

## Judge Orders Biden Adm to Limit Contact with Social Media Platforms

### Description



A Louisiana federal judge on Tuesday ordered the Biden administration to limit its contact with social media platforms, determining that the government likely violated the First Amendment by working to censor disfavored political viewpoints online.

Judge Terry Doughty, a Trump appointed U.S. District Court judge, issued a preliminary injunction barring federal officials and agencies from contacting social media firms to seek the removal of protected speech, Politico [reported](#).

Doughty singled out White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre, and several health officials in the administration, while issuing a blanket ban on FBI and DOJ employees.

The suit is part of a longstanding effort by Republican-aligned states to challenge the Biden administration's cooperation with social media, which they say improperly censored disfavored positions during the coronavirus pandemic.

The injunction, which was obtained by Fox News, states that the government's actions "likely violate the Free Speech Clause" and that the court "is not persuaded by Defendants' arguments," dealing a significant blow to the White House.

"During the COVID-19 pandemic, a period perhaps best characterized by widespread doubt and uncertainty, the United States Government seems to have assumed a role similar to an Orwellian 'Ministry of Truth,'" Doughty wrote.

"If the allegations made by Plaintiffs are true, the present case arguably involves the most massive attack against free speech in United States' history," the injunction adds. "In their attempts to suppress

alleged disinformation, the Federal Government, and particularly the Defendants named here, are alleged to have blatantly ignored the First Amendment's right to free speech."

The injunction also claims that "the censorship alleged in this case almost [exclusively targeted conservative speech,](#)" but that issues the case raises are "beyond party lines."

"Viewpoint discrimination is an especially egregious form of content discrimination," Doughty argued. "The government must abstain from regulating speech when the specific motivating ideology or the perspective of the speaker is the rationale for the restriction."

The cases could mean that interactions between tech companies and government officials may be significantly limited in the future. Exceptions might include national security threats or criminal matters on social media.

The injunction received favorable responses from the Missouri and Louisiana attorneys general on Tuesday.

"Happy birthday America. You get your First Amendment back!!!" [Missouri AG Andrew Bailey wrote](#) in a tweet.

"Today's historic ruling is a big step in the continued fight to prohibit our government from unconstitutional censorship," Louisiana AG Jeff Landry said in a statement. "We look forward to continuing to litigate the case and will vigorously defend the injunction on appeal."