



A Free Speech Order

January 23, 2025

“Will President Trump be a free speech president?”

On January 21, David Keating, president of Institute for Free Speech, asked this question. And he refers the reader to his *Wall Street Journal* [op-ed](#) published last month in which he offered suggestions about how to stop the federal government from censoring people via social media or in other ways.

The new president sure seemed to get off to a good start restoring the First Amendment. One of his [thirty or so](#) executive orders signed on the 20th, his first work day, is [entitled](#) “Restoring Freedom of Speech and Ending Federal Censorship.”

Section 2 says that it is U.S. policy to “secure the right of the American people to engage in constitutionally protected speech,” ensure that no federal employee or agent “engages in or facilitates” unconstitutional abridgement of speech, and “identify and take appropriate action to correct past misconduct by the Federal Government related to censorship of protected speech.”

Section 3 says no federal employee or department may act in a manner inconsistent with Section 2.

Maybe this broad order needs to be supplemented with many more specific orders that say: *Really. Don't engage in censorship here or there or anywhere.*

This is where specific suggestions like Mr. Keating's come in handy, such as preventing the IRS from penalizing taxpayers for criticizing political candidates, repealing SEC limits on political donations, and instituting specific regulations to “force disclosure of most government contacts with social-media organizations asking to take down third-party posts,” thereby scuttling most future such contacts.

It's a start. Let's keep going.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.