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S. 3292

To support research about the impact of digital communication platforms on society by providing privacy-protected, secure pathways for independent research on data held by large internet companies.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 1, 2025

Mr. COONS (for himself and Mr. CASSIDY) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

A BILL

To support research about the impact of digital communication platforms on society by providing privacy-protected, secure pathways for independent research on data held by large internet companies.

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; TABLE OF CONTENTS.**

4 (a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the
5 “Platform Accountability and Transparency Act”.

6 (b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for
7 this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Definitions.

Sec. 3. Qualified research projects, qualified researchers, and qualified data and information.

Sec. 4. Obligations and immunity for platforms.

Sec. 5. Obligations and immunity for qualified researchers.

Sec. 6. Reporting.

Sec. 7. Enforcement.

Sec. 8. Establishing a safe harbor for research on platforms.

Sec. 9. Rulemaking authority.

Sec. 10. Authorization of appropriations.

Sec. 11. Severability.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) COMMISSION.—The term “Commission”
4 means the Federal Trade Commission.

5 (2) NSF.—The term “NSF” means the Na-
6 tional Science Foundation.

7 (3) PERSONAL INFORMATION.—The term “per-
8 sonal information” means any information, regard-
9 less of how the information is collected, inferred, or
10 obtained that is linked or reasonably linkable to a
11 specific consumer or consumer device.

12 (4) PLATFORM.—The term “platform” means
13 any entity subject to the jurisdiction of the Commis-
14 sion under section 5(a)(2) of the Federal Trade
15 Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 45(a)(2)) that—

16 (A) operates a website, desktop applica-
17 tion, augmented or virtual reality application,
18 or mobile application that—

19 (i) permits a person to become a reg-
20 istered user, establish an account, or create

1 a profile for the purpose of allowing the
 2 user to create, share, and view user-gen-
 3 erated content through such an account or
 4 profile;

5 (ii) enables 1 or more users to gen-
 6 erate content that can be viewed by other
 7 users of the platform; and

8 (iii) primarily serves as a medium for
 9 users to interact with content generated by
 10 other users of the platform and for the
 11 platform to deliver ads to users; and

12 (B) has at least 50,000,000 unique month-
 13 ly users in the United States for a majority of
 14 the months in the most recent 12-month period.

15 (5) QUALIFIED DATA AND INFORMATION.—

16 (A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subpara-
 17 graph (B), the term “qualified data and infor-
 18 mation” means data and information from a
 19 platform—

20 (i) that the NSF determines is nec-
 21 essary to allow a qualified researcher to
 22 carry out a qualified research project; and

23 (ii) that—

24 (I) is feasible for the platform to
 25 provide;

1 (II) is proportionate to the needs
 2 of the qualified researchers to com-
 3 plete the qualified research project;

4 (III) will not cause the platform
 5 undue burden in providing the data
 6 and information to the qualified re-
 7 searcher; and

8 (IV) would not be otherwise
 9 available to the qualified researcher.

10 (B) EXCLUSIONS.—Such term does not in-
 11 clude any of the following:

12 (i) Direct and private messages be-
 13 tween users.

14 (ii) Biometric information, such as a
 15 fingerprint, voiceprint, eye retinas, irises,
 16 or other unique biological patterns or char-
 17 acteristics.

18 (iii) Precise geospatial information.

19 (6) QUALIFIED RESEARCHER.—

20 (A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subpara-
 21 graph (B), the term “qualified researcher”
 22 means a researcher affiliated with a United
 23 States university or a United States nonprofit
 24 organization (as described in section 501(c) of
 25 the Internal Revenue Code of 1986) that is spe-

cifically identified in a research proposal that is approved as a qualified research project pursuant to section 3.

(B) EXCLUSION.—Such term does not include a researcher who is affiliated with a Federal, State, local, or tribal law enforcement or intelligence agency.

(7) QUALIFIED RESEARCH PROJECT.—The term “qualified research project” means a research plan that has been approved pursuant to section 3.

(8) STATE.—The term “State” means each of the 50 States of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

(9) USER.—The term “user” means a person that uses a platform for any purpose, including advertisers and sellers, regardless of whether that person has an account or is otherwise registered with the platform.

SEC. 3. QUALIFIED RESEARCH PROJECTS, QUALIFIED RESEARCHERS, AND QUALIFIED DATA AND INFORMATION.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 1 year after the date of enactment of this Act, the NSF shall establish, in consultation with the Commission, a research program

1 to review research applications for approval as qualified
2 research projects.

