CDT Proposes New Federal Privacy Framework for the Digital Age

May 28, 2009

Washington--In an effort to update the federal government's decades-old guidelines for handling citizens' personal information, the Center for Democracy & Technology (CDT) today proposed a sweeping new federal privacy framework designed to respond to the realities of the digital age.

The E-Privacy Act Amendments of 2009 propose a host of new initiatives - including the creation of a new government Chief Privacy Officer - and recommend significant amendments to two existing laws: the Privacy Act of 1974 and the E-Government Act of 2002. CDT's recommendations come on the heels of a report by the federally appointed Information Security and Privacy Advisory Board (ISPAB) calling for an update to federal privacy standards in light of new technologies.

"The Privacy Act has held up well over the past 35 years," said CDT Vice President Ari Schwartz. "We are suggesting changes to insure that it can last another 35 despite the strains that are showing from the advent of a range of new technologies that threaten to undermine the basis of the protections that have been put in place."

The ISPAB recommendations [1] call for substantial amendments to the Privacy and E-Government Acts; systemic improvements in governmental privacy leadership; and other technology-specific policy rules limiting how the government collects and uses personally identifiable information.

The E-Privacy Act Amendments of 2009 address many of the issues raised in the report. Recommendations include:

Washington--In an effort to update the federal government's decades-old guidelines for handling citizens' personal information, the Center for Democracy & Technology (CDT) today proposed a sweeping new federal privacy framework designed to respond to the realities of the digital age.

The E-Privacy Act Amendments of 2009 propose a host of new initiatives - including the creation of a new government Chief Privacy Officer - and recommend significant amendments to two existing laws: the Privacy Act of 1974 and the E-Government Act of 2002. CDT's recommendations come on the heels of a report by the federally appointed Information Security and Privacy Advisory Board (ISPAB) calling for an update to federal privacy standards in light of new technologies.

"The Privacy Act has held up well over the past 35 years," said CDT Vice President Ari Schwartz. "We are suggesting changes to insure that it can last another 35 despite the strains that are showing from the advent of a range of new technologies that threaten to undermine the basis of the protections that have been put in place."

The ISPAB recommendations [1] call for substantial amendments to the Privacy and E-Government Acts; systemic improvements in governmental privacy leadership; and other technology-specific policy rules limiting how the government collects and uses personally identifiable information.

The E-Privacy Act Amendments of 2009 address many of the issues raised in the report. Recommendations include:

- Creating a federal Chief Privacy Officer
- Installing chief privacy officers (CPOs) at all major agencies

- nsuring that Data Mining techniques are covered by the Privacy Act
- Strengthening and standardizing privacy notices including "privacy impact assessments"

"Because they must collect and use so much personal information, government agencies face unique privacy challenges," Schwartz said. "But government also has a unique opportunity to lead by example, by establishing strong, consistent rules that protect citizens without harming the government's ability to operate," Schwartz said.

CDT also is encouraging the public's participation via an interactive, online experiment at drafting legislation. For the first time the private process of drafting legislation by Washington "insiders," will be opened to the public for inspection and comment before that legislation is submitted to Congress. A "wiki" has been set up that allows anyone to read any part of the bill, change the language, provide feedback or simply open a discussion on any provision of the bill. CDT will edit and moderate this open process and, if appropriate, incorporate suggestions in the final bill it submits to Congress.

E-Privacy Act Amendment Wiki is online here: http://www.eprivacyact.org [2]

Copyright © 2013 by Center for Democracy & Technology.
The content through out this website that originates with CDT can be freely copied and used as long as you make no substantive changes and clearly give us credit. Details.
Source URL:
https://www.cdt.org/pr_statement/cdt-proposes-new-federal-privacy-framework-digital-age

Links:
[1] http://www.cdt.org/privacy/20090529_ispab_rpt.pdf
[2] http://www.eprivacyact.org