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Bokhari: Congress Wants to Give the Establishment Media a Massive Handout

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If there is one force in society worse than Big Tech, it's Big Media – mainstream, establishment, and corporate media.

Yet a bill currently making its way through Congress would give a massive handout to the latter, ostensibly justified by criticism of the former.

The bill, introduced by Rep. David Cicilline (D-RI), is titled the “[Journalism Competition and Preservation Act of 2019](#),” and it is a particularly troublesome piece of legislation, even by Democrat standards.

The title of a bill is quite deceptive. Far from promoting “competition,” the current version would instead cement the advantage of the establishment and corporate media at the expense of its competitors.

It would give Big Media companies a special exemption from antitrust law, allowing them to form a cartel that would, under normal circumstances, be illegal to create. But why should these establishment news companies be given a special exemption from antitrust law to negotiate on their own behalf something that applies only to their select few and not to all news companies and journalists? Of course, they should not.

Furthermore, there is nothing in the bill that would prevent the bigger media companies from excluding smaller companies from the cartel. If passed, there would be nothing to stop the formation of a cartel that includes CNN, NBC, MSNBC, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and other big companies, while excluding smaller competitors in the independent media — not to mention local newspapers. Such a cartel would secure favorable rates for the former while leaving the latter in the dust.

But even if a favored nations clause were inserted into the bill — meaning that whatever deal they negotiated on their own behalf would have to apply to all news companies and journalists — there would still be the troublesome secondary issues that the bill leaves unsatisfactorily unanswered. What qualifies as news — for example, are two journalists doing fantastic work and publishing their own articles on substack a “news company?”

What qualifies as “high-quality news?” And most importantly, who gets to decide? The bill leaves that decision in the hands of alternatively Big Tech or Big Media — and everyone should be able to agree neither should be permitted to make that determination.

In short, the bill is yet another egregious power grab by the legacy media, as they desperately try to keep themselves relevant in the age of the internet.

They know that they need to force Big Tech companies to give them an advantage in order to maintain their position, and that’s precisely what this bill is intended to do.

It also reveals the relentlessness of the corporate media. They are determined to secure every possible advantage for themselves, even though Big Tech spent the last four years *voluntarily* giving them an unfair advantage.

The corporate media, overwhelmingly liberal, pushed for this Big Tech censorship regime and [applauds it](#) — they know that as long as the “disinformation” panic endures, the tech companies will artificially promote their stories, a practice now [openly admitted to](#) by the tech companies.

But it’s not enough for the corporate media that Big Tech companies use their enormously influential algorithms to give them an artificial advantage. Now the government must give them an advantage too, by giving them a special exemption from antitrust law.

It’s part of a wider effort by national and international media companies, including some conservative media like Rupert Murdoch’s NewsCorp, not to promote competition, but to protect them from competition. A free and open internet where everyone gets to compete on an equal playing field is an existential threat to their business model, and they know it.

That’s why this bill must be opposed at all costs — and Republicans who support it — even those who may have signed on with the good intention of curbing Big Tech — must be called out. Conservatives who want to empower the establishment media which has too often made clear their intention to destroy conservatives are just sowing the seeds of their own destruction.

Corporate journalists are central to America’s present-day problems because they are the enforcers of regime orthodoxy. They are the watchmen at the Gulag who keep the prisoners in line.

America doesn’t have hate speech laws like Europe, so the corporate media fills the void. Instead of the government punishing you, often with a fine, the media punishes you, often with a permanent death-blow to your reputation.

Companies [live in fear of it](#), celebrities [live in fear of it](#), Hollywood studios [live in fear of it](#), and even [private individuals](#) live in fear of it. This is the essence of cancel culture. Even Silicon Valley lives in fear of it. While the tech giants shouldn’t be absolved of responsibility for the past five years of censorship, the media companies made it clear what would happen to them if they didn’t play ball: massive ad boycotts costing hundreds of millions of dollars, sparked by negative media coverage. Both [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#) were victims of this.

Internet freedom came to an end because of the actions of Google, Facebook, Twitter, and other tech giants.

But those actions were instigated, in large part because the mainstream media was terrified of smaller competitors springing up on the internet to replace them. Congress should be making things easier for those competitors, not cementing the advantage of the corporate media even further.

And no, putting “competition” and “preservation” in the bill’s title isn’t enough to save this errant piece of legislation.