3 (b) RESEARCH PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS.—The re-
4 search program established by the NSF and the Commis-
5 sion under this section shall—

6 (1) provide that the NSF shall—

7 (A) establish a process to solicit research
8 applications in order to identify qualified re-
9 search projects;

10 (B) review research applications for sci-
11 entific merit;

12 (C) ensure research applications identify
13 proposed qualified researchers;

14 (D) publish guidelines and criteria to be
15 used by the NSF in determining how it will re-
16 view research applications seeking approval to
17 be a qualified research project;

18 (E) identify, in consultation with the Com-
19 mission, what data and information in a plat-
20 form's possession will be qualified data and in-
21 formation for the purposes of carrying out a
22 qualified research project;

23 (F) ensure that approved research applica-
24 tions do not request data described in section
25 2(6)(B); and

1 (G) prescribe and publish guidelines and
2 criteria, in consultation with the Commission,
3 used to determine how the NSF and Commis-
4 sion will identify qualified data and information
5 necessary to conduct a qualified research
6 project;

7 (2) provide that the Commission shall—

8 (A) review research applications for pri-
9 vacy and cybersecurity risks;

10 (B) for each qualified research project, es-
11 tablish appropriate privacy and cybersecurity
12 safeguards that a platform must implement in
13 the provision of, and with which qualified re-
14 searchers must comply to access, qualified data
15 and information that a platform is required to
16 share with qualified researchers pursuant to a
17 qualified research project, and such safe-
18 guards—

19 (i) must account for the relative sensi-
20 tivity of the qualified data and information
21 involved and be sufficient to protect such
22 data and information; and

23 (ii) may include alternative protec-
24 tions, as appropriate and in consideration

1 of the aims of the qualified research
2 project, including—

3 (I) encryption of the data in
4 transit and when not in use;

5 (II) delivery of the data in a for-
6 mat that employs methods to prevent
7 qualified researchers from identifying
8 individuals in the dataset;

9 (III) data access logs; and

10 (IV) keystroke logs;

11 (C) in the case of each qualified research
12 project, consider whether to require the plat-
13 form to provide a secure physical or virtual en-
14 vironment to facilitate delivery of the qualified
15 data and information;

16 (D) establish appropriate privacy and cy-
17 bersecurity safeguards that a qualified re-
18 searcher must implement when receiving, stor-
19 ing, or analyzing qualified data and information
20 or generating new data using such qualified
21 data and information, including inferential data
22 based on such qualified data and information,
23 and such safeguards may include a requirement
24 that a qualified researcher delete qualified data
25 and information after completion of a qualified

1 research project, however any such safeguard
2 must provide the qualified researcher the ability
3 to retain enough information about the quali-
4 fied data and information to allow the re-
5 searcher or their peers to recreate the qualified
6 research project upon request to, and approval
7 from, the NSF and Commission pursuant to
8 this section;

9 (E) publish a list of criteria for deter-
10 mining the privacy and cybersecurity safe-
11 guards required for qualified data and informa-
12 tion related to a qualified research project;

13 (F) provide a platform that is the subject
14 of a qualified research project with the oppor-
15 tunity to provide comment about the privacy
16 and cybersecurity safeguards required for the
17 qualified research project;

18 (G) provide researchers with the oppor-
19 tunity to provide comment about the privacy
20 and cybersecurity safeguards required for a
21 qualified research project;

22 (H) establish a process to ensure that
23 qualified researchers will be able to comply with
24 any such privacy and cybersecurity safeguards;
25 and

1 (I) publish a list of criteria for determining
2 whether qualified researchers will be able to
3 comply with any such privacy and cybersecurity
4 safeguards;

5 (3) provide that a research application may not
6 be denied on grounds of the race, color, age, sex, na-
7 tional origin, political affiliation, or disability of the
8 researcher;

9 (4) provide that a research application shall not
10 be approved as a qualified research project unless
11 it—

12 (A) has been approved by an institutional
13 review board;

14 (B) has been deemed exempt from institu-
15 tional review board review; or

16 (C) is excluded from the criteria for insti-
17 tutional review board review;

18 (5) provide a platform the opportunity to com-
19 ment on and appeal to the NSF and the Commission
20 the approval of a qualified research project for which
21 the platform is required to provide qualified data
22 and information to qualified researcher the grounds
23 that—

24 (A) the platform cannot provide the quali-
25 fied data and information;

1 (B) providing access to the qualified data
2 and information would lead to significant
3 vulnerabilities in the security of the platform's
4 service or user privacy; or

5 (C) the privacy and cybersecurity safe-
6 guards established by the Commission are not
7 sufficient to protect the qualified data and in-
8 formation; and

9 (6) require that any analysis by a qualified re-
10 searcher derived from a qualified research project
11 that the qualified researcher intends to publish un-
12 dergo prepublication review by the Commission to
13 ensure that the analysis does not expose personal in-
14 formation, or trade secrets.

15 (c) QUALIFIED RESEARCHER CAPACITY.—A qualified
16 research project may not proceed unless the proposed
17 qualified researchers can demonstrate that they have the
18 capacity to comply with the privacy and cybersecurity
19 safeguards established for the qualified research project.

