# Courts halt new laws targeting adult content online



In a timely legal decision, two laws targeting online content related to adult material have been effectively halted by courts, preventing their implementation just before the January 1 deadline. The measures in question are Tennessee's Protect Tennessee Minors Act (PTMA) and California's Protecting Our Kids from Social Media Addiction Act.

The California law aimed to prohibit social media platforms from employing personalised recommendation algorithms for users under the age of 18, impose significant restrictions on the hours minors could access these platforms, and mandate parental consent for notifications intended for younger users. These rules would have obliged tech companies to comply by January 1, 2025, but a ruling by U.S. District Judge Edward J. Davila on December 31 temporarily blocked parts of the law from occurring.

While Judge Davila allowed some enforcement on algorithmic feeds, he halted the notification requirements and the mandates for reporting the number of minor users. Technology trade group NetChoice successfully petitioned for this injunction, and on January 2, Judge Davila extended the block against the law until February 1, 2025, allowing legal proceedings to unfold. “It’s a win for free speech and a concession that laws targeting algorithms may run afoul of the First Amendment,” said a commentator on the implications of the ruling.

Meanwhile, in Tennessee, U.S. District Judge Sheryl H. Lipman granted a preliminary injunction against the PTMA, which seeks to regulate what the state considers "harmful" online content targeted towards minors. This law imposed obligations on website operators to prevent minors from accessing material deemed inappropriate, with severe penalties for noncompliance, including class C felony charges. Judge Lipman highlighted the law's broad reach, noting that it inadvertently encompasses a range of expressive content beyond just internet pornography.

In her ruling, she underscored the significant First Amendment ramifications, stating, “The First Amendment is not shy in its protective sweep....to promote state interests.” This ruling follows legal challenges from the Free Speech Coalition and Deep Connection Technologies, with Lipman indicating that while child protection is a legitimate state concern, it cannot compromise adults' rights to free expression.

Though these federal court actions are seen as crucial developments in the ongoing discourse surrounding freedom of expression and internet regulation, they do not eliminate the threat of lawsuits as private actions and local district attorneys may still pursue cases under these laws.

In addition to these judicial actions, notable discussions in the tech sphere include remarks from OpenAI CEO Sam Altman about the company's expectations for artificial general intelligence (AGI), predicting that by 2025 AI agents could significantly alter workforce dynamics. This anticipation reflects broader trends in AI automation, suggesting that companies may soon have access to technologies capable of transforming business operations and outputs.

In conjunction with these developments, the Biden Administration has approached the Supreme Court to uphold potential legislation aimed at banning TikTok, asserting that the measures do not infringe upon constitutional rights.

These unfolding events exemplify the intersections of technology, freedom of speech, and legal challenges, highlighting the complexities that businesses, content creators, and platforms must navigate in an evolving digital landscape.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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2. <https://tennesseestar.com/justice/federal-district-judge-blocks-the-protect-tennessee-minors-act-from-taking-effect/khousler/2025/01/02/> - Supports the information about the PTMA, including the penalties for noncompliance and the federal judge's decision to block the law.
3. <https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB976> - Provides details about California's Protecting Our Kids from Social Media Addiction Act, including restrictions on notification hours and parental consent requirements.
4. <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2024/09/20/governor-newsom-signs-landmark-bill-to-protect-kids-from-social-media-addiction-takes-action-on-other-measures/> - Corroborates the information about California's law, including the prohibition on sending notifications to minors during certain hours and the requirement for parental consent.
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12. <https://reason.com/2025/01/06/stop-overprotecting-the-children-say-courts-in-tennessee-and-california/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data