March 3, 2022

Dear Governor,

NewsGuard, a so-called online “credibility” arbiter, is threatening the quality and integrity of the education system in your state. And in every state.

NewsGuard has recently partnered with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) to censor points of view they disagree with in the classroom. Specifically, NewsGuard is actively working with the AFT to bring its agenda-driven rating system to classrooms across the country. Why? To stymie students from partaking in an open exploration of news and views from across the political spectrum.

NewsGuard claims to objectively rate the validity and accuracy of websites and news sources. But it does nothing of the sort. In fact, as we have pointed out in a recent study, NewsGuard is yet another one-sided, leftist organization dedicated to silencing conservative voices and other viewpoints it disagrees with. Specifically, in our study we “found that outlets rated ‘left’ or ‘lean left’ by AllSides received an average NewsGuard score of 93/100. Sites considered ‘right’ or ‘lean right’ by AllSides had an average NewsGuard rating of 66/100”.

As we have outlined in our report: “School children depend on the internet for homework help. NewsGuard is now stepping in to ‘filter’ online sources for so-called ‘misinformation.’ The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) union is buying NewsGuard licenses for its 1.7 million member teachers, according to an AFT press release. The partnership will make NewsGuard available to tens of millions of students and their families for free. The NewsGuard partnership will foist the company’s ‘real-time ‘traffic light’ news ratings and detailed “Nutrition Label” reviews, via a licensed copy of NewsGuard’s browser extension’ on students using news stories for research.”

We are calling on you to stop this ideological assault on education and freedom of speech. There should be no partnership among such ideologically driven outside organizations and state-sponsored educational establishments. Such partnerships are clear conflicts of interest with an open and honest educational system.
If, according to NewsGuard, a website does not meet its biased criteria for accuracy, NewsGuard gives that website a worse rating — on a scale of 1-100. The purpose of NewsGuard’s rating system is clear … to silence voices with which it disagrees. Examples of NewsGuard’s bias include:

- HuffPost, which published an attack piece on then-conservative talk radio host Rush Limbaugh following his death headlined “Rush Limbaugh, Bigoted King of Talk Radio, Dies at 70,” scored a “87.5” by NewsGuard.
- The Federalist, posted in the “right” AllSides list, was scored the worst with a ridiculous “12.5” on NewsGuard. A predominant reason for the abysmal rating, according to NewsGuard, was that The Federalist questioned the efficacy of mask mandates for COVID-19, even though liberal CNBC (not on the AllSides list, but has a “95” NewsGuard rating) cited a study showing that cloth masks were only 37 percent effective at filtering out virus particles.
- Abortion giant Planned Parenthood, who performed 9 million abortions as of July 2021, received a positive 75/100 rating. Yet, NewsGuard gave pro-life LifeNews and Live Action websites negative red “credibility” ratings of 30/100. NewsGuard specifically downgraded Live Action for reportedly exposing corruption in Planned Parenthood. The rating firm gave LifeSiteNews a 17.5/100.

And now NewsGuard is bringing this leftist, censorship agenda to secondary and post-secondary schools throughout the country — through a partnership with a far-left teacher’s union.

This agenda must be stopped dead in its tracks.

As education is a key priority of any state, we are urging you, as your state’s chief executive, to call out NewsGuard for its ideologically driven agenda. We are also asking you to take immediate steps to prevent NewsGuard from inserting itself into the classrooms and schools of your state.

As organizations representing millions of Americans all across the country, including your state, we are calling on you to immediately and publicly take a stand and prevent the agenda driven NewsGuard from insinuating itself into the classrooms in your state.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

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