20 (d) AIM OF PROJECT.—A research application shall
21 not be approved as a qualified research project unless it
22 is in the public interest, aims to study activity on a plat-
23 form, and is used for noncommercial purposes.

24 (e) NO JUDICIAL REVIEW.—A determination by the
25 Commission or the NSF under this section regarding

1 whether a research application will be deemed a qualified
 2 research project shall not be subject to judicial review.

3 (f) NO GOVERNMENT ACCESS.—If a platform pro-
 4 vides qualified data and information to a qualified re-
 5 searcher, no government entity may seek access to such
 6 qualified data and information from the qualified re-
 7 searcher.

8 (g) RESEARCHER CONSORTIA.—The Commission and
 9 NSF shall establish procedures and necessary safeguards
 10 under this section that allow for consortia of researchers
 11 to apply to seek data for the purpose of conducting a se-
 12 ries of qualified research projects.

13 **SEC. 4. OBLIGATIONS AND IMMUNITY FOR PLATFORMS.**

14 (a) PROVISION OF QUALIFIED DATA AND INFORMA-
 15 TION.—A platform shall provide access to qualified data
 16 and information relating to a qualified research project to
 17 a qualified researcher under the terms and privacy and
 18 cybersecurity safeguards dictated by the Commission pur-
 19 suant to section 3 for the purpose of carrying out the
 20 qualified research project.

21 (b) CONTINUED ACCESS TO QUALIFIED DATA AND
 22 INFORMATION.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—A platform may not restrict
 24 or terminate a qualified researcher’s access to quali-
 25 fied data and information for an ongoing qualified

1 research project unless the platform has a reason-
2 able belief that the qualified researcher is not acting
3 in accordance with the cybersecurity and privacy
4 safeguards required for the qualified research
5 project pursuant to section 3.

6 (2) NOTICE AND REVIEW OF CHANGE TO AC-
7 CESS.—If a platform restricts or terminates a quali-
8 fied researcher’s access to qualified data and infor-
9 mation for an ongoing qualified research project—

10 (A) the platform shall, within a reasonable
11 time (as established by the Commission), in-
12 form the Commission in writing that the plat-
13 form has restricted or terminated the qualified
14 researcher’s access to the qualified data and in-
15 formation; and

16 (B) the Commission shall promptly review
17 the platform’s decision and determine whether
18 the qualified researcher has violated the privacy
19 and cybersecurity safeguards established for the
20 qualified research project.

21 (c) NOTICE TO PLATFORM USERS.—The Commission
22 shall issue regulations requiring that platforms, through
23 posting of notices or other appropriate means, keep users
24 informed of their privacy protections and the information

1 that the platform is required to share with qualified re-
2 searchers under this Act.

3 (d) SAFE HARBOR.—No cause of action under State
4 or Federal law arising solely from the release of qualified
5 data and information to qualified researchers in further-
6 ance of a qualified research project may be brought
7 against any platform that complies with the Act.

8 (e) RIGHT OF REVIEW.—If a platform fails to provide
9 all of the qualified data and information required under
10 the terms of a qualified research project to the qualified
11 researcher conducting the project, the qualified researcher
12 or the researcher's affiliated university or non-profit orga-
13 nization may bring an action in district court for injunc-
14 tive relief or petition the Commission to bring an enforce-
15 ment action against the platform.

16 (f) SECURITY.—Nothing in this Act shall be con-
17 strued to restrict a platform's ability to—

18 (1) take immediate steps to protect an interest
19 that is essential for the life or physical safety of a
20 natural person; or

21 (2) respond to security incidents, identity theft,
22 fraud, harassment, malicious or deceptive activities,
23 or illegal activity, preserve the integrity of security
24 of systems, or investigate or report those responsible
25 for such actions.

1 **SEC. 5. OBLIGATIONS AND IMMUNITY FOR QUALIFIED RE-**
2 **SEARCHERS.**

3 (a) SCOPE OF PERMITTED USE OF QUALIFIED DATA
4 AND INFORMATION.—Each qualified researcher who ac-
5 cesses qualified data and information shall use the quali-
6 fied data and information—

7 (1) only for the purposes of conducting research
8 authorized under the terms of the qualified research
9 project involved; and

10 (2) in accordance with the privacy and cyberse-
11 curity safeguards prescribed by the Commission for
12 the qualified research project.

13 (b) PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION.—A
14 qualified researcher that is provided access to qualified
15 data and information for purposes of a qualified research
16 project may not—

17 (1) attempt to reidentify, disclose, publish, or
18 use for commercial purpose personal information de-
19 rived from such qualified data and information; or

20 (2) disclose such qualified data and information
21 to a third party for any reason.

