

The Honorable Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Chair
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr.
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Commerce
U.S. House of Representatives

May 21, 2024

Dear Chair McMorris Rodgers and Ranking Member Pallone:

We, the undersigned representatives of associations and stakeholders dedicated to protecting and preserving Section 230, write to express our strong opposition to the bipartisan discussion draft Section 230 sunset legislation recently unveiled by the House Energy and Commerce Committee. While we understand the stated intention to bring large technology companies to the table to reform Section 230, we believe this approach is arbitrary and unpredictable and overlooks the critical importance of Section 230 protections for the broader Internet ecosystem.

The proposed legislation, as presented, appears to be primarily focused on its potential impact on large technology companies. However, it fails to recognize the indispensable role that Section 230 plays in fostering a diverse and innovative digital landscape across many industries that extends far beyond the realm of only large technology corporations.

Indeed, Section 230 protections are essential for nurturing a thriving ecosystem of small and medium-sized tech enterprises that make up the Internet's infrastructure, educational institutions, libraries, ISPs, and many other vital stakeholders. These protections provide the necessary legal framework for innovation, creativity, and free expression to flourish online.

By narrowly framing the debate around the interests of "Big Tech," there is a risk of misunderstanding the far-reaching implications of altering or dismantling Section 230. The heaviest costs and burdens of such action would fall on the millions of stakeholders we represent who, unlike large companies, do not have the resources to navigate a flood of content-based lawsuits. While it may seem that such changes will not "break the Internet," this perspective overlooks the intricate interplay of legal liability and innovation that underpins the entire digital infrastructure.

We urge you to consider the broader implications of sunseting Section 230 and to engage in a more inclusive dialogue that encompasses the perspectives and concerns of all stakeholders within the Internet ecosystem. It is only through such collaborative and informed deliberation that we can ensure the continued vibrancy and openness of the digital landscape for generations to come.

Sincerely,

American Library Association
Association of Research Libraries
Consumer Technology Association
Creative Commons
EDUCAUSE
INCOMPAS
Internet Archive
Internet Infrastructure Coalition
Internet Society
Wikimedia Foundation

cc: Members of the Committee on Energy and Commerce