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We're in the middle of the COVID-19 crisis. Big Tech is already preparing for the next one.

New York Times
Amazon, Apple, Facebook and Google Prepare for Their 'Big Tobacco Moment'

Politico

MSG Networks is launching original programming as the National Hockey League gets set to drop the puck and start its Stanley Cup Qualifiers games on August 1. On July 27, the network will debut "Around the NHL," presented by Chase, a new weekday program hosted by Michelle Gingras and Anson Carter. The show will highlight league news and action and feature guest interviews.

The network is also launching MSG Hockey IQ, an NHL themed trivia show on July 27. MSG Hockey IQ features broadcasters Sam Rosen, Joe Micheletti, John Giannone, Steve Valiquette, Brendan Burke, Butch Goring and Shannon Hogan getting ready for the season and answering trivia questions. The show is presented by Cadillac. — **NextTV**

The Trump administration moved forward with plans to regulate content on social-media platforms Monday, formally asking federal regulators to start overseeing how these platforms treat user-generated content.

In a petition to the Federal Communications Commission, the Commerce Department called for an FCC rule-making to reinterpret key elements of Section 230 of the 1996 Communications Decency Act. That provision has given online companies broad immunity from legal liability for their users' actions, and wide latitude to police content on their sites. "Unfortunately, large online platforms appear to engage in selective censorship that is harming our national discourse," the petition says. "The FCC should determine how Section 230 can best serve its goals of promoting internet diversity and a free flow of ideas, as well as holding dominant platforms accountable for their editorial

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decisions, in new market conditions and technologies that have emerged since the 1990s."

The action follows complaints by President Trump and others who say left-leaning Silicon Valley technology companies unfairly censor conservative views on their digital platforms. The internet industry has dismissed those claims, and is expected to resist attempts to reframe Section 230 as an intrusion on the free-speech rights of technology companies.

In a statement, FCC Chairman Ajit Pai said the commission will carefully review the petition. But FCC Commissioner Jessica Rosenworcel, a Democrat, said the panel "shouldn't take this bait." "While social media can be frustrating, turning this agency into the President's speech police is not the answer," Ms Rosenworcel said in a statement. "If we honor the Constitution, we will reject this petition immediately."

Still, the petition comes amid the run-up to the Nov. 3 election and is likely to lead to further scrutiny of political content on social-media platforms. The Commerce Department request follows [an executive order issued by Mr. Trump in May](#), when he proposed limits on Section 230 after Twitter Inc. said it would [apply a fact-checking notice](#) to tweets by the president with unsubstantiated claims about voter fraud.

Twitter described the executive order as "a reactionary and politicized approach to a landmark law," and the measure already [has been challenged in federal district court](#) in Washington, D.C. by an online-rights group, the Center for Democracy and Technology, in a case that is ongoing. Mr. Trump's order seeks to make it easier for federal regulators to hold companies such as Twitter and Facebook Inc. accountable if they unfairly curb users' speech by, for example, suspending their accounts or deleting their posts.

The order directed the Commerce Department to petition the FCC to set up a rule-making proceeding to clarify the scope of Section 230. A key focus of that proceeding would be to determine when platforms have failed to live up to their obligations to act in "good faith" under the law when they police content. The rule—if it were adopted by the FCC—would be similar to a transparency rule already in place for internet service providers such as cable and wireless companies. That rule is aimed at promoting fairness in how the providers treat internet traffic from different websites.

In effect, the new rule would impose the same fairness principle for how social-media platforms treat their users' comments, requiring the companies to live up to their public commitments. If companies failed to live up to their commitments, they could be subject to punishment by the Federal Trade Commission, a separate agency. In a statement, the FTC said it is committed to robust enforcement of consumer protection and competition laws, including with respect to social-media platforms.

Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross said in a statement that the petition is aimed at fostering a free flow of ideas on the internet. "President Trump is committed to protecting the rights of all Americans to express their views and not face unjustified restrictions or selective censorship from a handful of powerful companies," Mr. Ross said. — *Wall Street Journal*

A Pennsylvania state senator is hoping to keep the lights on for thousands of Pennsylvanians who could soon be at risk for shutoffs. The governor's order helped keep water, gas, and electricity on for many; but now, there are concerns that utility companies will begin lobbying the Public Utilities Commission to approve disconnects.

"The numbers are astonishing. We're hearing it could be, some are saying conservatively 800,000 businesses and homes may lose utilities," said [Republican Senator Tom Killion](#) (PA-9). Shutoffs could affect all

customers, current or behind. "When the utilities have uncollected payments, they're permitted to go to the PUC and get a rate increase, which means everyone's rates would go up," said Killion.

The PUC has a moratorium in place that prevents the shut off of utilities, but it may not last much longer. Sen. Killion is proposing using Flexible Funds available under the federal CARES Act. It would cover bills and make payments directly to companies through the LIHEAP program. "Folks whose income levels prior to COVID-19, they weren't eligible for LIHEAP, well now they would be," said Sen. Killion.