22 (c) EFFECT OF VIOLATION OF INFORMATION AND
23 PRIVACY STANDARDS.—Qualified researchers who inten-
24 tionally, recklessly, or negligently violate the privacy and
25 cybersecurity safeguards prescribed by the Commission for
26 a qualified research project may be subject to both civil

1 and criminal enforcement, under applicable Federal,
2 State, and local laws. The Commission may refer any such
3 violation to the Department of Justice or the appropriate
4 State law enforcement agency.

5 **SEC. 6. REPORTING.**

6 Not later than 24 months after the date of enactment
7 of this Act, and annually thereafter, the NSF and the
8 Commission shall submit to the Congress a joint report
9 regarding the operation of this Act, which shall include
10 a detailed statement of all qualified research projects, in-
11 cluding with respect to each such project:

12 (1) The identity of any authorized qualified re-
13 searcher and the institution the researcher is affili-
14 ated with.

15 (2) The platforms required to provide qualified
16 data and information to qualified researchers.

17 (3) The categories of qualified data and infor-
18 mation each platform was required to provide.

19 (4) The terms of the privacy and cybersecurity
20 safeguards prescribed by the Commission to ensure
21 the security of the qualified data and information.

22 (5) Any recommendations for improvements to
23 the operation of this Act in order to facilitate its aim
24 of providing enhanced platform transparency.

1 **SEC. 7. ENFORCEMENT.**

2 (a) UNFAIR OR DECEPTIVE ACT OR PRACTICE.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—A platform’s failure to com-
4 ply with subsection (a) or (b) of section 4, or a
5 qualified researcher’s failure to comply with sub-
6 section (a) or (b) of section 5, shall be treated as a
7 violation of a rule defining an unfair or deceptive act
8 or practice prescribed under section 18(a)(1)(B) of
9 the Federal Trade Commission Act (15 U.S.C.
10 57a(a)(1)(B)).

11 (2) POWERS OF THE COMMISSION.—

12 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall
13 enforce the provisions of this Act specified in
14 paragraph (1) in the same manner, by the same
15 means, and with the same jurisdiction, powers,
16 and duties as though all applicable terms and
17 provisions of the Federal Trade Commission
18 Act (15 U.S.C. 41 et seq.) were incorporated
19 into and made a part of this section.

20 (B) PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES.—Any
21 person that violates the provisions of this Act
22 specified in paragraph (1) shall be subject to
23 the penalties, and entitled to the privileges and
24 immunities, provided in the Federal Trade
25 Commission Act (15 U.S.C. 41 et seq.).

1 (C) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in
 2 this Act shall be construed to limit the author-
 3 ity of the Commission under any other provi-
 4 sion of law.

5 (b) REGULATIONS.—The Commission shall have the
 6 authority to promulgate, in the manner prescribed by 5
 7 U.S.C. 553, such rules and regulations as it may deem
 8 necessary to carry out its responsibilities under this Act.

9 (c) ATTORNEY’S FEES AND OTHER COSTS.—In the
 10 event any enforcement action is appealed, the prevailing
 11 party in the action may, in the discretion of the court,
 12 recover the costs of the action including reasonable inves-
 13 tigative costs and attorneys’ fees.

14 **SEC. 8. ESTABLISHING A SAFE HARBOR FOR RESEARCH ON**
 15 **PLATFORMS.**

16 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

17 (1) COVERED INFORMATION.—The term “cov-
 18 ered information” means—

19 (A) publicly available information, includ-
 20 ing publicly available information recommended,
 21 targeted, or otherwise amplified or de-amplified
 22 to an individual or research account; and

23 (B) information about advertisements
 24 shown on the platform.

1 (2) COVERED METHOD OF DIGITAL INVESTIGA-
2 TION.—The term “covered method of digital inves-
3 tigation” means—

4 (A) the collection of information from a
5 platform’s user-facing interface, including by
6 navigating the interface or the use of a browser
7 extension or plug-in to collect information from
8 the interface, through automated means; and

9 (B) the creation or use of research ac-
10 counts, including accounts designed to observe
11 information that is recommended, targeted, am-
12 plified, or de-amplified to minors.

13 (3) JOURNALISM.—The term “journalism” in-
14 cludes the gathering, preparing, collecting,
15 photographing, recording, writing, editing, reporting,
16 or investigating news or information that concerns
17 local, national, or international events or other mat-
18 ters of public concern for dissemination to the pub-
19 lic.

20 (4) PUBLICLY AVAILABLE INFORMATION.—

21 (A) IN GENERAL.—The term “publicly
22 available information” means any information
23 that a person has a reasonable basis to believe
24 has been lawfully made available to the general
25 public.

