

News Item

Algorithm accountability is easier said than done | Columbia Journalism Review

By Mathew Ingram December 3, 2021

Over the past several years, Congress has held a seemingly never-ending series of hearings concerning "Big Tech," the handful of companies that control much of our online behavior: Facebook, Twitter, and Google. Congressional committees have looked into whether the platforms allowed foreign agents to influence the 2016 election, whether their algorithms suppress certain kinds of speech, and whether they harm young women; in many cases, the hearings have also been a forum for grandstanding. This week saw the latest in the series, a hearing by the House Energy and Commerce Committee, called "Holding Big Tech Accountable:

Targeted Reforms to Tech's Legal Immunity." The subject of the hearing was a piece of legislation that has been an ace in the hole for the platforms in all of their other congressional appearances: Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act.

[...]

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