

Big Tech sues Texas, says age-verification law is “broad censorship regime”

Texas minors also challenge law

The Texas App Store Accountability Act is similar to laws enacted by Utah and Louisiana. The Texas law is scheduled to take effect on January 1, 2026, while the Utah and Louisiana laws are set to be enforced starting in May and July, respectively.

The Texas law is also being challenged in a different lawsuit filed by a student advocacy group and two Texas minors.

“The First Amendment does not permit the government to require teenagers to get their parents’ permission before accessing information, except in discrete categories like obscenity,” attorney Ambika Kumar of Davis Wright Tremaine LLP said in an announcement of the lawsuit. “The Constitution also forbids restricting adults’ access to speech in the name of protecting children. This law imposes a system of prior restraint on protected expression that is presumptively unconstitutional.”

Davis Wright Tremaine LLP said the law “extends far beyond social media to mainstream educational, news, and creative applications, including Wikipedia, search apps, and internet browsers; messaging services like WhatsApp and Slack; content libraries like Audible, Kindle, Netflix, Spotify, and YouTube; educational platforms like Coursera, Codecademy, and Duolingo; news apps from The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, ESPN, and The Atlantic; and publishing tools like Substack,

Medium, and CapCut.”

Both lawsuits against Texas argue that the law is preempted by the Supreme Court’s 2011 decision in *Brown v. Entertainment Merchants Association*, which struck down a California law restricting the sale of violent video games to children. The Supreme Court said in *Brown* that a state’s power to protect children from harm “does not include a free-floating power to restrict the ideas to which children may be exposed.”

The tech industry has sued Texas over multiple laws related to content moderation. In 2022, the Supreme Court blocked a Texas law that prohibits large social media companies from moderating posts based on a user’s viewpoint. Litigation in that case is ongoing. In a separate case decided in June 2025, the Supreme Court upheld a Texas law that requires age verification on porn sites.

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