

Consumer Privacy Legislative Forum Statement of Support in Principle for Comprehensive Consumer Privacy Legislation

Today we live in a digital economy where both beneficial and potentially harmful uses of personal information are multiplying. Information about individuals is used by businesses to: provide consumers with an unprecedented array of goods and services; increase productivity; promote access to financial products; and protect individuals, business and society from fraud and other bad acts. However, that same information can also be misused to harm individuals, with results such as identity theft, deception, unwarranted intrusion, embarrassment, and loss of consumer confidence.

The time has come for a serious process to consider comprehensive harmonized federal privacy legislation to create a simplified, uniform but flexible legal framework. The legislation should provide protection for consumers from inappropriate collection and misuse of their personal information and also enable legitimate businesses to use information to promote economic and social value. In principle, such legislation would address businesses collecting personal information from consumers in a transparent manner with appropriate notice; providing consumers with meaningful choice regarding the use and disclosure of that information; allowing consumers reasonable access to personal information they have provided; and protecting such information from misuse or unauthorized access. Because a national standard would preempt state laws, a robust framework is warranted.

About the Consumer Privacy Legislative Forum: The Consumer Privacy Legislative Forum was organized in the winter of 2006 to support a process to consider comprehensive consumer privacy legislation in the United States. The Forum began with a Steering Committee of companies eBay, Hewlett-Packard, and Microsoft, the consumer group Center for Democracy and Technology, and Professor Peter Swire of the Ohio State University. An expanded list of companies has now signed the Statement of Support in Principle for Comprehensive Consumer Privacy Legislation. In addition, the Forum has had detailed meetings with a diverse set of industry actors and consumer groups, in order to identify issues that need resolution as part of any eventual legislation. By providing a forum for discussion of these issues, the CPL Forum hopes to foster a more informed legislative debate, leading to privacy provisions that benefit both industry and consumers.

CPL Forum members signing the statement today are:

Eastman Kodak Co.
eBay Inc.
Eli Lilly and Co.
Google, Inc.
Hewitt and Associates
Hewlett-Packard Co.

Intel Corp.
Microsoft Corp.
Oracle Corp.
Procter & Gamble Co.
Sun Microsystems, Inc.
Symantec Corp.