, the content and the aggressive partisanship of some of your public statements have added to the troubling trend of more incivility in our public life," Portman said.

He also noted that even after Tanden deleted thousands of old tweets, his staff found nine pages worth of Tweets among her remaining posts about Cruz.

"I recognize the concern. I deeply regret and apologize for my language," Tanden responded, adding that the onus was on her to earn the trust of GOP senators.

She noted that, despite the rhetoric, she had worked with right-leaning think tanks such as the American Enterprise Institute and the Cato Institute in the past.

Tanden denied that she deleted her old tweets at the behest of the incoming Biden administration, and said she had removed them over the course of several months because she regretted them.

Tanden's tweets made her an early target for Republicans among Biden's nominees, raising questions about her confirmation.

The line of questioning on Tuesday marked somewhat of a partisan role reversal from recent years. During the Trump administration, Republican senators were frequently confronted with questions about President Trump's incendiary and insulting tweets.

During his time in office, Trump called Biden "weak, both mentally and physically," referred to Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) as "crazy," told several congresswomen of color to "go home," and threatened war with Iran and North Korea on Twitter.

GOP senators frequently responded by saying they disagreed with Trump's tone, brushing them off as distractions, or simply claiming they had not seen the tweets in question.

Tanden is scheduled to testify in an additional nomination hearing Wednesday before the Senate Budget Committee.