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#### Omnibus spending package passes the senate now – it’s tentative – sustained bipartisanship is key to getting it over the line

BRESNAHAN et al. 3/10 @5:17 AM [John Bresnahan – Co-Founder Punchbowl News, Anna Palmer - American political journalist based in Washington, Jake Sherman - American journalist and writer. He is the co-founder of Punchbowl News, Heather Caygle – Congress Reporter for Politico, Max Cohen – Reporter at Punchbowl News, Christian Hall – Reporter at Punchbowl News, “Punchbowl News AM: How Democratic leaders whiffed, but won”, 03-10-2022, https://punchbowl.news/?p=3806]//pranav

After 10 p.m. last night, the House passed a $1.5 trillion omnibus spending package that will keep federal agencies open until Sept. 30. The measure now goes onto the Senate, which is expected to pass it as well, although there may be some opposition from conservative Republicans.

The House has also approved a short-term funding bill that gives the Senate until March 15 to complete work on the omnibus. The Senate will take this up today.

The omnibus package includes more than $13 billion in military and humanitarian funding for Ukraine, which has been invaded by tens of thousands of Russian troops. U.S. aid will go to Eastern European nations dealing with more than 2 million Ukrainians who have fled the bloody Russian onslaught, as well as NATO allies now facing a renewed security threat.

#### Moves to make media more objective collapse bipartisanship – Republicans hate the plan

Brown & Solender ’21 [Abram Brown - senior editor at Forbes, Andrew Solender - senior news reporter covering politics, “Social Media Reform Appears Stalled In Congress—Even As Zuckerberg And Dorsey Prepare To Testify About It”, 03-25-2021, Forbes, https://www.forbes.com/sites/abrambrown/2021/03/25/section-230-social-media-facebook-twitter-zuckerberg-dorsey-congress/?sh=177ff87750fe]//pranav

After the mob swept through the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, congressional Democrats seemed poised to seize the moment and push through a set of long-sought reforms with bipartisan support: alterations to Section 230, the bedrock federal legislation that shields tech companies from liability for what’s posted on their sites and undergirds much of the online economy. The riot had been born, planned and fed by the internet—President Trump himself contributing to the online melee—and lawmakers saw an opportunity to finally hold platforms more accountable for what’s said on social media. But momentum on Section 230 has ebbed in the new Congress, even as three major tech CEOs—Mark Zuckerberg, Jack Dorsey and Sundar Pichai—are scheduled to testify Thursday before a House subcommittee taking a look at the issue. In fact, it’s unclear whether anything will be done about it until after the midterm elections, say both Democratic and Republican leaders who have been champions of Section 230 reform, despite the existence of several legislative proposals for change. “Right now, there’s not a bill out there I could support,” says Ron Wyden, a Democrat from Oregon who co-wrote Section 230 a quarter century ago and has advocated for modifying it. Across the aisle, frequent social media critic Sen. Josh Hawley throws up his hands at the concept. During the current Congress, “there won’t be anything meaningful” done with Section 230, the Missouri Republican says. When Wyden helped get Section 230 passed in 1996, it established an important principle that would allow web companies to flourish: They wouldn’t be held liable for what’s posted on their sites, a particularly important protection for companies reliant on user content like Dorsey’s Twitter, Zuckerberg’s Facebook and Pichai’s Alphabet, the parent company of Google and YouTube. It’s allowed them to grow into multi-multi-billion-dollar businesses—and in the cases of Facebook and Alphabet, two of the largest in the world, which together are worth a collective $2.1 trillion. But there’s been a growing movement over the past few years to alter Section 230—or possibly repeal it entirely. Democrats such as Sen. Richard Blumenthal have promoted the idea of modifying Section 230 to place more burden on the companies to self-regulate and take down offensive or harmful content. Republicans have postulated regulatory change as well, for an entirely different reason. They think platforms like Facebook and Twitter already over-filter content, unfairly weeding out conservative