

HB171 INTRODUCED



1 HB171
2 XD36QZE-1
3 By Representative Robbins
4 RFD: Children and Senior Advocacy
5 First Read: 13-Jan-26



4 SYNOPSIS:

5 Under existing law, a social media platform may
6 provide recommendations or sections of additional feeds
7 to users on its websites, services, or applications,
8 regardless of whether the users of the platform are
9 minors.

10 This bill would introduce limits on the ability
11 of social media platforms to provide these media feeds,
12 defined as "addictive feeds," without age verification
13 or parental consent.

14 This bill would prohibit social media platform
15 operators from notifying minors from 12:00 a.m. to 6:00
16 a.m.

17 This bill would require social media platform
18 operators to disclose certain information regarding the
19 algorithms that influence which media is prioritized to
20 users.

21 This bill would also authorize the Attorney
22 General to bring suits to enforce this act provided
23 that operators of social media platforms may cure any
24 violation.

25
26
27 A BILL
28 TO BE ENTITLED



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AN ACT

Relating to social media; to provide age-verification requirements for social media platforms that host addictive feeds; to prohibit social media platform operators from notifying minors during certain hours; to require social media platform operators to disclose certain information regarding media-prioritization algorithms used on their platforms; and to authorize the Attorney General to enforce this act.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. For the purposes of this act, the following terms have the following meanings:

(1) ACCESSIBLE USER INTERFACE. An interface that requires minimal user interactions, such as clicks, taps, or swipes, for a user to input data, make a choice, or take an action while using an addictive social media platform.

(2) ADDICTIVE FEED. A website, online service, online application, or mobile application, or a portion thereof, in which multiple pieces of media generated or shared by users of a website, online service, online application, or mobile application, either concurrently or sequentially, are recommended, selected, or prioritized for display to a user based in whole or in part on information associated with the user or the user's device, unless any of the following conditions are met:

a. The recommendation, selection, or prioritization is based on information that is not associated with the user or user's device and does not concern the user's previous



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interactions with media generated or shared by other users.

b. The recommendation, prioritization, or selection of media is based on user-selected privacy, user-enabled accessibility settings, or technical information concerning the user's device.

c. The user expressly and unambiguously requested that specific media, media by a specified author, creator, or poster of media to which the user has subscribed, or media shared by users to a page or group to which the user has subscribed. This condition is not met if the media is recommended, selected, or prioritized for display based in whole or in part on other information associated with the user or the user's device.

d. The user expressly and unambiguously requested that specific media, media by a specified author, creator, or poster of media the user has subscribed to, or media shared by users to a page or group the user has subscribed to, be blocked or deprioritized for display. This condition is not met if the media is not blocked or deprioritized based on other information associated with the user or the user's device.

e. The media is part of direct and private communications.

f. The media recommended, selected, or prioritized is in response to a specific search inquiry by the user.

g. The media recommended, selected, or prioritized for display is exclusively next in a preexisting sequence from the same author, creator, poster, or source.



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h. The recommendation, selection, or prioritization is necessary to comply with this act and any rules adopted pursuant to this act.

(3) ADDICTIVE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM. A website, online service, online application, or mobile application that offers or provides users an addictive feed as a significant part of the services provided by the website, online service, online application, or mobile application.

(4) COVERED MINOR. A user of a website, online service, online application, or mobile application in Alabama when the covered operator has actual knowledge the user is a minor.

(5) COVERED OPERATOR. Any person who operates an addictive social media platform. The term does not include Internet service providers, data center operators, or similar providers of services that are necessary for users to access an addictive social media platform but that do not offer a platform or addictive feed through the service.

(6) COVERED USER. A user of a website, online service, online application, or mobile application in Alabama who is not acting as an operator, or agent or affiliate of the operator, of the website, online service, online application, or mobile application, or any portion thereof.

(7) MEDIA. A piece of text, an image, or a video.

(8) MINOR. An individual under 18 years of age.

(9) PARENT. The parent or legal guardian of a minor.

(10) REASONABLE AGE-VERIFICATION METHOD. Any commercially available software, application, program, or methodology that, when enabled, provides reasonable assurances



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that any individual accessing certain published material is 18 years of age or older.

(11) WEIGHT. An individual numeric setting that controls the output of an addictive feed's algorithm at a high level across an addictive social media platform's user base, such as the relative contributions of different factors to how media is prioritized.

