



“Antitrust” Bills May Secretly Pave Way for MORE Big Tech Censorship

Is the latest “bipartisan” effort to curb Big Tech nothing more than a Trojan Horse?

Although some conservatives have thrown their support behind two bills ostensibly aimed at reducing the power of tech companies such as Google and Apple, the “antitrust” bills are, in fact, being praised by progressives who see them as a vehicle for enabling more censorship.

The first piece of legislation is the American Choice and Innovation Online Act (ACIOA), which claims to restrict Big Tech firms’ ability to favor their own products over those of other companies using their platforms. Similarly, the Open App Marketplace Act is intended to limit tech platforms from either boosting their own apps or making it mandatory to use their app stores, such as the Apple App Store and Google Play.



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The left-wing think tank Center for American Progress published an analysis of the two bills and endorsed both of them. The authors of the [analysis](#), titled “Evaluating 2 Tech Antitrust Bills To Restore Competition Online,” were Erin Simpson, the center’s technology director, and Adam Conner — who was previously a major lobbyist for Facebook.

As seen in an [executive summary](#) of their report, both Simpson and Conner criticize Big Tech for not going far enough in censoring speech. They even want the government to establish “best practices” for censorship to take place.

The report’s authors believe the two bills will result in “much-needed improvements in content moderation practices and technologies.” Their analysis quotes Aaron Schurr, the general counsel for the crowd-sourced review platform Yelp, who argues the legislation does not “prevent hate speech or stop vaccine disinformation as ‘discriminatory’ behavior.”

Simpson and Conner even contend that the ACIOA will still allow for Big Tech to censor someone such as Alex Jones due to his “long history attacking victims of a school shooting and spreading false cures for COVID-19.” They continued, “among other outrages, these actions should fall squarely in the category of YouTube’s ability to take action to protect the safety or security of its users.”

“Brand safety” is another exception under which the authors posit Big Tech will be allowed to continue to censor, as these tech platforms “are primarily funded by advertising and have heavily touted their efforts around ‘brand safety’ to their advertisers, marketing it as a core feature of their advertising products.”



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on June 9, 2022

Some conservatives believe the two pieces of legislation will crack down on Big Tech censorship. This is the stance of columnists Rachel Bovard and Jon Schweppe, who [wrote](#) at the *Orlando Sentinel* that “these monopolies don’t just distort the market, they distort the free exchange of ideas.”

Recounting the story of how Twitter alternative Parler was essentially killed after Apple and Google simultaneously removed it from their App Stores and Amazon Web Services cut off its hosting, Schweppe and Bovard write:

This is not the kind of free market capitalism that conservatives support. Predatory monopolies are the engines of socialist economies, not capitalist ones. Unchecked monopoly power distorts the free market by silencing opponents, crushing competitors, and killing innovation. Conservatives have always understood where this type of overwhelming, concentrated power leads, whether in government or in any other institution. And, as President Biden’s increasingly aggressive demands for more Big Tech censorship have shown, the line between public and private is becoming vanishingly thin.

... Has any propaganda machine had more totalizing power over the spread of facts and narratives than Google has? These companies find it within their power to ban businesses, news stories, books, scientific papers, legal defense funds, campaign ads, House candidates, congressional testimony, sitting senators and the President of the United States. “Content moderators” in Silicon Valley should not have such power, but as it stands currently, they absolutely do.

As [Breitbart News](#) notes, Noah Peters, the attorney who has taken on both Twitter and Google, does not trust that the two bills in question will reduce censorship. He states: “We can readily foresee how Big Tech companies will interpret this language. Virtually every Big Tech platform has a ‘trust and safety’ or ‘safety’ section in their Terms of Service, including rules against so-called hate speech, extremism, and misinformation.”

Conservatives are rightly concerned at the power Big Tech has to stifle speech in our Republic. But is the desire for reform in danger of being hijacked by forces who want *more* censorship, not less?



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