1 (B) LIMITATIONS.—The term “publicly
2 available information” does not include any of
3 the following:

4 (i) Any obscene visual depiction (as
5 such term is used in section 1460 of title
6 18, United States Code).

7 (ii) Biometric information.

8 (iii) Genetic information.

9 (iv) Intimate images, authentic or
10 generated by a computer or by artificial in-
11 telligence, known to be nonconsensual.

12 (5) REASONABLE MEASURES TO PROTECT INDIVIDUAL
13 PRIVACY.—The term “reasonable measures
14 to protect individual privacy” includes reasonable
15 measures to—

16 (A) avoid the collection and retention of
17 publicly available information that would readily
18 identify an individual, alone or in combination
19 with other information, that is extraneous to
20 the research or journalism project;

21 (B) prevent the theft and accidental disclosure
22 of any information collected;

23 (C) ensure that the relevant information is
24 not used for any purpose other than the pur-

pose of informing the general public about matters of public concern; and

(D) restrict the publication or other disclosure of any information that would readily identify an individual, alone or in combination with other information, except if such individual is—

(i) an advertiser and the information concerns an advertisement;

(ii) a public official, candidate for public office, or public figure; or

(iii) an adult and the individual has provided consent that is freely given, specific, informed, and express to the publication or disclosure.

(6) RESEARCH ACCOUNT.—The term “research account” means an account on a platform that is created and used solely—

(A) for the purpose of a journalism or research project on the platform; and

(B) for no longer than is necessary to complete such project.

(b) SAFE HARBOR.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—No cause of action may be brought or maintained by a platform, or by the owner or operator of a platform, in any proceeding

1 against any person for collecting covered informa-
 2 tion, as part of a journalism or research project on
 3 the platform, notwithstanding that such collection
 4 may violate the terms of service of the platform, if—

5 (A) the information is collected through a
 6 covered method of digital investigation;

7 (B) the purpose of the project is to inform
 8 the general public about matters of public con-
 9 cern; and

10 (C) with respect to any such information
 11 collected—

12 (i) the information is not used, re-
 13 tained, disclosed, or transferred for any
 14 purpose other than the purpose described
 15 in subparagraph (B); and

16 (ii) the person who collects the infor-
 17 mation takes reasonable measures to pro-
 18 tect individual privacy.

19 (2) CLARIFICATION.—A person shall not be
 20 considered to be accessing without authorization or
 21 exceeding the authorized access of a platform solely
 22 based on the collection of covered information on the
 23 platform through a covered method of digital inves-
 24 tigation that complies with the conditions of this sec-
 25 tion.

1 (3) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Paragraph (1)
 2 shall not be construed to protect the collection of
 3 covered information to train a large language model.

4 (c) RULEMAKING.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
 6 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Sec-
 7 retary of Commerce shall issue regulations to fur-
 8 ther clarify the terms defined in subsection (a) and
 9 ensure that—

10 (A) with respect to the use of research ac-
 11 counts, reasonable measures have been taken to
 12 avoid misleading individuals on a platform; and

13 (B) reasonable measures have been taken
 14 to avoid materially burdening the technical op-
 15 eration of the platform.

16 (2) EXCEPTION.—A regulation issued under
 17 this subsection may not further define the term
 18 “journalism” as defined under paragraph (3) of sub-
 19 section (a) or the phrase “matters of public con-
 20 cern” as used in this section.

21 (d) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—This section shall not
 22 be construed to create or expand liability under any law
 23 for any person.

24 (e) PROHIBITION AGAINST COMPELLED DISCLOSURE
 25 TO GOVERNMENT ENTITIES.—A person who otherwise es-

1 tablishes entitlement to the safe harbor described in sub-
 2 section (b) may not be required (by a subpoena, court
 3 order, or otherwise) to divulge to a department or agency
 4 of the United States or any State or political subdivision
 5 thereof in furtherance of an investigation or legal process
 6 about an individual any information related to such indi-
 7 vidual obtained from a platform under this section.

8 **SEC. 9. RULEMAKING AUTHORITY.**

9 (a) ADDITIONAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—In consultation with the
 11 NSF, the Commission may, in accordance with sec-
 12 tion 553 of title 5, United States Code, and subject
 13 to subsection (g), issue regulations that require plat-
 14 forms to make available to qualified researchers
 15 data, metrics, or other information that the Commis-
 16 sion determines will facilitate independent research
 17 in the public interest into activity on platforms.

18 (2) FACTORS.—In exercising its authority
 19 under this subsection, the Commission shall consider
 20 the extent to which disclosures under this subsection
 21 may facilitate collaboration amongst qualified re-
 22 searchers and alleviate burdens on platforms and
 23 qualified researchers as compared to qualified re-
 24 search projects conducted pursuant to section 3.

