

Senate Appropriations Committee

HB 1144

By Dr. Gaylynn Becker

January 20, 2021

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Chairman Klemin and Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

I am Gaylynn Becker of Bismarck, ND. I'm testifying on my own. I am here to testify in support of House Bill 1144. I am one of the citizens who was banned from Facebook for 30 days without being informed of what specifically I posted to warrant a good faith blocking. I've written a "Letter to the Editor" which appeared in several North Dakota newspapers during the past week. It reads:

My first amendment right to Freedom of Speech was taken away by Facebook because of a law that Congress passed. Why did I get banned for 30 days? I'm not sure why. Facebook will not respond to my repeated requests. I think it was for apparently posting pictures of the "North Dakota Capital Prayer Rally." Not because of words I wrote.

It may have been due to pictures I posted of the Prayer Rally of people, flags, signs and a beautiful 10 foot cross that we signed and will be sent to Washington, D.C. I have reposted this page – to the best of my recollection - on a new "mewe.com" account I set up.

On Wednesday 1/6/2021 I posted on my Facebook page,

"I'm heading to the "North Dakota Capital Prayer Rally' at the capitol grounds today at noon! And I'm going there again at 5:00 P.M. for a candlelight Prayer vigil. 'These are rallies for praying - for our Nation, our State, and our communities. God be with us!'"

The First Amendment to the Constitution states, "Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech..." When Congress passed this legislation referred to as Section 230, Congress gave these corporations such as Facebook, Twitter, etc., immunity. Congresses' legislation gave them the right to restrict my freedom of speech! It also restricted the freedom of speech of thousands or millions of other U.S. citizens.

One remedy is to remove Section 230 immunity. Thousands or perhaps millions of other U.S. citizens are being banned. I apologize to my 1200 Facebook friends that I have built up over several years. I had set up an account on Parler, but I wasn't able access this either. No due process, just this letter.

God bless you!

I ask that you pass HB 1144. I also urge you to take HB 1144 one step further in sponsoring and passing legislation, or take some action which would challenge the constitutionality of the Section 230 immunity provisions of the Communications Decency Act (CDA) of 1996. Section 230 provides immunity from liability for providers and users of an “interactive computer service who publish information provided by third-party users as long as it is done in good faith. Well, I don't know about others, but **I don't believe when Facebook blocked me for 30 days for posting pictures of a “North Dakota Capitol Prayer Rally” in front of this building on January 6, 2021 that they did this in good faith. Due to this and what Facebook has done to thousands or millions of users, Facebook should lose its Section 230 immunity.**

Thank you,