

New Recommendations to the Biden Administration:

NYU and Harvard Centers, With Other Experts, Advise White House on
Countering Disinformation

Proposals for new regulation of social media giants and limits on Section 230 liability protection come just days before March 25 hearing on Capitol Hill, where CEOs of Facebook, Twitter, and Google will face tough questioning about harmful content.

As lawmakers address the role of social media platforms in fueling the sort of extremism that led to the January 6 Capitol riot, research centers at NYU's Stern School of Business and Harvard Kennedy School have joined forces with other experts to make a series of practical recommendations to the Biden Administration. These include:

- Creation of new industry standards of conduct and a new regulatory infrastructure based at the Federal Trade Commission;
- Amendment of Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act to incentivize more vigorous content moderation;
- Support for an expanded version of the Honest Ads Act, which would require full disclosure for all advertising, not just political ads; and
- Backing for credible local news as a counterweight to disinformation.

In recent years, the spread of disinformation and other harmful content online has eroded crucial democratic institutions, especially in connection with elections. The Biden Administration should move swiftly to address this threat. The new recommendations provide a roadmap for doing so.

The core group that collaborated on the recommendations consists of Michael Posner and Paul Barrett, director and deputy director of the NYU Stern Center for Business and Human Rights, and John Haigh, co-director of the Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government at Harvard Kennedy School, and Dipayan Ghosh, co-director of the Digital Platforms and Democracy Project at Harvard Kennedy School.

Others involved in the effort include: Caroline Atkinson, former deputy national security advisor for international economic affairs; Lynda Clarizio,

former president of Nielsen U.S. Media; Vivian Schiller, executive director of Aspen Digital, a program of the Aspen Institute; and Clint Watts, distinguished research fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute and a former special agent with the FBI.

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