

Senate Joint Memorial 8

Sponsored by Senators THATCHER, LINTHICUM, HEARD; Senators BENTZ, BOQUIST, GIROD, HANSELL, OLSEN

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Calls on chief executive officers of certain social media companies to ensure fair representation of conservative views.

JOINT MEMORIAL

To Mark Zuckerberg, chief executive officer of Facebook, Inc., and Jack Dorsey, chief executive officer of Twitter, Inc.:

We, your memorialists, the Eightieth Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

Whereas numerous publications in the last year have reported that social media companies, notably including Facebook, Inc., and Twitter, Inc., have implemented policies to curate news and remove content from search results that have disproportionately impacted conservative users and conservative views; and

Whereas Facebook, Inc., and Twitter, Inc., have become primary sources of news, opinion and social awareness for millions of users in this country and around the world; and

Whereas in a country with a long tradition of free speech and the free flow of information in an information marketplace, a biased suppression of views that run contrary to those of other people, especially the views of those who have the power to suppress contrary views, is anathema; and

Whereas robust debate over political and social issues is a cornerstone of democratic participation in our society; and

Whereas informed democratic participation requires that people with differing viewpoints are able to get access to information that enables them to form, strengthen and defend their viewpoints along with information that challenges those viewpoints; and

Whereas favoring in an important public forum one set of viewpoints over another and suppressing the expression of disfavored viewpoints dampens democratic participation; and

Whereas the power that social media companies now hold in the marketplace of information is significant enough to generate substantial concern when evidence emerges of bias or favor for one set of viewpoints over another; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:

(1) That the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon strongly urges the chief executives of Facebook, Inc., and Twitter, Inc., to:

(a) Conduct and complete an investigation into claims of bias against conservative users and viewpoints and report publicly the results of that investigation;

(b) Take immediate and reasonable steps to ensure that in their companies' curation of news, in algorithms and other methods by which they generate search results and in any other means by

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 which they present or allow the presentation of news, debate, the exchange of viewpoints or other
2 information the companies avoid bias in favor of one viewpoint over another;

3 (c) Pay particular attention to ensuring that news curation and search results do not disfavor
4 users or viewpoints that are conservative; and

5 (d) Take the initiative to lead other social media companies by example and by partnership or
6 agreement into ensuring that conservative users and viewpoints will not be suppressed, marginalized
7 or excluded from news, the exchange of viewpoints, debate or information available on all social
8 media platforms; and

9 (2) That a copy of this resolution be sent to the chief executives of Facebook, Inc., and Twitter,
10 Inc., and to each member of Congress who represents this state.

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