



## Meta to end news access for Canadians if Online News Act becomes law

### Description

Facebook-parent Meta Platforms Inc said on Saturday that it would end availability of news content for Canadians on its platforms if the country's Online News Act passes in its current form.

The "Online News Act," or House of Commons bill C-18, introduced in April last year laid out rules to force platforms like Meta and Alphabet Inc's Google to negotiate commercial deals and pay news publishers for their content.

"A legislative framework that compels us to pay for links or content that we do not post, and which are not the reason the vast majority of people use our platforms, is neither sustainable nor workable," a Meta spokesperson said as reason to suspend news access in the country.

Meta's move comes after Google last month started testing limited news censorship as a potential response to the bill.

Canada's news media industry has asked the government for more regulation of tech companies to allow the industry to recoup financial losses it has suffered in the years as tech giants like Google and Meta steadily gain greater market share of advertising.

In a statement on Sunday, Canadian Heritage Minister Pablo Rodriguez said it was disappointing to see Facebook resorting to threats instead of working with the Canadian government in good faith, and the C-18 bill had nothing to do with how Facebook makes news available to Canadians.

"All we're asking Facebook to do is negotiate fair deals with news outlets when they profit from their work," Rodriguez said. "This is part of a disappointing trend this week that tech giants would rather pull news than pay their fair share."

Facebook last year raised concerns about the legislation and warned it might be forced to block news-sharing on its platform.

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