1 (3) FORM AND FREQUENCY; RETENTION OF IN-
2 FORMATION.—The Commission shall specify in the
3 regulations the required form and frequency of re-
4 porting or disclosures, as well as how long data,
5 metrics, or other information should be retained and
6 made available. It may require the information be
7 provided in a form that is accessible for analysis by
8 qualified researchers, such as through an application
9 programming interface.

10 (4) CONSULTATION.—The Commission shall
11 further consult with the National Institutes of
12 Health and other relevant government agencies, as
13 appropriate, in exercising its authority under this
14 subsection.

15 (5) APPLICABILITY OF PRIOR SECTIONS.—For
16 data made available to qualified researchers under
17 this section, the Commission shall establish privacy
18 and cybersecurity safeguards applicable to platforms
19 and qualified researchers in the manner described in
20 section 3 for data made available under that section.
21 The obligations and immunities for platforms and
22 qualified researchers described in sections 4 and 5
23 shall apply to data disclosed to qualified researchers
24 under this section, and the provisions of section 7
25 may be invoked to enforce this section.

1 (b) TRANSPARENCY OF CERTAIN CONTENT AND
 2 USER ACCOUNTS.—

3 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
 4 the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission
 5 shall, in accordance with section 553 of title 5,
 6 United States Code, and subject to subsection (g),
 7 issue regulations to require platforms to make avail-
 8 able to the public on an ongoing basis, in a specific
 9 section of their online interface, through a search-
 10 able and reliable tool that allows multicriteria que-
 11 ries and through application programming inter-
 12 faces, a repository containing information regarding
 13 reasonably public content on the platform that—

14 (A) has been highly disseminated; or

15 (B) was originated or spread by major
 16 public accounts.

17 (2) DISCLOSURE OF PUBLIC CONTENT
 18 SAMPLINGS.—The regulations issued under para-
 19 graph (1) shall further require platforms to disclose
 20 on an ongoing basis statistically representative
 21 samplings of reasonably public content, including, at
 22 a minimum, a sampling that is weighted by the
 23 number of impressions the content receives.

24 (3) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—The informa-
 25 tion required to be disclosed about content described

1 in paragraphs (1) and (2) shall include, as appro-
2 priate—

3 (A) the user-generated content itself, in-
4 cluding any text, images, videos, links, and key-
5 words;

6 (B) platform-generated content displayed
7 in connection with the user-generated content,
8 including any dates, labels, disclaimers, or
9 metrics;

10 (C) metrics about the extent of dissemina-
11 tion of or engagement with the content, includ-
12 ing the number of impressions, reach, and en-
13 gagements;

14 (D) information about the extent to which
15 the content was recommended, amplified, or re-
16 stricted by platform algorithms or policies;

17 (E) reasonably public information about
18 the user accounts responsible for the content;
19 and

20 (F) public uniform resource locators that
21 uniquely link to the content and identify related
22 materials such as the parent content, replying
23 content, and cross-posted content.

24 (4) HIGHLY DISSEMINATED CONTENT.—As part
25 of the regulations issued under paragraph (1), the

1 Commission shall define “highly disseminated” ac-
2 cording to metrics that the Commission deems ap-
3 propriate (which may include engagement, views,
4 reach, impressions, or other metrics), provided that
5 a piece of content must have been viewed by at least
6 10,000 unique users to qualify.

7 (5) MAJOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.—As part of the
8 regulations issued under paragraph (1), the Com-
9 mission shall define “major public accounts” as it
10 deems appropriate, provided that, at a minimum,
11 “major public accounts” are restricted to reasonably
12 public accounts whose content is followed by at least
13 25,000 users or otherwise regularly reaches at least
14 25,000 users per month.

15 (6) TREATMENT OF CONTENT THAT HAS BEEN
16 REMOVED.—The regulations described in paragraph
17 (1) shall provide guidance regarding disclosure of
18 content that is removed by the user or platform sub-
19 sequent to its dissemination.

20 (7) FREQUENCY.—To the extent practicable,
21 the Commission shall require this information to be
22 updated so as to provide a real-time understanding
23 of the content described in paragraphs (1) and (2).

24 (c) TRANSPARENCY OF ADVERTISING.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
2 the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission
3 shall, in accordance with section 553 of title 5,
4 United States Code, and subject to subsection (g),
5 issue regulations to require platforms to disclose on
6 an ongoing basis information regarding advertising
7 on the platform. These regulations shall require
8 platforms to compile and disclose publicly in a spe-
9 cific section of their online interface, through a
10 searchable and reliable tool that allows multicriteria
11 queries and through application programming inter-
12 faces, a repository containing the information re-
13 ferred to in paragraph (2), for the entire period dur-
14 ing which they present an advertisement and until 1
15 year after the advertisement was presented for the
16 last time on their online interfaces. Platforms shall
17 ensure that the repository does not contain any per-
18 sonal information of the recipients of the service to
19 whom the advertisement was or could have been pre-
20 sented.

