

STATE OF NEW YORK

11292

IN ASSEMBLY

May 8, 2026

Introduced by COMMITTEE ON RULES -- (at request of M. of A. Otis) --
read once and referred to the Committee on Science and Technology

AN ACT to amend the general business law, in relation to prohibiting the
use of stealth crawlers

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assem-
bly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The general business law is amended by adding a new article
2 48 to read as follows:

ARTICLE 48

NEW YORK STEALTH CRAWLER PROHIBITION ACT

Section 1750. Short title.

1751. Definitions.

1752. Stealth crawler disclosure.

1753. Stealth crawler prohibition.

1754. Enforcement.

1755. Severability.

11 § 1750. Short title. This article shall be known and may be cited as
12 the "New York stealth crawler prohibition act".

13 § 1751. Definitions. As used in this article, the following terms
14 shall have the following meanings:

15 1. "Crawler" means software that retrieves, scans, indexes, scrapes or
16 otherwise accesses a website or other internet source, including but not
17 limited to an online crawler, spider, fetcher, client, bot, user agent,
18 AI agent or equivalent tool.

19 2. "Covered news source" means the website or any other relevant
20 source of any print, television, radio, network, cable, satellite or
21 digital publication or service which:

22 (a) performs a public-information function comparable to that tradi-
23 tionally served by journalism organizations, such as newspapers, broad-
24 casters, magazines and other periodical publications;

25 (b) makes a substantial expenditure of labor, skill, and money to
26 create, edit, produce and distribute content including by engaging indi-
27 viduals to create, edit, produce and distribute original text, audio,
28 photo, illustrative or video content concerning matters or topics of

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 interest or use to members of the public through activities such as
2 observation, video or audio recording events, interviews, research,
3 testing and analysis;

4 (c) publishes new content or updates its content on at least a monthly
5 basis and has a process for error correction and clarification; and

6 (d) has at least one thousand monthly active viewers, listeners, users
7 or subscribers in New York.

8 3. "Journalism provider" means any person that owns one or more
9 covered news sources.

10 4. "Operator" means any individual, partnership, association, firm, or
11 business entity, or any member, affiliate, subsidiary or beneficial
12 owner thereof.

13 5. "Person" means any individual, partnership, corporation, trust,
14 estate, co-operative, association, government or governmental subdivi-
15 sion, agency or other entity.

16 6. "Service provider" means an entity offering the transmission, rout-
17 ing or providing of connections for broadcast or digital online communi-
18 cations, between or among points specified or selected by a viewer,
19 listener, user or subscriber, of material of such user's choosing, with-
20 out modification to the content of the material as sent or received,
21 including an entity that provides internet access services.

22 7. "Stealth crawler" means a crawler that does not comply with section
23 seventeen hundred fifty-two of this article.

24 § 1752. Stealth crawler disclosure. A crawler that accesses a covered
25 news source shall disclose its identity and purpose at the time or
26 before it accesses the covered news source, including by:

27 (a) identifying itself via a valid and accurate user-agent string,
28 which shall state the identity of any software product making the
29 request, the version of such software product and the identity of the
30 company behind such software product; and

31 (b) disclosing the specific nature and purpose of such crawler, which
32 shall include all uses and purposes that the content of the covered news
33 source could be used for, at the time access is requested and in a
34 format that the journalism provider can access.

35 § 1753. Stealth crawler prohibition. It shall be a violation of this
36 article for any operator to deploy a stealth crawler in a manner that
37 would damage, impair or burden the operation of a covered news source or
38 otherwise cause a news source economic harm.

39 § 1754. Enforcement. 1. Whenever the attorney general shall believe
40 from evidence satisfactory to them that an operator has engaged in or is
41 about to engage in any of the acts or practices stated to be unlawful in
42 this article, they may bring an action in the name and on behalf of the
43 people of the state of New York to enjoin an operator from continuing
44 such unlawful acts or practices, and may seek civil penalties of up to
45 fifteen thousand dollars per day for each violation. If it shall appear
46 to the satisfaction of the court or justice that the defendant has
47 violated this article, no proof shall be required that any person has
48 been injured thereby. In such action preliminary relief may be granted
49 under article sixty-three of the civil practice law and rules.

50 2. (a) Pursuant to subdivision (c) of section thirty-one hundred two
51 of the civil practice law and rules, a journalism provider may request
52 the clerk of the supreme court, or a judge where there is no clerk, to
53 issue a subpoena prior to the institution of an action, to a service
54 provider for identification of an alleged violator.

55 (b) The clerk, or the judge where there is no clerk, shall within a
56 reasonable period of time issue and sign the proposed subpoena and

1 return it to the journalism provider for delivery to the service provid-
2 er.

3 (c) The subpoena shall authorize and order the service provider
4 receiving such subpoena to expeditiously disclose to the journalism
5 provider information sufficient to identify the alleged violator to the
6 extent such information is available to such service provider.

7 (d) A subpoena issued under this section shall include a provision
8 requiring the preservation of any relevant evidence in the possession of
9 the service provider.

10 § 1755. Severability. If any clause, sentence, paragraph, section or
11 part of this article shall be adjudged by any court of competent juris-
12 isdiction to be invalid and after exhaustion of all further judicial
13 review, the judgment shall not affect, impair or invalidate the remain-
14 der thereof, but shall be confined in its operation to the clause,
15 sentence, paragraph, section or part of this act directly involved in
16 the controversy in which the judgment shall have been rendered.

17 § 2. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall
18 have become a law.