voices. Nearly a dozen bills have been introduced over the past two years aimed at adjusting the legislation. President Trump personally took up the mission, most noisily at the end of his term when he vetoed a bill containing the $740 billion defense budget partly because it didn’t include the Section 230 repeal he requested. (Congress overrode the president, prompting, ironically, one of his final tweets: “Our Republican Senate just missed the opportunity to get rid of Section 230, which gives unlimited power to Big Tech companies. Pathetic!!!”) President Biden, meanwhile, told The New York Times in January 2020 the legislation “should be revoked immediately.” He hasn’t had anything else to say on the subject publicly, suggesting his position may be drifting back toward his party’s less strident stance. (A White House spokesperson didn’t respond to a request for comment.) As political pressure has mounted, tech companies have increasingly conceded the need to better regulate themselves. Social media has also found itself in Congress’ crosshairs—placed there during hearings like Thursday’s before the House energy and commerce subcommittee on communications and technology—forcing Zuckerberg and Dorsey to move away from initial reluctance to police their sites. “A decade ago, social media was nascent. As more people joined, the conversations became more robust and the importance of social media—and the scrutiny of it—became far greater,” says Colin Crollin, Twitter’s former public policy chief. In the past year, Facebook and Twitter have added fact-check labels and hubs of well-vetted information around important topics like voting and Covid-19 and, most notably, expelled Trump after his comments on their platforms helped incite the Jan. 6 violence. Zuckerberg and Dorsey now seem resigned to their fate and have signaled an increasing acceptance of the inevitability of reform during past congressional testimony and other public statements. Despite the hearing, Washington appears to be stalled out on the issue. Unsurprisingly, Republicans place the blame on their liberal counterparts, complaining that Democrats won’t join forces to fight and risk cozy relationships with the technorati. “I don’t expect Congressional Democrats to be willing to stand up to Big Tech,” says Sen. Ted Cruz, of Texas, who has made monologues on this subject a staple. Just as unsurprisingly, Democrats say much the same about Republican peers, characterizing them as unwilling to work productively on the matter. “There’s not a lot of good faith,” says Brian Schatz, the Democratic Senator from Hawaii who, along with Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.), has authored the PACT Act, which would give the government more legal tools to regulate social media companies and require platforms to make their content moderation practices more accessible to users. But there’s more going on here than typical partisan bickering. Most fundamentally, changes to internet regulation appear to be nowhere on the top list of priorities for the Biden White House or the Democrat-led Congress. Each has staked out the pandemic and the economy as the most pressing agenda items. And mucking around with federal regulations that affect the fortunes of some of the country’s biggest political donors may not hold the appeal it seemed to even two months ago, as both Democrats and Republicans vie for control in next year’s midterm election of House and Senate chambers the Democrats currently hold by the narrowest of margins. “Democrats are recovering from four years of Trump, and they have two goals: to heal America and to win races up and down the ballot while retaining control of the House and Senate,” says Cooper Teboe, a Democratic fundraising strategist in Silicon Valley. “While there are legitimate concerns with social media and how it intersects with democracy, I don't think a single voter is going to the polls with this single issue in mind.” Even if Congress and Biden had fewer pressing priorities, Democrats and Republicans don’t agree on what the problem is, making it more difficult to find bipartisan consensus. “Many on the political right want platforms to stop taking down so much user content, many on the political left want platforms to take down more user content. And while both of those goals could be promoted by certain changes to Section 230, there is no one change that will serve both of those goals,” says Daphne Keller, a director at Stanford’s Cyber Policy Center.