21 (2) INFORMATION REQUIRED.—The information
22 required to be included in the repository required
23 under paragraph (1) shall include at least all of the
24 following information:

1 (A) The content of the advertisement, in-
2 cluding the name of the product, service, or
3 brand, and the subject matter of the advertise-
4 ment.

5 (B) The natural or legal person on whose
6 behalf the advertisement is presented.

7 (C) The natural or legal person who paid
8 for the advertisement, if that person is different
9 from the person referred to in subparagraph
10 (B).

11 (D) The period during which the advertise-
12 ment was presented.

13 (E) Whether the advertisement was in-
14 tended to be presented specifically to 1 or more
15 particular groups of recipients of the service
16 and if so, the main parameters used for that
17 purpose including where applicable the main pa-
18 rameters used to exclude 1 or more of such par-
19 ticular groups.

20 (F) The total number of recipients of the
21 service reached and, where applicable, aggregate
22 numbers broken down by group or groups of re-
23 cipients that the advertisement specifically tar-
24 geted.

1 (G) Information about the extent to which
 2 the advertisement was recommended, amplified,
 3 or restricted by platform algorithms or policies.

4 (3) TREATMENT OF REMOVED ADS.—The regu-
 5 lations described in paragraph (1) shall provide
 6 guidance regarding disclosure of ads that are re-
 7 moved by the user or platform subsequent to its dis-
 8 semination.

9 (4) FREQUENCY.—To the extent practicable,
 10 the Commission shall require this information to be
 11 updated so as to provide a real-time understanding
 12 of the content described in paragraph (2).

13 (d) TRANSPARENCY OF ALGORITHMS AND COMPANY
 14 METRICS AND DATA.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
 16 enactment of this Act, the Commission shall, in ac-
 17 cordance with section 553 of title 5, United States
 18 Code, and subject to subsection (g), issue regula-
 19 tions to require platforms to report publicly on their
 20 use of recommender or ranking algorithms and
 21 metrics.

22 (2) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—The reporting
 23 required under paragraph (1) shall be at least semi-
 24 annual and include, as appropriate—

1 (A) a description of all consumer-facing
2 product features that made use of recommender
3 or ranking algorithms during the reporting pe-
4 riod;

5 (B) a summary of signals used as inputs
6 to the described recommender or ranking algo-
7 rithms, including an explanation of which rely
8 on user data, an explanation of the types of
9 user data relied upon, and ranked based on the
10 significance of their impact on the algorithms'
11 outputs;

12 (C) a summary of the processes or pre-
13 dictions used by the platform to assess the sig-
14 nals incorporated into the recommender or
15 ranking algorithm and to score or rank content
16 (such as predictions of future user engage-
17 ment), ranked based on the significance of their
18 impact on the algorithms' outputs;

19 (D) a summary of the optimization objec-
20 tives of the described recommender or ranking
21 algorithms;

22 (E) a summary of metrics calculated by
23 the platform to assess product changes or new
24 features, or as a basis to assess performance or
25 calculate employee or executive compensation,

1 with an assessment of their relative importance
 2 in company decision making;

3 (F) significant changes during the report-
 4 ing period from the last report; and

5 (G) other information about the rec-
 6 ommender or ranking algorithms that the Com-
 7 mission deems appropriate.

8 (3) IMPLEMENTATION.—In implementing this
 9 section, the Commission shall ensure that the report-
 10 ing is useful and actionable while ensuring that plat-
 11 forms are not required to disclose trade secrets.

12 (e) TRANSPARENCY OF CONTENT MODERATION AND
 13 VIOLATING CONTENT.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year after
 15 the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission
 16 shall, in accordance with section 553 of title 5,
 17 United States Code, and subject to subsection (g),
 18 issue regulations to require platforms to issue a pub-
 19 lic report on an ongoing basis information regarding
 20 content moderation and content violating platform
 21 policies.

22 (2) REQUIRED INFORMATION.—The informa-
 23 tion required to be disclosed under paragraph (1)
 24 shall include, as appropriate—

1 (A) statistics regarding the amount of con-
2 tent that the platform determined violated its
3 policies, broken down by—

4 (i) the violated policy;

5 (ii) the action taken in response to the
6 violation;

7 (iii) the methods the platform used to
8 identify the violating content (such as arti-
9 ficial intelligence, user report, human mod-
10 erator review, or other means);

11 (iv) the extent to which the content
12 was recommended, amplified, or restricted
13 by platform algorithms or policies; and

14 (v) geographic and demographic fac-
15 tors as the Commission deems appropriate;

16 (B) statistics regarding the number of
17 times violating content was viewed by users and
18 the number of users who viewed it;

19 (C) estimates by the platform about the
20 prevalence of violating content (including as
21 measured by the number of impressions of vio-
22 lating content), broken down by—

23 (i) the violated policy;

24 (ii) geographic and demographic fac-
25 tors; and

1 (iii) other factors the Commission
2 deems appropriate; and

3 (D) the number of orders received from
4 governmental authorities, categorized by the
5 type of violating content concerned, and the av-
6 erage time needed for taking the action speci-
7 fied in those orders.

