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TN AG SKRMETTI LEADS COALITION IN FILING LAWSUITS AGAINST BIG TECH GIANT META AND ITS SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM

Nashville - Today, Tennessee Attorney General Jonathan Skrmetti filed a lawsuit against Meta Platforms, Inc., the company formerly known as Facebook, alleging that its Instagram platform causes mental health harms to its young users.

“Meta has known for years that Instagram causes psychological harm to young users,” said General Skrmetti. “Rather than take steps to reduce or disclose the harm, Meta leaned further in to its profit-maximizing approach that hurts kids. Targeting kids with a harmful product and lying about its safety violates the Tennessee Consumer Protection Act. Meta knows every last design decision that made Instagram addictive to kids and that means it knows exactly how to fix the problem. We’re suing to make the company fix the problem.”

The Tennessee complaint alleges that Meta knew of the harmful impact of its Instagram platform on young people, including increased levels of depression and anxiety, increased hyperactivity, lack of sleep, and other mental health harms. Instead of taking steps to mitigate these harms, Meta misled its users about the harms and concealed the extent of the harms suffered by young users addicted to the use of its platform.

Much of the complaint relies on confidential material obtained through the investigation that is not yet available to the public. Tennessee has asked the court to release an unredacted version of the complaint. Publicly available sources, including information from former Meta employees, detail that Meta purposefully made its platforms addictive to children and teens to capture an ever-increasing amount of their time and data. User time and data fuels Meta’s advertising sales, and thus the complaint alleges that Meta subjected children and teens to the psychological harms associated with the use of Instagram solely for the purpose of increasing the company’s profits.

These lawsuits are the result of a bipartisan, nationwide investigation led by Skrmetti and Colorado Attorney General Phil Weiser. Nearly all of the attorneys general in the country have worked together since 2021 to investigate the social media industry for providing and promoting social media platforms to children and teens despite the harms associated with their use. Today, some 42 states filed suit against Meta either in their individual state courts or as part of a consolidated federal action.

The multistate coalition that filed today's complaints is also investigating TikTok's conduct related to a similar set of concerns. That investigation remains ongoing, and Tennessee is currently engaged in litigation related to TikTok's failure to provide adequate responses to the state investigation.

The investigation to date has involved significant commitment of resources from the Tennessee Attorney General's Office. Attorney General Skrmetti wishes to thank the attorneys and staff in the Consumer Protection Division who have worked intensely for years to get to this point and who remain committed to seeing this litigation through to the end. Tennessee is fortunate to have such dedicated and capable public servants.

In addition to Tennessee, attorneys general filing in their own local courts include the District of Columbia, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Utah, and Vermont.

States joining the federal lawsuit include Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, and Wisconsin. Florida is filing its own federal lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida.

To read the complaint, click [here](#).

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