#### Bill is key to solve a laundry list of existential crises – environment, readiness, Ukraine

Popli 3/9 [Nik, Journalist for TIME, “The House Just Passed a Massive Spending Bill. Here’s What's In It”, 03-09-2022, TIME, https://time.com/6156432/spending-bill-ukraine-whats-in/]//pranav

The House passed a $1.5 trillion spending package Wednesday night that sends further military and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and funds the federal government through the end of September. The spending bill increases funding for the military and nearly every non-defense agency, with federal domestic spending set to reach $715 billion and defense funding $782 billion for the remainder of this fiscal year. The House passed the spending measure in two separate votes, with the portion containing defense spending passing by a vote of 361-69, and the non-defense portion passing by a vote of 260-171. The bill was slated for passage Wednesday morning, but stalled after multiple Democrats refused to allow Congress to offset $15.6 billion in new COVID-19 aid with previously approved but unspent relief funds. To get the bill over the finish line, Democratic House leaders removed the COVID-19 aid provision—which sought to replenish federal health programs that provide tests, treatments, and vaccines—and now instead hope to pass a separate bill on COVID-19 relief funding next week. The omnibus bill now heads to the Senate, where lawmakers in the upper chamber may continue negotiating elements of the bill before it heads to President Joe Biden’s desk. Senate Minority Whip John Thune, a Republican from South Dakota, said Tuesday that he expects a “fairly robust” and “bipartisan vote” from his colleagues, in large part due to the urgency of getting assistance to Ukraine, signaling it may be possible for the bill to clear the Senate quickly. Here are some of the current bill’s most significant provisions. $13.6 billion for aid to Ukraine The package delivers nearly $14 billion in emergency funding to help address the emerging humanitarian crisis in Ukraine and shore up the country’s defense against Russia, including $4 billion for humanitarian aid, $3.5 billion for sending new military equipment and $3 billion for deploying U.S. troops to the region. The largest segment of humanitarian aid—$2.65 billion to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)—goes toward providing emergency food assistance, health care and urgent support for vulnerable populations and communities in Ukraine. USAID will also fund an additional $120 million in initiatives to provide support for activists, journalists and independent media to help promote public messaging and accountability for Russian human rights violations. $1.4 billion to the State Department will fund migration and refugee assistance to provide support for refugee outflows from Ukraine. More than 2 million Ukrainians have fled their country in the 13 days since Russia began its invasion, according to a tracker from the U.N. refugee agency. $1.76 billion will go towards helping Ukraine respond to macroeconomic and governmental needs such as protecting its electrical grid from disruption. The legislation also allows Biden to transfer an additional $3 billion in excess defense equipment to Ukraine and other regional U.S. allies if needed. The Biden Administration originally called on lawmakers to approve $10 billion in aid to Ukraine, but bipartisan efforts and staunch support from the House led that figure to grow in the face of a worsening Russian onslaught and pleas from Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelensky for more equipment. $1.45 billion for southern border response Republicans won a few concessions in the bill—notably increased military spending—but they also secured more than $23 billion for two key federal agencies that oversee immigration: Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Border Protection (CBP). $1.45 billion will go towards managing the volume of migrants arriving at the southern border, including $1.06 billion to CBP for processing facilities, migrant medical care, and transportation. $30 million will fund new body-worn cameras and video recording equipment for Border Patrol stations, and $72.4 million will be invested in new aircraft and aircraft sensors. U.S. border officials processed migrants at the southwest border 153,941 times in January, according to CBP data provided to a federal court in Texas, marking a 14% decrease from the previous month. $4 billion for rural development programs After 2021’s bipartisan infrastructure bill provided a $65 billion investment in rural infrastructure to increase broadband access, the latest spending measure invests an additional $4 billion for rural development programs. Of that amount, $550 million will go towards the expansion of broadband