

# White House reviewing Section 230 amid efforts to push social media giants to crack down on misinformation

CNN —

The White House is reviewing whether social media platforms should be held legally accountable for publishing misinformation [via Section 230](#), a law that protects companies' ability to moderate content, White House communications director Kate Bedingfield said Tuesday.

The Section 230 debate is taking on new urgency in recent days as the administration has called on social media platforms to take a more aggressive stance on combating misinformation. The federal law, which is part of the Communications Decency Act, provides legal immunity to websites that moderate user-generated content.

"We're reviewing that, and certainly they should be held accountable," Bedingfield told MSNBC when asked about Section 230 and whether social media companies like Facebook should be liable and open to lawsuits for publishing false information that causes Americans harm.

President Joe Biden, Bedingfield said, also believes it is "the responsibility of the people creating the content."

"It is a big and complicated ecosystem, and everybody bears responsibility to ensure that we are not providing people with bad information about a vaccine that will save their lives," she said.

Both Biden and then-President Donald Trump have advocated for revoking Section 230, but for different reasons.

Biden has long railed against the law for its protection of social media companies from misinformation, whereas Trump has claimed that it leads to the censorship and suppression of conservative voices. Supporters of the provision, meanwhile, argue that the law protects free speech. Trump's attempts to use the executive branch to change how Section 230 is applied to tech companies was called unconstitutional by legal experts, lawmakers and officials at the Federal Communications Commission.

The Biden administration now confronts many of the same legal questions. But only Congress can amend the law itself, and while US lawmakers may be united in their hostility to Big Tech, Republicans and Democrats on Capitol Hill remain split on how Section 230 should be updated.

Biden kept the pressure on Facebook on Monday, saying he not satisfied with what the platform is doing to stop the spread of misinformation, but backing off his accusation from last week that it was directly responsible for "killing people." And senior officials are in touch with Facebook behind the scenes as tensions with the platform have escalated.

"Facebook isn't killing people – these 12 people are out there giving misinformation. Anyone listening to it is getting hurt by it. It's killing people. It's bad information," Biden said, appearing to cite [data from the nonprofit Center for Countering Digital Hate \(CCDH\)](#). A report published by the organization in March indicated that about a dozen people were super-spreaders of anti-vaccine misinformation.

The President continued, “My hope is that Facebook, instead of taking it personally, that somehow I’m saying Facebook is killing people, that they would do something about the misinformation, the outrageous misinformation about the vaccine. That’s what I meant.”

CNN’s Brian Fung contributed to this report.