



# Rhode Island General Assembly

Office of the House Minority Caucus

## **NEWS**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Stop Social Media Censorship Act**

Representative Justin Price (District 39 - Exeter, Hopkinton, Richmond) is proud to introduce House Bill 5500 relating to courts and civil procedure in the Stop Social Media Censorship Act.

This act would prohibit certain social media companies from censoring users' speech by either removal of the user's speech or using algorithms to prevent the user's speech.

These matters run to the heart of American Democracy, and therefore, the bill imposes a statutory penalty of \$75,000 and permits prevailing party in litigation to seek attorney fees and costs. The courts in Rhode Island will have personal jurisdiction over the social media websites who censored users in my state under the long-arm statute.

There are exceptions where censorship would be permitted. These exceptions include: removing immediate threats to violence, if the content is injurious to children, or if the account was fake.

“The major social media websites have limitless resources, so this bill levels the playing field and will incentivize local counsel to represent victims who have been censored for religious and political reasons”, said Representative Price (District 39- Exeter, Hopkinton, Richmond)

House Bill 5500 was introduced on February 14<sup>th</sup> and was referred to House Committee on Judiciary where it will be heard today in room 101 of the Rhode Island State House.

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