service and $450 million for the ReConnect program, which provides loans and grants to cover the cost of broadband construction and improvement. The White House estimates that more than 30 million Americans live in areas that lack broadband infrastructure to provide minimally acceptable speeds. Additional spending will be invested in basic utility infrastructure, including $1.45 billion for rural water and waste program loans and over $653 million in grants to provide safe drinking water and sanitary waste disposal systems. $24.6 billion for student financial assistance Biden called for sweeping higher education reforms during his State of the Union address on March 1, including a $2,000 Pell Grant expansion and additional HBCU and community college funding. The spending bill partly accomplishes these goals, increasing the maximum Pell Grant by $400—the largest increase in the maximum award in more than a decade—and authorizing $363 million in HBCU funding. In total, the bill provides $24.6 billion for federal student aid programs, an increase of $35 million from the previous year. Climate change investments The bill provides record funding for the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy at $3.2 billion, $338 million more than the previous year—but less than what House Democrats had proposed. The funding will support the production of clean and affordable energy sources. An additional $78.3 million will fund the Department of Agriculture’s efforts to address the impacts of climate change in farming and rural communities, including research on clean energy technologies and greenhouse gas reductions. NASA’s Science Mission Directorate will also receive $7.6 billion—an increase of $313.4 million compared to last year—to enable better scientific research on a variety of topics, including Earth’s changing climate.

**Warming causes extinction & turns every impact – no adaptation & each degree is worse**

**Krosofsky ’21** [Andrew, Green Matters Journalist, “How Global Warming May Eventually Lead to Global Extinction”, Green Matters, 03-11-2021, https://www.greenmatters.com/p/will-global-warming-cause-extinction]//pranav

Eventually, yes. **Global warming will invariably result in the mass extinction of millions of different species,** humankind included. In fact, **the Center for Biological Diversity says that global warming is currently the greatest threat to life on this planet**. **Global warming causes a number of detrimental effects on the environment that many species won’t be able to handle long-term**. Extreme weather patterns are shifting climates across the globe, eliminating habitats and altering the landscape. **As a result, food and fresh water sources are being drastically reduced**. Then, of course, **there are the rising global temperatures themselves, which many species are physically unable to contend with**. Formerly frozen arctic and antarctic regions are melting, increasing sea levels and temperatures. Eventually, **these effects will create a perfect storm of extinction conditions**. The melting glaciers of the arctic and the searing, **unmanageable heat indexes being seen along the Equator are just the tip of the iceberg, so to speak.** **The species that live in these climate zones have already been affected by the changes caused by global warming.** Take polar bears for example, whose habitats and food sources have been so greatly diminished that they have been forced to range further and further south. **Increased carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere and oceans have already led to ocean acidification**. **This has caused many species of crustaceans to either adapt or perish and has led to the mass bleaching of more than 50 percent of Australia’s Great Barrier Reef**, according to National Geographic. According to the Center for Biological Diversity, the current trajectory of global warming predicts that more than 30 percent of Earth’s plant and animal species will face extinction by 2050. By the end of the century, that number could be as high as 70 percent. We won’t try and sugarcoat things, humanity’s own prospects aren’t looking that great either. According to The Conversation, **our species has just under a decade left to get our CO₂ emissions under control. If we don’t cut those emissions by half before 2030, temperatures will rise to potentially catastrophic levels. It may only seem like a degree or so, but the worldwide ramifications are immense.** The human species is resilient. We will survive for a while longer, even if these grim global warming predictions come to pass, **but it will mean less food, less water, and increased hardship across the world — especially in low-income areas and developing countries. This increase will also mean more pandemics, devastating storms, and uncontrollable wildfires**.

