



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Anna M. Kaplan

Lawmakers Push For Better Enforcement of Social Media Standards Against Hate and Misinformation

SENATOR ANNA M. KAPLAN May 5, 2021

| ISSUE: **SOCIAL MEDIA, COMBATING MISINFORMATION, VACCINE MISINFORMATION, COMBATING HATE SPEECH, ELECTION MISINFORMATION**



In ruling to uphold former President Trump's suspension from Facebook, Facebook's own oversight board faults the social media giant for incorrectly applying its own standards

New reporting by the Wall Street Journal also details the opaque and inconsistent manner with which Facebook ineptly polices its own platform

Legislation by Senator Anna Kaplan and Assemblywoman Patricia Fahy would require social media platforms to maintain clear, consistent reporting mechanisms to fight the proliferation of hate speech,

vaccine misinformation, and election misinformation online, and set guidelines for responding to such reports with improved transparency.

CARLE PLACE, NY (May 5, 2021) - Today, NYS **Senator Anna M. Kaplan** (D-North Hills) and **Assemblymember Patricia Fahy** (D-Albany) announced a package of legislation, [S.4511](#), [S.4512](#), and [S.4531](#), aimed at addressing the proliferation of hate speech and misinformation on social media networks, and ensuring that established community standards are enforced consistently and transparently. The push comes following a [report by the Facebook Oversight Board](#) that the social media giant failed to follow its own rules and processes in punishing former President Donald Trump, and a [damning report by the Wall Street Journal](#) about Facebook's patchwork of opaque rules and their inconsistent application of their own community standards.

Bill sponsor Senator Anna M. Kaplan said "New Yorkers know the expression 'if you see something, say something,' but unfortunately many social media platforms make it impossible to speak out when you see something dangerous or harmful online. This legislation will empower social media users to keep virtual spaces safer for all by providing clear and consistent reporting mechanisms for hate speech, and misinformation about vaccines or elections, and with the problem getting worse by the day, we need to take this action right away."

Bill sponsor Assemblymember Patricia Fahy said: "The alarming spread of misinformation and hate speech across our online and social media platforms is only growing. Unfortunately, many social media platforms like Facebook have inadequate reporting mechanisms and apply their self-promulgated guidelines arbitrarily, and are often ineffective at preventing the spread of hate speech or other misinformation online before it's simply too late. These pieces of legislation send a strong message to social media platforms and companies; that they must take real action to safeguard free speech online and protect New Yorkers from the

spread of dangerous misinformation.”

The package of legislation introduced by Senator Kaplan and Assemblymember Patricia Fahy includes S.4511, S.4512, and S.4531, which:

- Require social media networks to provide and maintain mechanisms for reporting hate speech, vaccine misinformation, and election misinformation, respectively.
- Require social media networks to maintain clearly accessible reporting mechanisms on both their mobile apps and websites
- Require social media networks to maintain a clear and consistent policy for responding to reports made through these mechanisms. Such policies shall include a mechanism to provide a direct response to the individual who has made the report on how the matter has been handled in accordance with established community standards.

RELATED LEGISLATION

2021-S4511

- Introduced
- ◦ In Committee Assembly
 - In Committee Senate
- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly

- On Floor Calendar Senate

- ◦ Passed Assembly

- Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Requires social media networks to provide and maintain mechanisms for reporting hateful conduct on their platform

February 05, 2021

Senate Floor Calendar

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Do you support this bill?

2021-S4512

- Introduced

- ◦ In Committee Assembly

- In Committee Senate

- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly

- On Floor Calendar Senate

- ◦ Passed Assembly

- Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Requires social media networks to provide and maintain mechanisms for reporting vaccine misinformation on their platform

February 05, 2021

In Senate Committee [Internet and Technology](#)

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Do you support this bill?

2021-S4531

- Introduced

- ◦ In Committee Assembly

- In Committee Senate

- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly

- On Floor Calendar Senate

- ◦ Passed Assembly

- Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Requires social media networks to provide and maintain mechanisms for reporting election misinformation on their platform

February 05, 2021

In Senate Committee [Rules](#)

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Do you support this bill?