It would provide three different options. Sen. Killion said the first is traditional LIHEAP available for low-income families, another option for people who have lost at least 30% of income due to COVID, and the final for small businesses who are facing financial hardships. "As the economy comes back, it will get that large bill that they're facing, that's going to cause a shut-off, off their backs," said Sen. Killion. – **WHP-TV, Harrisburg**

Another poll of Pennsylvania voters finds Joe Biden leading President Donald Trump in the critical battleground state, the latest in a string of surveys that show the former vice president with a substantial lead. Biden, the presumptive Democratic nominee for president, has support from 50% of likely Pennsylvania voters, compared with 42% who back Trump, according to a [Morning Consult Political Intelligence poll](#) released Tuesday.

The results broadly align with numerous public surveys that show [Biden with a sizable lead in a state that is usually closely divided](#). [Other recent Pennsylvania polls](#) by Fox News, CNBC/Change Research, and Monmouth University found Biden leading by 11 points, 8, and 13 percentage points respectively. Slightly more than three months remain until Election Day.

The Morning Consult poll finds a potentially significant shift among independents, who favored Biden by 12 percentage points, 46% to 34%. [Trump won independents](#) in Pennsylvania by 7 percentage points in 2016, according to exit polls. That change, if it holds, could prove significant in a state decided by less than one percentage point in 2016, when Trump's surprise victory helped secure his national win.

Pennsylvania is again seen as one of the most important swing states in the country, with both parties pouring money, time, and staff into the Keystone State. Jill Biden, Joe Biden's wife, and Sen. Bob Casey (D., Pa.) are holding a virtual event on school re-openings Tuesday in Pittsburgh, and Vice President Mike Pence is set to visit Westmoreland County on Thursday for a "Cops for Trump" event, [his second visit to the state this month](#). Biden has [also held a series of events](#) in the state over the past two months.

Trump seemed to be railing against the recent polling Sunday [when he tweeted](#), "There is NO WAY a place like Pennsylvania can vote for the Radical Left and their puppet, Joe Biden." But the president's [support has appeared to drop nationally and in Pennsylvania](#) as he has confronted [the coronavirus](#), an economic collapse, and protests against systemic racism and police brutality.

The Morning Consult poll found that Democrats in Pennsylvania back Biden over Trump 89% to 9%. Among Republicans, 84% support Trump and 9% back Biden. The survey of 2,100 likely Pennsylvania voters was conducted from July 17 to 26 and had a margin of error of plus or minus 2 percentage points. The poll, like others, is a snapshot in time, and the race could change. Republicans argue that polls can't be trusted, pointing to Trump's defiance of expectations in 2016, and say Biden will stumble as voters get a closer look at him and his policies. They also argue that an economic revival, which Trump has promised, could lift the president.

Democrats, for their part, are cautiously optimistic about recent polling, but are still stung by 2016 and warning supporters not to take anything for granted. Members of both parties predict the race is likely to tighten as the election nears. – *Philadelphia Inquirer*

Concerned that Gov. Tom Wolf is acting more like a king than a governor in exercising his emergency powers, the GOP-controlled state Legislature is trying to limit his powers by amending the state constitution.

However, in doing so, the Legislature is guilty of the same overreach of which Mr. Wolf is accused. Mr. Wolf initially issued a 90-day emergency powers declaration in March when the first coronavirus cases were being reported in Pennsylvania. He then reissued the declaration in June. The declaration does give the governor broad powers, and Mr. Wolf used it to close schools and businesses and force people to stay in their homes.

Some Republicans contended that the governor went too far and then moved too slowly in reopening the state, causing much unnecessary pain and suffering for residents and businesses. They also maintained that the governor's distinction between essential and nonessential was confusing and arbitrary. Others have said Mr. Wolf's application of shutdowns and reopenings has been unbalanced, and they have a point. Restaurant owners, for example, have whiplash.

So, GOP lawmakers sent several bills to Mr. Wolf that would loosen the restrictions, but he vetoed them. Republicans sued to end his emergency order, but the state Supreme Court rejected their arguments and sided with the governor. Republicans then came up with a way to get around Mr. Wolf. They passed an amendment to the state constitution that would permit the governor to issue an emergency declaration for 21 days and then allow the Legislature to vote by a simple majority on whether it could be extended. The bill will have to be approved again next year before it can be put on the ballot for a referendum, but that could happen in time for the primary election next spring.

By limiting the declaration to 21 days and allowing the Legislature to overturn it by a simple majority vote, Republicans have turned this into a bitterly partisan issue when or if it shows up on the ballot. To be sure, there should be some limits to any governor's power. However, only allowing such declarations to exist for 21 days is nonsense. Ninety days is a much better time frame for governors to deal with emergencies.

Also, allowing a simple majority to overrule a governor would create massive confusion and uncertainty. Like it or not, there has to be someone in charge during an emergency. A two-thirds vote to overrule would be much better, giving lawmakers some say in the governor's actions but not totally taking away his power. The bottom line is that neither the Legislature nor the governor has performed wisely or consistently during the pandemic. There does not seem to be an adult in the house. – *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* editorial



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