## 2

#### Populism is on the decline worldwide – set to collapse

**Cambridge University 22** [Cambridge University. “Support for Populist Politics 'Collapsed' during the Pandemic: Global Report.” Phys.org, Phys.org, 18 Jan. 2022, phys.org/news/2022-01-populist-politics-collapsed-pandemic-global.html.] // VS

Support for populist parties and politicians, and agreement with populist sentiment, has diminished during the pandemic, according to a "mega-dataset" taking in attitudes of over half a million people across 109 countries since 2020. A University of Cambridge team say there are clear signs of a turning tide for the "populist wave", as the mishandling of coronavirus by populist leaders—along with a desire for stability and a decline in "polarizing" attitudes resulting from the pandemic—starts to move public opinion. The authors of the new report, from Cambridge's Center for the Future of Democracy (CFD), describe the study as the first global overview of how the COVID-19 crisis has affected political beliefs. They say that threats posed by the pandemic saw a "technocratic" shift in political authority worldwide, with increased trust in government, and in experts such as scientists and civil servants. Yet faith in the democratic process continued to falter. "The story of politics in recent years has been the emergence of anti-establishment politicians who thrive on the growing distrust of experts," said Dr. Roberto Foa, Co-Director of the CFD and the report's lead author. "From Erdogan and Bolsonaro to the 'strong men' of Eastern Europe, the planet has experienced a wave of political populism. COVID-19 may have caused that wave to crest." "Electoral support for populist parties has collapsed around the world in a way we don't see for more mainstream politicians. There is strong evidence that the pandemic has severely blunted the rise of populism," said Foa. The findings are published by Cambridge's Bennett Institute for Public Policy. The first months of the pandemic saw many political leaders get a boost in ratings—a classic "rally round the flag" effect in troubled times, say researchers. However, the approval ratings of populist leaders the world over began declining almost as soon as coronavirus hit, and have continued to sink ever since. On average, populist leaders have seen a 10 percentage point drop between the spring of 2020 and the last quarter of 2021, while ratings for non-populists—on average—returned to around pre-pandemic levels. Electoral support also plunged for their parties—seen most clearly in Europe, where the proportion of people intending to vote for a populist party\* has fallen by an average of 11 percentage points to 27%. Overall, across Europe, early lockdowns saw voting intention for incumbent parties increase. Yet all the continent's governing populists—from Italy's Five Star to Hungary's Fidezs—bucked the trend with the largest declines in support. Support for Europe's opposition populist parties also fell over the pandemic—by 5 pp on average to 11% – while it rose for "mainstream" opposition. Researchers suggest several factors for populism's fading appeal. One is simply the botch job made of the pandemic by populist governments: from Bolsonaro's mask veto to Trump's "bleach injection" suggestion. The report's polling shows the public considered populist leaders to be less trustworthy sources of virus-related information than centrist counterparts. In June 2020, approval of government handling of the crisis was 11 percentage points lower on average in countries with populist leaders than in those with more centrist governance. By the end of 2020, this gap had widened to 16 points. Researchers also found that political "tribalism"—fertile ground for populists—has declined in most countries. The percentage of party supporters expressing a "strong dislike" of those who vote for opposing politicians fell in most nations (although not the US) during the crisis. "The pandemic fostered a sense of shared purpose that may have reduced the political polarization we've seen over the last decade," said CFD researcher and report co-author Dr. Xavier Romero-Vidal. "This could help explain why populist leaders are struggling to mobilise support." Some of the (support for) ideas propagated by populists are losing ground. Levels of agreement with statements such as "corrupt elites" divide our nation or the "will of the people" should be obeyed fell in almost every nation surveyed. For example, agreement with four such statements fell on average by 9 percentage points in Italy to 66%, 10 points in France to 61%, and 8 points in the UK to 64%, between 2019 and 2021. Commitment to these ideas has also waned. Even among supporters, in almost every nation a smaller number now "strongly agree" than did in 2019. In developed democracies, this shift is predominantly among those aged over 55. Moreover, areas with the sharpest drops in populist attitudes are some of the poorer "left behind" regions—from Eastern Poland to Southern Italy and Northern Hungary—that have been a focus for populist rhetoric and support. "This may be down to some rebalancing of wealth as people escaped cities overrun with the virus," said Foa. "In addition, COVID-19 border closures stopped migration and globalized trade more effectively than any populist government." However, some "illiberal" policies gained traction while populations were in the teeth of the pandemic. Majorities in all major nations surveyed in 2020 were content with banning handshakes, and much of the public—including majorities in Japan and Germany—supported restricting online discussions of the virus. The consequence of populist decline has not been renewed faith in liberal democracy, say researchers. Perhaps tainted by the record of populists in office, support for democracy has also waned. Instead, citizens increasingly favor technocratic sources of authority, such as having "non-political" experts take decisions. By the start of summer 2020, belief that experts should be allowed to make decisions "according to what they think best for the country" had risen 14 points to 62% in Europe and 8 points to 57% in the US. While trust in government has steadily climbed since the pandemic hit, increasing by 3.4 percentage points on average right across the world's democratic nations, faith in democracy as a political system barely changed. "Satisfaction with democracy has recovered only slightly since the post-war nadir of 2019, and is still well below the long-term average," said Foa. "Some of the biggest declines in democratic support during the pandemic were seen in Germany, Spain and Japan—nations with large elderly populations particularly vulnerable to the virus." In the US, the percentage of people who consider democracy a "bad" way to run the country more than doubled from 10.5% in late 2019 to 25.8% in late 2021. Added Foa: "The pandemic has brought good and bad news for liberal democracy. On the upside, we see a decline in populism and a restoration of trust in government. On the downside, some illiberal attitudes have are increasing, and satisfaction with democracy remains very low."

