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**Committee:** Senate Commerce, Science & Transportation Committee  
**Event:** [Part II of Shut Your App: How Uncle Sam Jawboned Big Tech Into Silencing Americans](#)  
**Date:** October 29, 2025  
**Time:** 10:30 AM  
**Place:** 253 Russell Senate Office Building

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***Member Toplines:***

[\*Chair Ted Cruz \(R-TX\):\*](#) Cruz stressed the importance of free speech and warned against government censorship. He announced plans to introduce the Jawbone Act, which is intended to strengthen legal protections for those whose speech is suppressed as a result of government influence.

[\*Ranking Member Maria Cantwell \(D-WA\):\*](#) Cantwell criticized the consolidation of power in the media and tech sectors. She urged the committee to prioritize transparency, competition, and media diversity going forward.

***Witness Toplines:***

[\*Markham Erickson, Vice President, Government Affairs and Public Policy, Google:\*](#) Erickson defended Google's commitment to free speech and emphasized that the company independently develops and enforces its content moderation policies.

[\*Neil Potts, Vice President, Public Policy, Meta:\*](#) Potts acknowledged the difficult balance between allowing open discourse on its platforms and maintaining user safety. He outlined recent reforms at Meta, such as ending third-party fact-checking and easing restrictions on political speech.

[\*Will Creeley, Legal Director, Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression:\*](#) Creeley argued that officials from both parties have used their power to restrict unfavorable speech through threats and regulatory leverage. He urged Congress to pass legislation requiring transparency in government communications with tech companies.

[\*Harold Feld, Senior Vice President, Public Knowledge:\*](#) Feld contended that past Federal Communications Commission (FCC) chairs maintained agency independence, while current Chairman **Brendan Carr** has blurred that line by pressuring media companies to take certain actions or face consequences. He urged Congress to restore the FCC's independence, strengthen transparency and legal protections against coercion, and address media consolidation.

### **Major Takeaways:**

- Sen. **Deb Fischer** (R-NE) discussed conservative social media users alleging the Biden Administration pressured companies to deplatform accounts in 2020.
  - Fischer and Sen. **Eric Schmitt** (R-MO) noted that this pressure campaign was tied to threats of Section 230 reform to remove liability protections.
- Sen. **Bernie Moreno** (R-OH) challenged Potts and Erickson on the tension between their companies' Section 230 immunity and their role in moderating content. He argued that platforms are acting like publishers by censoring speech. He suggested that a solution could be modifying Section 230 to remove conditional protections and allow all constitutionally protected dissenting viewpoints.
- Sen. **John Curtis** (R-UT) raised concerns about the scope of Section 230 immunity in the context of algorithmic amplification, questioning whether platforms should retain protection when their algorithms promote or suppress content to maximize views.
  - Curtis argued that algorithmic curation represents an active editorial choice that could invalidate Section 230 protections.
- Sens. **Amy Klobuchar** (D-MN) and **Marsha Blackburn** (R-TN) expressed concerns with Big Tech's child safety guardrails' failure to protect young users.
  - Klobuchar also raised privacy concerns after reports that Meta plans to use users' conversations with AI chatbots to personalize the ads they see.