

# Report: The Two Faces of Big Tech

## How Big Tech Companies Lobby Against the Reforms They Publicly Endorse

Big Tech is waging a shadow campaign to weaponize America’s increasingly politicized courts – it’s their latest attempt to protect their dominance and profits at all costs. Companies like Apple, Google, Meta, Snap, TikTok, and X are laundering extreme and dangerous legal theories through [NetChoice](#), an industry lobbying group whose mission is to overturn tech regulations and help corporations avoid accountability.

It’s a well-worn playbook for winning on unpopular issues: Like the NRA and the National Right to Life Committee, Big Tech companies are trying to neutralize a popular movement and overturn reforms – all while hiding behind a front group.

From state courts to the Supreme Court, Big Tech is using NetChoice to drive unprecedented online and offline harms – bending the law to overturn child safety protections, erode limits on harmful misinformation, and allow companies to manipulate consumers. **The lobbying group is actively working to overturn tech regulations in at least 27 states across the country.**

But that’s not the message Big Tech companies want the public to hear. Instead, Big Tech companies and CEOs claim to support reforms when speaking at conferences or providing quotes to the press. Behind the scenes, Big Tech is funding lobbying and litigation efforts to block or overturn tech legislation, including some of the very laws they’ve publicly endorsed.

**NetChoice is actively working to overturn tech regulations in at least 27 states in America.**

The lobbying group is actively working to overturn tech regulations in [Alabama](#), [Arizona](#), [Arkansas](#), [California](#), [Connecticut](#), [Florida](#), [Idaho](#), [Illinois](#), [Indiana](#), [Iowa](#), [Kansas](#), [Louisiana](#), [Massachusetts](#), [Minnesota](#), [Montana](#), [New Jersey](#), [New Mexico](#), [New York](#), [Ohio](#), [Pennsylvania](#), [Rhode Island](#), [South Carolina](#), [Tennessee](#), [Texas](#), [Utah](#), [Virginia](#), and [Washington](#).

**Snap and X claim to support the Kids Online Safety Act (KOSA) when in public, but behind the scenes, they're funding litigation to block it through their lobbying group NetChoice.**

#### **PUBLIC CLAIMS:**

- [Snap claims to support KOSA, 1/25/24](#): “Protecting the privacy and safety of young people on Snapchat is a top priority, and we support the Kids Online Safety [Act]... We look forward to continuing to work closely with lawmakers on this important legislation.”
- [X CEO Linda Yaccarino claims to support KOSA, 1/31/24](#): “We support KOSA and [we] will continue to make sure that it accelerates and make sure it continues to offer community to teens that are seeking that voice.”

#### **PRIVATE ACTIONS:**

- [Snap and X are funding lawsuits to overturn KOSA, 2/5/24](#): “Decisions in NetChoice’s lawsuits against the states of California, Arkansas, and Ohio show the legal problems with the Kids Online Safety Act.”
- [NetChoice slams KOSA as “massively” problematic for American families, 7/27/23](#): KOSA “hand[s] parenting over to bureaucrats,” “violat[es] free speech rights,” and creates “massive privacy and security problems for American families.”
- [NetChoice urges Congress to block KOSA, 7/27/23](#): “NetChoice, a tech industry group opposing KOSA and COPPA 2.0, urged lawmakers to instead pass a federal comprehensive privacy bill and invest more in law enforcement efforts against child abuse and exploitation.”

**Meta publicly claims to empower parents to protect their children's safety online. Privately, the company is funding NetChoice to overturn laws in Arkansas and Utah that provide parents with tools and resources to protect their children from online harms.**

### **PUBLIC CLAIMS:**

- **Meta claims to “work hard to provide parents...controls to reduce harms,” 1/31/24:** “...we work hard to provide parents and teens support and controls to reduce potential harms. Technology gives us new ways to communicate with our kids and feel connected to their lives, but it can also make parenting more complicated and it’s important to me that our services are positive for everyone who uses them. We are on the side of parents everywhere working hard to raise their kids.”
- **Meta claims to have dedicated teams and tools to support minors and parents online 11/27/23:** “We want teens to have safe, age-appropriate experiences online, and we have over 30 tools to support them and their parents. We’ve spent a decade working on these issues and hiring people who have dedicated their careers to keeping young people safe and supported online.”

