



THE FLORIDA SENATE

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100

COMMITTEES:

Agriculture
Appropriations Subcommittee on Health and Human Services
Banking and Insurance
Commerce and Tourism
Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security

SELECT COMMITTEE:

Select Committee on Pandemic Preparedness and Response, *Chair*

JOINT COMMITTEE:

Joint Administrative Procedures Committee

SENATOR DANNY BURGESS

20th District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 9, 2021

Contact: Meagan Hebel

hebel.meagan@flsenate.gov

Senator Danny Burgess moves to protect Floridians' First Amendment Rights

Tallahassee, FL - Yesterday's events regarding Twitter's decision to permanently ban the President of the United States and Apple threatening to remove the conservative-leaning application known as Parler, has prompted Senator Danny Burgess (R-Zephyrhills) to file landmark legislation to protect Floridians from this dangerous precedent.

The First Amendment states that "Congress shall make no law...prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech..." "It seems to me that the government explicitly has granted Facebook, Twitter, and others immunity under federal law. As publishers of third-party content, they should not be allowed to discriminate based on content and ban individuals just because they do not agree with their viewpoint." says Senator Burgess.

This bill, as it stands, would require social media websites to provide electronic notice to a user who has been disabled or suspended, within 30 days, and explain why this user was punished. Senator Burgess fully intends to amend this legislation to include social media censorship and rely on the committee process to evaluate its merits.

"I just filed the Combating Public Disorder bill that creates a criminal offense for individuals who cyber intimidate others online. This bill goes a step further by signaling to social media websites that regardless of a person's background, political history, religion, race, gender, or any other identifying measure, Twitter and Facebook cannot be the sole judge, jury, and executioner on American's First Amendment rights. For better or for worse, social media has become a major part of our everyday life and society. These unilateral actions set a terrifying precedent that must be addressed appropriately." says Senator Burgess.

###

REPLY TO:

□ 38507 Fifth Avenue, Zephyrhills, FL 33542

□ 308 Senate Building, 404 South Monroe Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1100 (850) 487-5020

Senate's Website: www.flsenate.gov

WILTON SIMPSON
President of the Senate

AARON BEAN
President Pro Tempore