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Sec’y of State Marco Rubio Admits State Dept. Part of Censorship Industrial Complex, as NCLA Alleged

The Daily Wire, The Federalist, State of Texas v. Department of State, et al.

Washington, DC (April 17, 2025) – U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio has announced in an op-ed published in [The Federalist](#) that the State Department was complicit in censoring American citizens. In an effort to prevent that despicable conduct from recurring under his watch, Secretary Rubio is completely abolishing the Global Engagement Center (GEC). While GEC had already ostensibly been dismantled when Congress declined to renew its funding in late 2024, the Biden Administration had sidestepped this legislative decision by reallocating GEC’s activities to another entity within the State Department and giving it a different name.

As the New Civil Liberties Alliance’s lawsuit, [The Daily Wire, The Federalist, Texas v. State Dep’t](#), contended, GEC was funding the development of “mis” and “disinformation” tools and technologies that had the intent and effect of suppressing First Amendment protected speech. Secretary Rubio’s op-ed vindicates those claims. Underscoring evidence NCLA outlined in this case, Rubio decries GEC financing the development and promotion of censorship technology and enterprises, such as NewsGuard and the Global Disinformation Index, that blacklisted *domestic* news organizations. NCLA’s suit helped expose how these companies targeted media outlets—including *The Daily Wire* and *The Federalist*—that opposed the government’s preferred narrative. The technologies these companies developed suppressed certain views, including those of NCLA’s clients, by reducing their circulation and ultimately depriving them of advertising dollars.

The State Department’s new announcement confirms the allegations of NCLA and its clients *The Daily Wire* and *The Federalist* that GEC exceeded its statutory mandate to combat foreign malign influence operations. NCLA’s clients still deserve justice, and the State Department should take steps to address the prospective harm *The Daily Wire* and *The Federalist* will continue to suffer due to the Department’s past actions. They also need assurance that a future administration will not revive these programs or others that violate Americans’ First Amendment rights.

As Secretary Rubio recognized, it is all too easy for a future administration to find ways to circumvent Congress’s deprivation of funds, or to do away with President Trump’s executive order prohibiting executive agencies from abridging the freedom of speech. NCLA hopes to work with the Trump Administration and to use the information gained through discovery in this case to assist with developing measures that will ensure the State Department does not trample Americans’ First Amendment rights in the future.

NCLA released the following statements:

“Secretary Rubio’s acknowledgement that our government abridged the free speech rights of American citizens and the American press represents a first step toward dismantling the Censorship Industrial Complex. Unfortunately, our clients continue to suffer from the blacklisting and demonetization advanced by the State Department—as do other members of the American press.”

— **Margot Cleveland, Of Counsel, NCLA**

“Secretary Rubio’s recognition of the irreparable and ongoing harm GEC and the State Department inflicted on our clients is laudable, as are his promises to put an end to this unconstitutional regime. We look forward to using the knowledge we have gained through litigating this case to help craft safeguards that ensure our clients and all Americans are protected from similar, future harm.”

— **Jenin Younes, Litigation Counsel, NCLA**

“When NCLA first learned that the State Department was wrapped up in the Biden Administration’s censorship regime, we were incredulous. How could the State Department be involved in any domestic activity, let alone censoring Americans in violation of the First Amendment? But Secretary Rubio’s admission confirms what our suit revealed. Now we’ll see if the State Department will rectify the situation going forward for our clients.”

— **Mark Chenoweth, President, NCLA**

For more information visit the case page [here](#).

ABOUT NCLA

[NCLA](#) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit civil rights group founded by prominent legal scholar [Philip Hamburger](#) to protect constitutional freedoms from violations by the Administrative State. NCLA’s public-interest litigation and other pro bono advocacy strive to tame the unlawful power of state and federal agencies and to foster a new civil liberties movement that will help restore Americans’ fundamental rights.

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