

Online liability reform would make internet worse: Twitter CEO

October 27 2020



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

Twitter chief executive Jack Dorsey said in remarks prepared for Congress Tuesday that proposals to reform a law providing online liability protection could lead to more "harmful content" by limiting the

ability of platforms to remove abusive material.

Dorsey's comments came in prepared testimony due to be given at a Senate hearing Wednesday examining reform of a contentious law governing the internet.

The Senate Commerce Committee was due to hear from Dorsey as well as Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg and Google CEO Sundar Pichai on the law known as Section 230, which shields online services from liability for content posted by others.

Defenders of the law argue that it is a cornerstone of the internet allowing online services to flourish without fear of a flood of litigation, but attacks on the law are on the rise across the [political spectrum](#).

Some political leaders and activists have argued that Section 230 is too lenient and enables the proliferation of abusive content and incitements to violence; Republicans on the other hand have maintained that it could be applied in an unfair manner, giving platforms the right to suppress conservatives.

Dorsey said in his remarks that Section 230 as currently written gives [online services](#) flexibility to remove "[hate speech](#)" and other inappropriate content, and that the law underpins the social media world where anyone can post comments.

"Eroding the foundation of Section 230 could collapse how we communicate on the internet, leaving only a small number of giant and well-funded [technology companies](#)," Dorsey said.

"We should also be mindful that undermining Section 230 will result in far more removal of online speech and impose severe limitations on our collective ability to address [harmful content](#) and protect people online."

He added: "I do not think anyone in this room or the American people want less [free speech](#) or more abuse and harassment online. Instead, what I hear from people is that they want to be able to trust the services they are using."

Republican Senator Roger Wicker, who chairs the panel, has already introduced with colleagues one bill that would limit the immunity shield by requiring platforms to show "objective reasonableness" when they take down content.

© 2020 AFP

Citation: Online liability reform would make internet worse: Twitter CEO (2020, October 27) retrieved 18 April 2024 from

<https://techxplore.com/news/2020-10-online-liability-reform-internet-worse.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.