8 (f) DATA DICTIONARIES.—Not later than 1 year
9 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Commission
10 shall, in consultation with the NSF and in accordance with
11 section 553 of title 5, United States Code, and subject
12 to subsection (g), issue regulations to require platforms
13 to disclose, and update periodically, data dictionaries to
14 inform and facilitate researcher data access requests. Such
15 data dictionaries shall include descriptions of significant
16 datasets in the platform's possession relating to content
17 on, or users of, the platform, enforcement of content pol-
18 icy, or advertising, as necessary or appropriate to inform
19 and facilitate researcher data access requests.

20 (g) PRIVACY, CONFIDENTIALITY, AND PLATFORM IN-
21 TEGRITY.—The Commission shall ensure that any report-
22 ing or disclosures required pursuant to this section do not
23 infringe upon reasonable expectations of personal privacy
24 of users of platforms or of other persons, or require dis-
25 semination of trade secrets. If necessary, the Commission

1 may require withholding of information otherwise required
 2 to be disclosed to meet this requirement. The Commission
 3 shall further consider the effect of disclosures on risks to
 4 platform integrity or the susceptibility of the platform to
 5 manipulation or inauthentic behavior, and may limit or re-
 6 duce the information required to be disclosed if necessary
 7 to address a substantial such risk.

8 (h) VARIATION.—In implementing this section, the
 9 Commission may vary the requirements it imposes on plat-
 10 forms based on the size of the platform and scope of its
 11 services.

12 (i) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

13 (1) ENGAGEMENT.—The term “engagement”
 14 means, with respect to content on a platform, the
 15 number of times a user interacts with the content,
 16 whether through comments, indications of approval
 17 or disapproval (such as likes or dislikes), reshares,
 18 or any other form of active interaction.

19 (2) IMPRESSION.—The term “impression”
 20 means, with respect to content on a platform, the
 21 display or delivery of the content to a user, regard-
 22 less of whether the user engages with the content.

23 (3) PREVALENCE OF VIOLATING CONTENT.—
 24 The term “prevalence of violating content” means a
 25 platform’s estimate of the number of impressions of

1 content that violates its moderation policies among
 2 its users, regardless of whether the platform ever
 3 identifies that particular content as violating.

4 (4) REACH.—The term “reach” means, with re-
 5 spect to content on a platform, the number of users
 6 to whom the content is displayed or delivered during
 7 a particular period, regardless of how many times it
 8 is delivered to them.

9 (5) REAL-TIME UNDERSTANDING.—The term
 10 “real-time understanding” means an understanding
 11 of content on a platform that is up-to-date within
 12 less than 24 hours.

13 (6) REASONABLY PUBLIC.—The term “reason-
 14 ably public” means information that the author
 15 made available in a manner and under such cir-
 16 cumstances such that the author does not retain a
 17 reasonable expectation of privacy in the information.
 18 The fact that a user may need to register or create
 19 an account with a platform to view information does
 20 not preclude it from being deemed reasonably public.

21 (7) RECOMMENDER OR RANKING ALGORITHM.—
 22 The term “recommender or ranking algorithm”
 23 means a fully or partially automated system used by
 24 a platform to suggest in its online interface specific
 25 information to recipients of the service offered by

1 the platform, or to prioritize that information, in-
2 cluding as a result of a search initiated by the re-
3 cipient of the service or otherwise determining the
4 relative order or prominence of information dis-
5 played. This includes any computational process, in-
6 cluding one derived from machine learning or other
7 artificial intelligence techniques, that processes per-
8 sonal information or other data for the purpose of
9 determining the order or manner that a set of infor-
10 mation is provided, recommended to, or withheld
11 from a user of a platform, including the provision of
12 commercial content, the display of social media
13 posts, recommendations of user or group accounts to
14 follow or associate with, or any other method of con-
15 tent selection, amplification, or restriction.

16 **SEC. 10. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

17 There are authorized to be appropriated such sums
18 as are necessary to carry out this Act for fiscal year 2026
19 and each succeeding fiscal year.

20 **SEC. 11. SEVERABILITY.**

21 If any provision of this Act, or the application of such
22 provision to any person or circumstance, is held to be un-
23 constitutional, the remainder of this Act, and the applica-

- 1 tion of the remaining provisions of this Act, to any person
- 2 or circumstance, shall not be affected.