#### Objectivity increases fake news

Napoli 21 [Philip M. Napoli, educator at the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University, 03-02-2021, “Back from the dead (again): The specter of the Fairness Doctrine and its lesson for social media regulation,” Wiley Online Library, [https://sci-hub.se/https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/poi3.253]/Kankee //](https://sci-hub.se/https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/poi3.253%5d/Kankee%20//) recut by VS

Fairness, balance, and false equivalency Finally, it essential to address the problematic broader principle that underlies any governmental or voluntary efforts to impose fairness or balance requirements on media gatekeepers. The biggest problem with the Fairness Doctrine is what it does to our conception of journalism and to the notion of how responsible gatekeeping works. Over the past few years, there has been a substantial amount of criticism heaped upon the news media for engaging in “false equivalence”—that is, giving equal attention to competing claims on different sides of the political spectrum, regardless of the objective validity of the competing claims (see, e.g., Spayd, 2016). This sort of uncritical, nonevaluative approach to journalism—and to gatekeeping more broadly—simply is not the right path to cultivating an informed citizenry in this environment of nearly unprecedented political polarization and disinformation. Institutionalizing such a model allows falsity to be legitimized by being presented alongside truth. It creates a system where demands of fairness and balance neuter journalists' and other gatekeepers' ability (and responsibility) to differentiate fact from fiction, truth from conspiracy theories and hoaxes. Consider, for instance, recent research focusing on the content curation practices of Google News (Kawakami et al., 2020). This study found that “Because there are fewer right‐ leaning publications than center or left‐leaning ones, to maintain this ‘fair’ balance, hyper‐ partisan far‐right news sources of low trust receive more visibility than some news sources that are more familiar to and trusted by the public” (Kawakami et al., 2020, p. 59). Such findings help to empirically demonstrate the dangers of the application of Fairness Doctrine‐ like principles in the governance of digital platforms, as such approaches typically lead to the disproportionate and unwarranted (from an informed citizenry standpoint) prominence of sources that are more likely to disseminate disinformation. This critical gatekeeping function is more valuable than ever in today's vast and complex information ecosystem, where distinguishing legitimate from illegitimate sources of news and information is more challenging for the end user than it has ever been; and where efforts by bad actors to manipulate social media platforms have become commonplace and increasingly sophisticated. The Trump White House's (2020) executive order contended that social media platforms should operate as “passive bulletin boards.” They have virtually never operated in this way; nor should they. Even those platforms that have marketed themselves as completely unfiltered forums for public discourse (e.g., Parler) operate under a number of explicit content curation and moderation guidelines, and, ironically, have been found to be engaging in editorial decision‐making geared toward filtering out particular political viewpoints (Lerman, 2020). Any efforts at content‐based regulation of social media platforms need to move beyond the notion of fairness—or, at the very least decouple the notion of fairness from the notion of balance. Fairness and balance are not the same thing. There is a degree of passivity, of a lack of judgment, in the notion of balance that is not present to the same degree in the notion of fairness. A news story can be fair without necessarily being balanced if, in the fair and objective judgment of the journalist, giving greater prominence to a discredited or extreme viewpoint would misinform the public. Similarly, if a digital platform is systematically and objectively applying criteria to individual posts or accounts that result in one political perspective's posts being taken down or fact‐checked more than another's, this can be seen as the platform behaving fairly. The unbalanced outcome is not a reflection of unfairness on the part of the platform. It is a reflection of the behavior of the speakers. Frustratingly, this is a position that the representatives of the various digital platforms have refrained from expressing in any of the many instances in which they have been called before Congress and grilled about their bias against conservative viewpoints. As one recent reconsideration of the Fairness Doctrine noted, contemporary concerns should focus on “greater accuracy and completeness, but… not… balance” (Vandenbergh, 2020, p. 815). As one of the growing number of critics of the notion of balance in journalism has noted, “Although appealing on the surface, balance can easily be manipulated to create a false sense of equivalency” (Vandenbergh, 2020, p. 815). Along these lines, some critics of the Fairness Doctrine noted that it led to an emphasis on the presentation of “extremes of controversy” (Bolton, 1987, pp. 818–819). Neither policy nor professional practice should, in the pursuit of “fairness” or “balance,” prioritize opposing viewpoints independently of any concerns about accuracy or truthfulness. Unfortunately, many of today's advocates for “fairness” in the content curation and moderation practices of social media platforms appear concerned first and foremost with the availability of extreme viewpoints independent of whether they have any grounding in verifiable fact. This strategic conflation of diversity and falsity needs to be resisted. Passivity does not equal fairness; and so in this regard, what Republican policymakers are calling for is a far cry from the principles of the Fairness Doctrine which specifically extended protections to “all responsible positions on matters of sufficient importance to be afforded radio time” and to “the various positions taken by the responsible groups” (Federal Communications Commission, 1949, pp. 1250–1251, emphasis added). The term responsible seems particularly relevant to the current environment, in light of contemporary challenges related to hate speech and disinformation. The Fairness Doctrine's approach to gatekeeping did not—at least in theory—involve broadcasters serving as passive conduits; and so any current efforts to impose more “fairness” upon social media platforms that are ultimately about converting these platforms to passive or uncritically balanced conduits misrepresent what fairness should mean in regulatory approaches to media gatekeeping, as well as in the voluntary gatekeeping practices of news organizations and digital platforms. CONCLUSION

#### Fake news revives populism worldwide – provides the catalyst needed

**ECPS 20** [“Fake News.” ECPS, 27 Dec. 2020, [www.populismstudies.org/Vocabulary/fake-news/](http://www.populismstudies.org/Vocabulary/fake-news/).] // VS