### **PRIVATE ACTIONS:**

- **Meta funds lawsuit against Arkansas parental consent law, 8/31/23:** “A federal judge has blocked an Arkansas law that requires children under 18 to get parental consent before accessing most social media websites... Judge Timothy Brooks of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Arkansas granted tech lobbying group NetChoice’s request to stop the law from going into effect on Sept. 1.”
- **Meta funds lawsuit against Utah parental consent law, 12/19/23:** “A group representing several social media giants, including Google, Meta, TikTok and X, sued Utah on Monday over the state’s new social media law that requires platforms to verify user ages and obtain parental consent for minors.”

**TikTok claims ensuring users are over 13 years-old is a priority. But they're funding a lawsuit to block an age verification law in Ohio.**

### **PUBLIC CLAIMS:**

- **TikTok claims to “invest heavily” to “keep under 13s off the platform,” 6/4/23:** “TikTok is a platform for users aged 13 and over. We invest heavily to help keep under 13s off the platform and our 40,000 strong safety team works around the clock to help keep the platform safe for our community.”
- **TikTok CEO Shou Chew, 3/23/23:** “We spent a lot of time adopting measures to protect teenagers. Many of those measures are firsts for the social media industry.”

### **PRIVATE ACTIONS:**

- **TikTok funds lawsuit against Ohio age verification law, 1/12/24:** “Though most social platforms allow anyone 13 or older to set up accounts, legislation being pushed in some states would make it more difficult for teens to access social platforms. Such is the case in Ohio, where legislators passed a law requiring parental consent for children under the age of 16 to access certain social media sites. The law was set to go into effect Monday, but is on hold after a group representing social media companies [NetChoice] filed a federal lawsuit.”
- **Ohio judge rules in NetChoice’s favor blocking age verification law, 2/12/24:** “On Monday, a federal judge blocked Ohio’s law requiring parents to sign off on their child’s new social media accounts, siding with a group representing several social media sites that has filed a lawsuit against the state and argues the law is unconstitutional.”
- **NetChoice claims age-verification poses “serious First Amendment problems,” 4/13/23:** “Age-verification requirements raise privacy concerns, adversely stifle freedom of speech online and pose serious First Amendment problems.”

**Google publicly advocates for the development and implementation of age-appropriate design principles. Privately, they are funding lawsuits and lobbying to undo those very principles, including in California, Maryland, Minnesota, and New Mexico.**

### **PUBLIC CLAIMS:**

- **Google claims age-appropriate design principles increase safety and privacy, 10/16/23:** “Good legislative models — like those based on age-appropriate design principles — can help hold companies responsible for promoting safety and privacy, while enabling access to richer experiences for children and teens.”

### **PRIVATE ACTIONS:**

- **Google is funding a lawsuit to overturn age-appropriate design requirements in California, 12/14/22:** “Tech industry group NetChoice is suing the state of California to block its new Age-Appropriate Design Code Act, which it claims violates the First Amendment. The group’s members include Amazon, Google, Meta, TikTok and Twitter.” Snap is also a [member](#).
- **NetChoice on working to “permanently” strike down the California law, 9/18/23:** “We look forward to seeing the law permanently struck down and online speech and privacy fully protected.”
- **NetChoice lobbies against Minnesota Age Appropriate Design Code, 3/26/23:** NetChoice claims the bill is an “unconstitutional and damaging prohibition on teenagers’ ability to access the internet.”
- **NetChoice compares age-appropriate design codes in New Mexico and Maryland to a “virus spreading across the country,” 3/14/23:** “This is an absolute virus spreading across the country ... to create new rules on how Americans and their families engage online,’ Carl Szabo, vice president and general counsel of NetChoice, a right-of-center trade group, said in an interview. NetChoice’s members include Google, Meta, TikTok and Twitter.”