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## White House Executive Order Targeting Social Media Platforms Will Stifle Free Expression

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President Trump is reportedly preparing to sign an Executive Order that would direct the Federal Communications Commission and Federal Trade Commission to regulate speech on social media platforms. Based on reporting, the Executive Order calls for the FCC to develop rules detailing how and when the law shields social media companies when they remove or moderate content on their platforms.

The First Amendment guarantee of Free Speech is balanced by laws which protect the public from speech that is false, such as statements that are fraudulent or defamatory. If the government can retaliate against content distributors for observing these protections where government speech is involved, government can similarly punish the lawful dissemination of unfavorable speech by others. The rights which protect and promote the expressing and sharing of ideas, through extemporaneous statements, journalistic recounts, or creative and artistic works, will no longer be nurtured and shaped as a matter of law, but dictated by government fiat.