Fake news (also known as junk news, pseudo-news, or hoax news) is a form of news consisting of deliberate disinformation or hoaxes spread via traditional news media or online social media. Digital news has brought back and increased the usage of fake news, or yellow journalism. The news is then often reverberated as misinformation in social media but occasionally finds its way to the mainstream media as well. Fake news is written and published usually with the intent to mislead in order to damage an agency, entity, or person, and/or gain financially or politically, often using sensationalist, dishonest, or outright fabricated headlines to increase readership. Similarly, clickbait stories and headlines earn advertising revenue from this activity. The relevance of fake news has increased in post-truth politics. For media outlets, the ability to attract viewers to their websites is necessary to generate online advertising revenue. Easy access to online advertisement revenue, increased political polarization and the popularity of social media, primarily the Facebook News Feed, have all been implicated in the spread of fake news, which competes with legitimate news stories. Hostile government actors have also been implicated in generating and propagating fake news, particularly during elections. Fake news undermines serious media coverage and makes it more difficult for journalists to cover significant news stories. An analysis by BuzzFeed found that the top 20 fake news stories about the 2016 US presidential election received more engagement on Facebook than the top 20 election stories from 19 major media outlets. The term “lying press” is at times used to cast doubt upon legitimate news from an opposing political standpoint. During and after his presidential campaign and election, Donald Trump popularized the term “fake news” in this sense, regardless of the truthfulness of the news, when he used it to describe the negative press coverage of himself. In part, as a result of Trump’s misuse, the term has come under increasing criticism, and in October 2018 the British government decided that it will no longer use the term because it is “a poorly-defined and misleading term that conflates a variety of false information, from genuine error through to foreign interference in democratic processes.” According to Greg Nielsen, fake news and populist movements that appear to hold the fate of democracy hostage are urgent concerns around the world. “The flight from liberal democracy toward oligarchy has spread out from the unexpected results of the 2016 American presidential elections bringing in a wave of reactionary populism and the beginning of a left populist counter movement. The phenomenon of fake news is often explained in terms of opposition public relations strategies and geopolitics that shift audiences toward a regime of post-truth where emotion is said to triumphs over reason, computational propaganda over common sense, or sheer power over knowledge,” wrote Nielsen. Like Nielsen, numbers of pundits assessed that ‘fake news’ has undeniably been biased in favor of populist or anti-establishment parties. As politically charged misinformation has been proliferating online, it is no wonder that many have been questioning whether the spread of fake news has affected the results of recent elections, contributing to the growth of populist party platforms. According to an article by Michele Cantarella and Nicolò Fraccaroli, in the US, Trump voters were more likely to be exposed and believe to misinformation. In the Ital(y)ian context, these findings (show) have been replicated in a recent report from the financial newspaper Il Sole 24 Ore,1 where the likelihood of believing and sharing so-called fake news was found to be higher for voters of the populist MoVimento 5 Stelle and Lega than for voters of other parties. In Italy, not only does the consumption of fake news appear to be linked with populism, but the content of the overwhelming majority of pieces of misinformation also displays an obvious anti-establishment bias. On the other hand, the Reuters Digital News Report in 2018 showed that Turkey ranks first on the list of countries (with) where people complain about completely made-up stories. The study researched how fake news is helping facilitate the rise of populism in Turkey. “Populist politicians generally consider fake news as a valuable propaganda tool for their political interests,” wrote Harun Güney Akgül in an article and added that “There is plenty of fake news aired by pro-government media. Therefore, the Turkish government is emerging as a suspect behind the fake news cycle. The fact is that most of the fake news is published for the benefit of the government. Research shows that, paradoxically, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is regarded as one of the most important populist politicians in the world. These two different indicators can be valuable data in revealing the relationship between fake news and populist politicians.” To Akgül, today “pool media” has become a term that symbolizes media that publishes broadcast pro-government stories. Pool media is crucial for making fake news because it is produced by the government. After that, this news is served to the pool media and most of the time and all newspaper use the same headline and text. Bots use this fake news for the next step. Bots are the accounts that are controlled en masse from a central point. According to Kerem Sözeri, this generally works with this way in Turkey; so instead of equal participation in the social media, “they amplify their owner’s agenda.” “According to various sources, the AKP has established troll troops, nearly six thousand. Finally, the fake news spreads to a broad mass of society as if they are reliable news. Fake news is used in a lot of different ways by the Turkish government. The government sometimes organizes protests to oppose social movements by producing misinformation. Turkish government is creating fake stories or misinformation with the help of social media accounts. It was discovered that lots of pro-Erdogan websites were producing fabricated news. Bosphorus Global is just an important one of such pro-Erdogan websites,” wrote Akgül. To Akgül’s article, with the new populist wave in Europe and America, people have started talking about fake news and populism as one entity. For example, “Le Monde, one of the leading French newspapers, identified and corrected 19 lies made by Marine Le Pen, the extreme-right candidate who reached the runoff of the 2017 French presidential election, during her televised debate against Emmanuel Macron”. Akgül underlined the fact that fake news is produced without ethical elements, although there was a code of ethics in media. “Principles of journalism are to ensure that citizens have access to the right information and are protected against fake news. There are hundreds of codes of conduct, charters, and statements made by media and professional groups outlining the principles, values, and obligations of the craft of journalism,” he wrote. Akgül wrote populist leaders caused polarization by playing with social values. Otherwise, polarization is very important for using fake news… They tend to create an autocratic structure with false accusations against democracy. The decline of democratic values following victories (for) of the populist leaders, e.g. Brexit campaigners, Trump’s controversial election victory and the rise of Jair Bolsonaro is a crucial power behind the populist movement… “Since the inception of social media, many populist governments have learned how to control the new public sphere and its digital ecology. Perhaps, misinformation is one of the best tools for them within social media. Brexit and Trump’s controversial election victory were a significant triumph for populist politicians… Trump and his election victory is an important example of fake news and populism. Following the 2016 election, according to a database, 115 pro-Trump fake stories were shared on Facebook a total of 30 million times and 41 pro-Clinton fake-stories have been shared a total of 7.6 million times,” said Akgül. On the other hand, right-wing populists, according to an article by Michael Hameleers, are not only attributing blame to the political elites, but increasingly vent anti-media sentiments in which the mainstream press is scapegoated for not representing the people. To his article, in an era of post-truth relativism, ‘fake news’ is increasingly politicized and used as a label to delegitimize political opponents or the press. To better understand the affinity between disinformation and populism, Hameleers conceptualizes two relationships between these concepts: i) blame attributions to the dishonest media as part of the corrupt elites that mislead the people; and ii) the expression of populist boundaries in a people-centric, anti-expert, and evidence-free way. The results of a comparative qualitative content analysis conducted by Hameleers in the US and Netherlands indicate that the political leaders Donald Trump and Geert Wilders blame legacy media in populist ways by regarding them as part of the corrupt and lying establishment. He said that “Compared to left-wing populist and mainstream politicians, these politicians are the most central players in the discursive construction of populist disinformation. Both politicians bypassed empirical evidence and expert knowledge whilst prioritizing the people’s truth and common sense at the center stage of honesty and reality. These expressions resonated with public opinion on Facebook, although citizens were more likely to frame mis- and disinformation in terms of ideological cleavages. These findings have important implications for our understanding of the role of populist discourse in a post-factual era.”

