



1919 S. Eads St.  
Arlington, VA 22202  
703-907-7600  
CTA.tech

March 17, 2026

The Honorable Ted Cruz  
Chairman  
Committee on Commerce, Science  
and Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Commerce, Science,  
and Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cruz, Ranking Member Cantwell, and Members of the Committee:

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Communications Decency Act, enacted on February 8, 1996. Section 230 of that Act laid down a simple principle: liability for speech rests with the speaker, not platforms hosting third-party content. Section 230 supercharged American tech leadership by creating clear rules and legal protections allowing innovators to build. Over the past 30 years, those 26 words helped power the modern internet and cemented American global leadership in the digital economy.

Since then, American internet companies have generated trillions of dollars in market value and created millions of jobs. Today, American tech companies account for roughly one-third of the S&P 500's total market value. The United States also produces more venture-backed startups than any other country and attracts the largest share of global venture capital investment. Seven of the ten largest tech firms globally are American. We have the world's most dynamic digital economy, and Section 230 made that possible.

Section 230 provided legal certainty allowing innovators to invest and take risks. Without it, every website that hosts a comment, review, rating, forum, or marketplace listing would face constant lawsuits over user speech, creating a crippling litigation tax on the internet. Certainty matters most for startups and early-stage companies. Large companies can hire teams of lawyers. Startups and smaller businesses - like 80% of the Consumer Technology Association's more than 1200 member companies - cannot.

Section 230 is not a subsidy for large platforms. It is the legal infrastructure that allows thousands of startups, creators, and small businesses to launch platforms, grow communities, and attract investment. Weakening Section 230 protections would not discipline large platforms. It would entrench them, making it nearly impossible for the next generation of competitors to thrive.

Many of the companies and technologies that debut each year at CES®, our annual globally tech event, would not exist without Section 230. CES features over 4000 exhibitors introducing new products, platforms, and services to the global market, showing vibrant competition in the technology sector. Section 230 helped create the legal environment that allows those innovations to emerge and scale.

Consumer Technology Association®  
Producer of CES®

Section 230 also helped enable the greatest expansion of speech in human history. Before the internet, reaching a large audience required owning a television or radio station, a newspaper, or another printed publication. Section 230 provided the legal certainty allowing platforms to host user-generated content at scale. Millions of Americans can now publish their ideas, grow audiences, launch businesses, and participate in public debate online. Creators, educators, entrepreneurs, artists, journalists, and small businesses all benefit from this open and competitive ecosystem.

Section 230 also protects platforms ability to moderate and remove objectionable content in good faith. That flexibility allows different communities to develop different norms. LinkedIn operates differently from X. Yelp operates differently from Truth Social. That diversity reflects marketplace competition and innovation as companies tailor their content moderation practices to their users' needs and preferences.

Section 230 does not protect illegal conduct. If something is illegal offline, it is illegal online. Fraud, trafficking, threats, and exploitation remain fully subject to criminal law enforcement. Major platforms invest billions of dollars each year in detecting and removing illegal content, and Section 230 enables that proactive work by ensuring that good faith content moderation does not become a liability trap.

As with every significant new technology, the expansion of online participation and speech also creates new challenges. Protecting children online is, can and should be a priority. Thankfully, practical solutions exist. For example, the Digital Safety Shield proposed by NetChoice outlines steps that strengthen online safety while preserving free expression and innovation.

Finally, Section 230 has renewed importance in the age of artificial intelligence (AI). Modern AI systems rely on vast amounts of third-party information and operate on top of the open internet ecosystem that Section 230 helped make possible. AI systems summarize, organize, recommend, and interact with information created by millions of users across the internet. Without the protections Section 230 provides for hosting and organizing user-generated content at scale, the data and interaction layers that power modern AI would face enormous litigation risk. Weakening that foundation would slow American AI innovation precisely when global competition is accelerating

The United States won the first era of the internet because Congress created clear rules for innovation. At a moment of intense global competition in AI and advanced technology, Congress should preserve the legal framework that made that leadership possible. We look forward to working with the Committee to ensure the United States remains the world's leading home for innovation, entrepreneurship, and free expression online.

Sincerely,



Kinsey Fabrizio  
President  
Consumer Technology Association



Michael Petricone  
Senior Vice President, Government Affairs  
Consumer Technology Association