Section 2. (a) It shall be unlawful for a covered operator to provide an addictive feed to a covered user unless:

(1) The operator employs a reasonable age-verification method on the addictive social media platform to provide reasonable assurance that individuals under 18 years of age cannot access the addictive feed; or

(2) The covered operator has obtained verifiable parental consent to provide an addictive feed to a covered minor.

(b) (1) Information collected for the purpose of obtaining age-verification or parental consent shall not be used for any other purpose and shall be deleted immediately after an attempt to obtain age verification, except where necessary for compliance with any applicable state or federal law.

(2) If an operator, intentionally or unintentionally, shares any consumer information collected for the purpose of obtaining age-verification or parental consent in violation of subdivision (1), the operator shall be liable to the party injured in an action at law, suit in equity, or other proper



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proceeding for redress.

(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed as preventing any action taken in good faith to restrict access to or availability of media which the covered operator considers to be obscene or otherwise objectionable.

Section 3. Each covered operator shall provide an accessible user interface on his or her addictive social media platform which gives covered users the option to expressly and unambiguously communicate their preferences about the types of items to be recommended and to be blocked in the website's, service's, or application's output. Covered operators shall take all reasonable steps to ensure that the media selected for display is consistent with those preferences.

Section 4. It shall be unlawful for the covered operator of an addictive social media platform to send notifications to a covered minor between the hours of 12:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m.

Section 5. Nothing in this act shall be construed as requiring the operator of an addictive social media platform to give a parent any additional or special access to or control over the data or accounts of his or her minor child.

Section 6. Other than as necessary for compliance with this act, a covered operator shall not withhold, degrade, lower the quality, or increase the price of any product, service, or feature to a covered user due to the covered operator being prohibited from providing an addictive feed to a covered minor under Section 2(a) or due to the user's exercise of any rights contained in Section 3.



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Section 7. (a) A covered operator that administers an addictive feed shall prominently and conspicuously provide on the operator's website, service, or application:

(1) A description of each algorithmic system that is in use by the covered operator;

(2) A description of each source of input to each algorithmic system used in any deployed addictive feed and the source of the data of each input; and

(3) A description of the weights used in each addictive feed. The covered operator shall categorize each weight into four quartile groups according to each weight's relative importance in contributing to the system's output.

(b) A covered operator shall disclose on the addictive social media platform, on an annual basis, the high-level objectives, key results, and performance metrics the covered operator uses to evaluate product teams responsible for addictive feed design. This disclosure must be accessible by the general public.

Section 8. (a) This act shall apply to conduct that occurs in whole or in part in the State of Alabama. For purposes of this act, conduct takes place wholly outside of Alabama if the addictive social media platform is accessed by a user who is physically located outside of Alabama.

(b) Nothing in this act shall be construed to impose liability for commercial activities or actions by operators that is inconsistent with the treatment of such activities or actions under 15 U.S.C. § 6502.

Section 9. (a) No earlier than April 1, 2027, whenever



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it appears to the Attorney General, either upon complaint or otherwise, that any person, within or outside the state, has engaged in any of the acts or practices in violation of this act, the Attorney General shall:

(1) Send a notice to the operator that informs the operator there has been a violation under this act, provides factual information regarding the specific violation, and informs the operator that the operator has 30 days to remedy the violation before any action will be taken by the Attorney General. If the operator remedies the violation within 30 days following receipt of the notice, the Attorney General may not bring any action or proceeding under subdivision (2); and

(2) If the operator fails to remedy the violation within 30 days following receipt of a notice, bring an action or special proceeding in the name and on behalf of the State of Alabama to do any of the following:

a. Enjoin any violation of this act.

b. Obtain restitution of any monies or property obtained, directly or indirectly, by a violation of this act.

c. Seek forfeiture of any profits or gains obtained, directly or indirectly, including, but not limited to, the destruction of unlawfully obtained data.

d. Obtain damages caused, directly or indirectly, by a violation of this act.

e. Obtain civil penalties of up to five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per violation.

f. Obtain any other and further relief as the court may deem proper, including preliminary relief.



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225 (b) The Attorney General shall maintain a website to
226 receive complaints, information, or referrals from members of
227 the public concerning a covered operator's or social media
228 platform's alleged compliance or noncompliance with this act.

229 Section 10. This act shall become effective on October
230 1, 2026.