

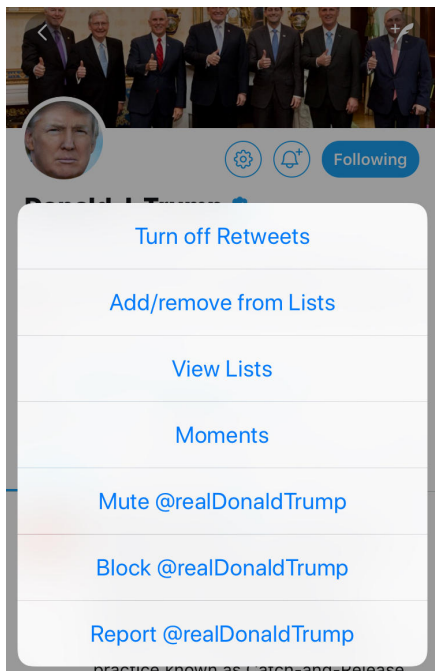
# Unblocked: Trump Twitter Ruling Could Trickle Down Locally

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<http://kuer.org/post/unblocked-trump-twitter-ruling-could-trickle-down-locally#stream/0>

A federal judge in New York ruled on Wednesday that's it's unconstitutional for President Trump to block critics from his Twitter feed. The case could have implications for local elected officials, too.



In her ruling today, U.S. District Judge Naomi Reice Buchwald said that President Trump's tendency of blocking users from viewing his Twitter account amounted to a violation of free speech.

The president's preferred social media platform is a "designated public forum," the court ruled, and should not exclude users who express different political beliefs.

The case, brought by seven Twitter users, was closely watched by First Amendment groups and other legal observers who say the ruling could have broader implications.

"Today's ruling should certainly be a wake-up call for local government officials who have social media platforms," said John Mejia, legal director of the ACLU of Utah.

“And the loud and clear message to them [is] that they can’t block people based on those people’s disagreements with policy positions or other political opinions.”

Mejia’s office has collected dozens of complaints from Utahns who’ve been blocked by their representatives. They sent a letter last summer to members of Utah’s Congressional delegation advising against it.

But Republican state Sen. Todd Weiler, R-Woods Cross, disagrees with the decision. He spoke last fall to [KUER about his online habits](#) and said he should be allowed to block people who target him with offensive or pornographic content.

“Just to say that because I’m in elected office I have to put up with people targeting me with crude messages I think is wrong,” he said. “I’m just surprised that that’s the decision.”

The court’s ruling did leave the door open to muting, which allows users to hide a follower’s comments while not completely blocking them.

Weiler's not sure he'll change his approach to Twitter, but he may give the mute button more consideration going forward.

"I had muted one person, and maybe I'll look at that more in the future," he said.