



## The Senate of Texas

CÉSAR J. BLANCO

TEXAS SENATOR  
DISTRICT 29

**PRESS RELEASE**  
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# SENATOR CESAR BLANCO PASSES KEY AMENDMENT TO ADDRESS HATE SPEECH ONLINE

*Amendment targets hate content like El Paso Wal-Mart Shooter's Manifesto*

**Austin, Texas** - Yesterday, the Texas Senate passed Senate Bill 12 by Senator Hughes. Senate Bill 12 aims to protect 1st amendment speech on social media sites. Senator César J. Blanco offered an amendment that ensures social media companies can prohibit and remove hate speech posts that incite criminal activity or consists of specific threats of violence. Senator Blanco cited the August 3rd El Paso Wal-Mart Shooter's manifesto, which was posted minutes before the attack. The El Paso shooter's manifesto was reportedly inspired by a manifesto shared online by the New Zealand mass murderer earlier that year. Senator Blanco's amendment was unanimously adopted by the Texas Senate.

The Texas Domestic Terrorism Threat Assessment published by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) in January 2020 cites digital media as a method of radicalization, recruitment, inspiration, and communication between terrorists. DPS states that online platforms provide global opportunities to seek inspiration, post manifestos, or stream attacks. A March report from the Office of the Director of National Intelligence repeatedly cites social media and other websites as an important method by which domestic violent extremists disseminate materials, achieve radicalization, and mobilize for violence. The report also cites the rise of racially or ethnically motivated violent extremists.

### **Senator Blanco issued the following statement:**

"On August 3rd, 2019, a shooter drove 10 hours to my district. He killed 23 people and injured dozens. Just minutes before his spree began, he posted a manifesto on social media—making it clear that his attack was racially motivated. It is clear that this shooter - along with others - drew inspiration from similar manifestos posting online by other terrorists.

"My amendment will allow social media companies fight back against online radicalization which has led to a rise in domestic terrorism in recent years and slow the spread of hate content online."

### **En Español**

"El 3 de agosto del 2019, un terrorista condujo 10 horas hasta llegar a mi distrito. Mato a 23 personas e hirió a docenas más. Apenas unos minutos antes de que comenzara su matanza, publico un manifiesto en las redes sociales, dejando en claro que su ataque tenia motivaciones raciales. Esta claro que este terrorista, junto con otros, se inspiro en manifiestos similares publicados en linea por otros terroristas.

“Mi enmienda permitirá a las empresas de medios sociales luchar contra la radicalización en línea que ha provocado un aumento del terrorismo doméstico en los últimos años y reducir la propagación de contenido de odio en línea.”