

Big Tech ‘Amplification’: What Does That Mean? | The New York Times

By David McCabe

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Lawmakers have spent years investigating how hate speech, misinformation and bullying on social media sites can lead to real-world harm. Increasingly, they have pointed a finger at the algorithms powering sites like Facebook and Twitter, the software that decides what content users will see and when they see it.

Some lawmakers from both parties argue that when social media sites boost the performance of hateful or violent posts, the sites become accomplices. And they have proposed bills to strip the companies of a legal shield that allows them to fend off lawsuits over most content posted by their users, in cases when the platform amplified a harmful post’s reach.

The House Energy and Commerce Committee discussed several of the proposals at a hearing on Wednesday. The hearing also included testimony from Frances Haugen, the [former Facebook employee](#) who [recently leaked](#) a trove of revealing internal documents from the company.

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