

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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UPDATED MEMORANDUM

February 24, 2023

To: Members, Committee on Oversight and Accountability

From: Committee Staff

Re: Committee Business Meeting

On Tuesday, February 28, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. ET, in room 2154 of the Rayburn House Office Building, the Committee on Oversight and Accountability will hold a business meeting to consider the following:

1. H.R. 140, the Protecting Speech from Government Interference Act; and
2. H.R. ____, the Accountability for Government Censorship Act; and
3. Authorization & Oversight Plan of the Committee on Oversight and Accountability.

I. H.R. 140, PROTECTING SPEECH FROM GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE ACT:

A. Summary

Expands the Hatch Act—the law prohibiting federal employees from engaging in political activities in their official capacity—to expressly prohibit those same federal employees from censoring lawful speech. Prohibits agency employees from using their authority to influence or coerce a private sector platform to censor—including to remove, suppress, restrict, or add disclaimers or alerts to—any lawful speech posted on its platform by a person or entity. Provides an exception for legitimate law enforcement activities reported to Congress for review.

B. Amendments

The Chairman will offer an ANS.

Staff contacts: Christian Hoehner and Lauren Lombardo at (202) 225-5074.

II. H.R. ____, ACCOUNTABILITY FOR GOVERNMENT CENSORSHIP ACT:

A. Summary

Requires a government-wide report to Congress of every instance, over the past five years, that a federal agency has communicated with a non-governmental entity for the purpose of removing, suppressing, restricting, or adding disclaimers to lawful speech posted on a platform. The report will include the agency employees that initiated the communication, the targeted platforms, and a justification of the action—including the legal authority for the action. Agency compliance with the reporting requirement will be audited by the inspectors general.

B. Amendments

The Chairman will offer an ANS.

Staff contacts: Christian Hoehner and Lauren Lombardo at (202) 225-5074.

III. AUTHORIZATION & OVERSIGHT PLAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

A. Summary

Under clause 2(d) of House Rule X, the Chair of each Committee is required to adopt and submit to the Committees on Oversight and Accountability and House Administration an authorization plan by March 1 of the first session of Congress.

B. Amendments

Staff contacts: Jessica Donlon at (202) 225-5074.

IV. AMENDMENT PROCESS:

Committee Rule 2(g) authorizes the chair of the Committee to prioritize the consideration of amendments filed 24 hours in advance of the consideration of matters before the Committee or subcommittees. Pursuant to this rule, and at the chair's discretion, the Committee may consider amendments that are pre-filed with the Committee clerk prior to amendments offered at a markup.

Members should pre-file amendments with the clerk of the Committee by emailing a searchable, electronic PDF copy of the amendment prepared by the House Legislative Counsel directly to GOP Oversight Clerks at Gop.Oversight.Clerks@mail.house.gov and Lauren Hassett at Lauren.Hassett@mail.house.gov at least 24 hours before the scheduled start of the business meeting. Members should include in the email accompanying the amendment text:

1. The name(s) of the Member(s) who will offer the amendment;

2. The name and number of the measure to be amended;
3. A brief, one-sentence description of the amendment; and
4. The name and phone number of a staff member who will serve as the point of contact for the amendment.

Pre-filed amendments will be compiled into a single roster, and the roster will be made available to Committee members prior to business meetings. Any amendment to a measure or matter before the Committee or a subcommittee should be germane to the measure or matter, including in scope, subject matter, and Committee consideration. Votes on amendments likely will be grouped together at a time determined by the chair, pursuant to Committee Rules.