

# Internet 'trolls' face being named under new bill

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A cameraman films the Facebook logo in California. Websites such as Facebook and Twitter will receive greater protection from lawsuits if they identify internet trolls accused of defaming others under a bill to be debated in the House of Commons on Wednesday.

Websites such as Facebook and Twitter will receive greater protection from lawsuits if they identify internet "trolls" accused of defaming others under a bill being debated in Britain's House of Commons on Tuesday.

Lawmakers are debating the Defamation Bill, which proposes to reform libel laws so that websites such as the popular [social networking](#) websites will have an incentive to turn in anonymous users who post slanders on the Internet.

The bill will also increase the responsibility on claimants to prove they have been or will suffer serious damage to their reputation before they can take their case forward -- offering another measure of protection to websites against threats of litigation.

The Commons debate comes the day after a man who sent a threatening email to Conservative MP Louise Mensch was banned from contacting a host of celebrities.

Frank Zimmerman narrowly escaped jail when a district judge suspended a 26-week [prison sentence](#) for two years after he sent an offensive email to Corby MP Mensch.

Under the current law, websites such as [Facebook](#) are considered responsible for what users publish on their website.

That leaves them open to threats of litigation from people claiming they have been defamed by content posted on such websites by other users - often anonymous "trolls".

The Government is proposing to change the law so that "[website operators](#) will have a defence against libel as long as they identify the authors of allegedly defamatory material when requested to do so by a [complainant](#)," Justice Secretary Kenneth Clarke said.

The hope is that this will allow people to protect themselves against defamation without forcing websites to censor their content as protection against "casual threats of litigation", he said.

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