

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1735

To provide a temporary safe harbor for publishers of online content to collectively negotiate with dominant online platforms regarding the terms on which content may be distributed.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 10, 2021

Mr. CICILLINE (for himself, Mr. BUCK, Mr. DESAULNIER, Mr. RASKIN, Mrs. SPARTZ, Ms. SCANLON, Ms. WILD, Mr. STEUBE, and Mr. GAETZ) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To provide a temporary safe harbor for publishers of online content to collectively negotiate with dominant online platforms regarding the terms on which content may be distributed.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Journalism Competi-
5 tion and Preservation Act of 2021”.

1 **SEC. 2. SAFE HARBOR FOR CERTAIN COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS.**
2

3 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

4 (1) ANTITRUST LAWS.—The term “antitrust
5 laws”—

6 (A) has the meaning given the term in
7 subsection (a) of the first section of the Clayton
8 Act (15 U.S.C. 12); and

9 (B) includes—

10 (i) section 5 of the Federal Trade
11 Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 45) to the ex-
12 tent that section applies to unfair methods
13 of competition; and

14 (ii) any State law (including regula-
15 tions) that prohibits or penalizes the con-
16 duct described in, or is otherwise incon-
17 sistent with, subsection (b).

18 (2) NEWS CONTENT CREATOR.—The term
19 “news content creator” means—

20 (A) any print, broadcast, or digital news
21 organization that—

22 (i) has a dedicated professional edi-
23 torial staff that creates and distributes
24 original news and related content con-
25 cerning local, national, or international

1 matters of public interest on at least a
2 weekly basis; and

3 (ii) is marketed through subscriptions,
4 advertising, or sponsorship; and

5 (B)(i) provides original news and related
6 content, with the editorial content consisting of
7 not less than 25 percent current news and re-
8 lated content; or

9 (ii) broadcasts original news and related
10 content pursuant to a license granted by the
11 Federal Communications Commission under
12 title III of the Communications Act of 1934 (47
13 U.S.C. 301 et seq.).

14 (3) ONLINE CONTENT DISTRIBUTOR.—The
15 term “online content distributor” means any entity
16 that—

17 (A) operates a website or other online serv-
18 ice that displays, distributes, or directs users to
19 news articles, works of journalism, or other con-
20 tent on the internet that is generated by third-
21 party news content creators; and

22 (B) has not fewer than 1,000,000,000
23 monthly active users, in the aggregate, of all of
24 its websites or online services worldwide.

1 (b) LIMITATION OF LIABILITY.—A news content cre-
2 ator may not be held liable under the antitrust laws for
3 engaging in negotiations with any other news content cre-
4 ator during the 4-year period beginning on the date of en-
5 actment of this Act to collectively withhold content from,
6 or negotiate with, an online content distributor regarding
7 the terms on which the news content of the news content
8 creator may be distributed by the online content dis-
9 tributor, if—

10 (1) the negotiations with the online content dis-
11 tributor—

12 (A) are not limited to price;

13 (B) are nondiscriminatory as to similarly
14 situated news content creators;

15 (C) directly relate to the quality, accuracy,
16 attribution or branding, and interoperability of
17 news; and

18 (D) pertain to terms that would be avail-
19 able to all news content creators;

20 (2) the coordination between the news content
21 creators is directly related to and reasonably nec-
22 essary for negotiations with an online content dis-
23 tributor that are otherwise consistent with this Act;
24 and

1 (3) the negotiations do not involve any person
2 that is not a news content creator or an online con-
3 tent distributor.

4 (c) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Except as provided in
5 this Act, this Act shall not be construed to modify, impair,
6 or supersede the operation of the antitrust laws.

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