#### **1] Populist leaders kill global climate action – denialism, oversimplification, and cooperation failures**

Calland 20 [(Richard, Associate Professor in Public Law, University of Cape Town) “Countering climate denialism requires taking on right-wing populism. Here’s how” The Conversation, February 12, 2020] MCM

In a complex world facing complex problems, it is seductive for politicians to identify a single culprit (like immigrants) or an evil force (like universal healthcare) to blame for the erosion of society, the economy, and the welfare of the masses. This is hardly ever true, but it is compelling. Take the bewilderingly complicated set of relationships between food, energy, urban infrastructure, and exponential demographic growth and change (at least in the developing world). Climate change and its effects are perhaps the epitome of a complex issue of interlinked social, political, and physical forces. That makes it an easy target for this sort of denialism. So, populism ends up denying not just the science of climate change but also the complexity of the entire issue – which is critical for both diagnosing the problem and determining the prognosis and the prescription. Populism strips issues of nuance, and thereby obstructs progress. A 2019 study mapping the climate agendas of right-wing populist parties in Europe contains some revealing evidence: two thirds of right-wing populist members of the European Parliament “regularly vote against climate and energy policy measures”. Half of all votes against resolutions on climate and energy in the European Parliament come from right-wing populist party members. Of the 21 right-wing populist parties analysed, seven were found to deny climate change, its anthropogenic causes, and negative consequences. According to estimates based on the World Resources Institute’s global greenhouse-gas emissions data, about 30% of global emissions come from countries with populist leaders. At the very moment when global cooperation is essential if climate action is to be effective, many of the leaders of these right-wing populist forces are trying to dismantle or weaken multilateral organisations such as the United Nations or the European Union. These political groups threaten to derail progress on the global response to climate change, and on new thinking about how to rewire the economy in pursuit of a more sustainable world. More hopefully, as grassroots organisations emerge as a potentially strong, countervailing force, the trick will be to effectively connect these movements to matters of global social justice. They should also be given enough coherence to be effective. Thus, again, shifting the lens for the climate crisis away from an environmental preoccupation towards human development and social justice. For example, how can Thunberg and the student strike movement in the global north connect with the 1.6 million children that are displaced in Malawi, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique from cyclones? Such connections need to be made to turn these nascent movements into powerful advocates for climate justice. Tipping the scale Regardless of whether the political will needed take transformational action to drastically reduce carbon emission and adapt economies and societies, especially in the global South, will be summoned by 2030, it is clear that by the end of this century life on earth will be very different to how it is now. It will certainly be more difficult and dangerous. This applies to everyone, but especially the poorest and most vulnerable members of a human society that is set to peak at around 9,8 billion by 2050 (up from the current 7,8bn). This is the human development challenge for sub-Saharan Africa. It’s not all doom and gloom. There are huge opportunities amid the grave threats. A first step to responding appropriately – individually and collectively – is understanding that the challenge is multi-dimensional. Only then can a multi-dimensional strategy be executed, across sectors and across national boundaries. But it is likely that the greatest impediment to taking action will not be technological know-how or even raising the money required. Instead it will be the lack of enough political will, given the obstructionism of right-wing populists in power around the globe. Hence, a political struggle will need to be won. And the fight for climate justice in the face of right-wing populist climate denialism is a titanic one. Trump-like trajectories into the “post-truth” world of climate change denial, charged by the amplifying impact of social media, distract from and obstruct the necessary action. Yet despite its flaws, the digital age presents a huge opportunity to impose a counter-narrative, and for recruiting new activists.