

Rumble and FIRE

December 8, 2022

Federal officials feel entitled to demand the censorship of persons uttering renegade opinions about pandemics and elections. Local police officers feel entitled to arrest persons who commit parody against them.

And New York State officials now feel entitled to compel social-media companies to restrict speech that the officials dislike.

The video-sharing platform Rumble, dedicated to making the Internet “free and open once

Clearly, the law would institute a massive incentive to bury social platforms in fines and investigations if they permit the “wrong” kind of speech.

again,” is teaming up with the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) in a lawsuit to stop the New York law.

The goal of AB A7865A is to force social media networks “to provide and maintain mechanisms for reporting hateful conduct on their platform.”

“Hateful conduct” is speech that some people



dislike. Of course, even the most acidulous asseverations are protected by the First Amendment if they don't entail actual violations of anyone's rights. Gangsters and terrorists are not legally entitled to use speech, or anything else, to commit robbery or murder — certainly not on the specious grounds that they have rights to freedom of speech or to bear arms.

The new law is not about such things. Under it, if social-media companies fail to provide ways for users to complain about “hateful” comments, they could be fined up to \$1,000 per violation and investigated by the state attorney general.

Clearly, the law would institute a massive incentive to bury social platforms in fines and investigations if they permit the “wrong” kind of speech. The number of those easily offended by others is infinite.

Also infinite? Excuses for those in power to stomp on opposition speech.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.