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## **COALITION FOR A SAFER WEB CRITICIZES TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S NEW SOCIAL MEDIA EXECUTIVE ORDER**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Washington, D.C. (MAY 28, 2020):** The Coalition for a Safer Web (CSW) ([www.coalitionsw.org](http://www.coalitionsw.org)) – a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization based in Washington, D.C., \* criticized the Trump Administration's new Executive Order targeting social media companies as a dubious act of political pique directed at Twitter. Rather than work with Congress to remove social media's remaining legal immunity from content liability accorded social media companies under Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act of 1996 (CDA), President Trump's Executive Order is of dubious legal validity. Since 1996 every federal court has upheld Section 230's content immunity shield as the law of the land.

The Trump Administration has repeatedly rebuffed pleas by concerned citizens groups, including CSW, to make elimination of Section 230 a legislative priority. Several days following the Tree of Life Synagogue massacre in Pittsburgh in October 2018, President Trump pledged to act against anti-Semitism incitement on social media which dramatically increased since the "Right anti-Semitic "Unite the Right" rally Charlottesville, VA in 2017.

Instead, the White House convened a series of ineffective social media "summits" to provide a forum for conservative commentators to air complaints about so-called the censorship by social media platforms. For all his belligerent tirades against social media companies threatening to hold social media companies accountable, President Trump has played both sides of the Section 230 divide when it suited his Administration to do so.

During final consideration of the US Mexico Canada Free Trade Agreement (USMCA), the U.S. Trade Representative – at the behest of the White House -- added Article 19.17 to the USMCA incorporating a mirror image version of Section 230. The White House acted at the behest of social media companies to make it more difficult for Congress to limit or eliminate Section 230. It was a huge legislative victory for Silicon Valley with the full knowledge of the White House.

Ambassador Marc Ginsberg, President of CSW stated:

***“There is a huge gap between the Trump Administration’s many pledges to work toward the elimination of social media-based anti-Semitic internet incitement and the President’s track record.***

***Mr. Trump’s battle with Twitter is a thinly veiled effort to impose government censorship on private social media companies. It does nothing to get at the root of the problem plaguing law-abiding Americans using social media: as long as Section 230 remains the law of the land, social media companies have no legal obligation to de-platform hate and extremist content which is a clear and present danger to America’s Jewish community and other minority groups.”***

**\*CSW’s mission is to accelerate policies and technological innovation to compel social media platforms to accelerate the permanent de-platforming of extremist and incitement hate content.**

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