



New Senate Bill Would Create Federal Agency to Police Americans for 'Misinformation' and 'Hate Speech'

Description

A new Senate bill would create a federal agency to police Americans' speech for "misinformation" and "hate speech" if passed by the Congress.

The bill was brought forth by Colorado U.S. Senator Michael Bennet and is dubbed the Digital Platform Commission Act (DPCA). As the senator announced, the legislation would "create an expert federal body empowered to provide comprehensive, sector-specific regulation of digital platforms to protect consumers, promote competition, and defend the public interest."

"The new Federal Digital Platform Commission would have the mandate, jurisdiction, and broad set of tools to develop and enforce thoughtful guardrails for a sector that has been left for too long to write its own rules, with serious consequences for everything from teen mental health to disinformation to anticompetitive practices that have hurt small businesses," the senator argued.

"As a country, we should take pride that most of the world's leading tech companies were founded in America. But they aren't start-ups anymore. Today they rank among the most powerful companies in human history. It's past time for a thoughtful and comprehensive approach to regulating digital platforms that have amassed extraordinary power over our economy, society, and democracy," said Bennet. "We don't have to choose between letting digital platforms write their own rules, allowing competitors like China and the E.U. write those rules, or leaving it to politicians in Congress. We should follow the long precedent in American history of empowering an expert body to protect the public interest through common sense rules and oversight for complex and powerful sectors of the economy."

The new Federal Digital Platform Commission would have five commissioners appointed by the president and confirmed by the U.S. Senate. It would be "staffed by experts with a background in areas such as computer science, software development, and technology policy."

The Commission would have "a broad mandate to promote the public interest, with specific directives to protect consumers, promote competition, and assure the fairness and safety of algorithms on digital platforms, among other areas," the senator's statement added. "To fulfill its mandate, the Commission

would have the authority to promulgate rules, impose civil penalties, hold hearings, conduct investigations, and support research. It could also designate ‘systemically important digital platforms’ subject to additional oversight, regulation, and merger review.”

The Digital Platform Commission Act has garnered support from various experts and organizations. Former Federal Communications Commission Chairman Tom Wheeler commends the bill for modernizing national policies and introducing an agile regulatory model suitable for the digital age. Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser emphasizes the need for federal action and a regulatory framework to protect citizens in the online world. Public Knowledge, a nonprofit organization, endorses the bill as a consumer-centered approach to holding online platforms accountable. Other supporters include the Center for Humane Technology, communication and technology policy experts from Georgetown University and Yale School of Management, and various advocacy groups concerned with the impact of digital platforms on democracy, youth, and public health.

“The Digital Platform Commission Act builds the capacity a 21st century democracy needs to align our rapidly changing digital landscape with public interest,” said Center for Humane Technology.

As Reclaim the Net noted on Twitter, the bill would “empower a new federal agency to create a council that establishes ‘enforceable behavioral codes’ on social media platforms and AI. The council will include ‘disinformation’ experts.”

? A new bill wants to empower a new federal agency to create a council that establishes “enforceable behavioral codes” on social media platforms and AI. The council will include “disinformation” experts. pic.twitter.com/m9MdSI9kda

— Reclaim The Net (@ReclaimTheNetHQ) [May 18, 2023](#)

“The bill also has age verification requirements,” Reclaim the Net added.

“This is unconstitutional, also evil and stupid,” Constitutional attorney Harmeet Dhillon bluntly [remarked](#).

The bill currently lacks specific safeguards to protect free speech and ensure that regulations implemented by the commission do not unduly infringe upon individuals’ constitutional rights. Instead, it relies upon government-appointed “experts” who would doubtless act to police state-approved narratives and policies. Without robust protections for free expression, there is a risk of chilling effects on online discourse, as well as stifling innovation and creativity.

The Twitter Files, meanwhile, continues to document the many abuses of free speech committed by the “misinformation” and “hate speech” moderators at Big Tech companies.

1. Twitter Provided Privileged Access to Banning Queen, Taylor Lorenz [#TwitterFiles](#)

Twitter engineer walking me through their reporting system, “Wow! She’s a heavy user.”
pic.twitter.com/z7Y7q5OEyi

— Paul D. Thacker (@thackerpd) [May 18, 2023](#)

“Lorenz had more than special reporting access to get accounts banned,” journalist Paul Thacker reported. “When Tucker Carlson did a piece ridiculing her, Twitter put out an alert-‘We need to be careful with her’.”

This is the kind of special privilege for ‘experts’ that has Americans justifiably suspect about double standards and political bias.

In summary, the U.S. government cannot be entrusted to police the Internet for “misinformation.” As Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) has [pointed out](#), “the largest area of misinformation is coming from the government.”

by Kyle Becker

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Date Created

05/21/2023