

Bipartisan Senate Bill Holds Promise for Internet Privacy

April 12, 2011

Today Senators John Kerry (D-MA) and John McCain (R-AZ) [released](#) [1] the first comprehensive privacy bill the Senate has seen in more than ten years. (CDT put out a formal [statement](#) [2] about the bill earlier today.) We firmly believe that the introduction of this legislation moves us one step closer to the enactment of needed baseline privacy protections. The bill gets a lot right and, while not perfect, it is a fine starting place for Congress this term.

The United States has been embarrassingly behind the times on online privacy. We at CDT have long advocated for a 21st century "refresh" for old sectoral privacy laws that leave most personal data completely unregulated and free for the taking. The Commercial Privacy Bill of Rights Act importantly addresses the full range of Fair Information Practice Principles to ensure that all consumer data is protected. The bill is also designed to withstand the test of time by including flexible provisions allowing companies to work with the Department of Commerce and the Federal Trade Commission to come up with industry-specific rules that make sense for both consumers and businesses. It also gives the Federal Trade Commission and state Attorneys General the ability to obtain significant penalties from companies and organizations that fail to comply with privacy rules.

CDT will be releasing a detailed analysis of this bill in the days ahead. We look forward to future engagement and are pleased to see Congressional leadership on this important issue.

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- [Senator John McCain](#)
- [Senator John Kerry](#)
- [Commercial Privacy Bill of Rights Act](#)

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Links:

[1] <http://kerry.senate.gov/work/issues/issue/?id=74638d00-002c-4f5e-9709-1cb51c6759e6&CFID=90701671&CFTOKEN=23761313>

[2] http://cdt.org/pr_statement/cdt-statement-introduction-commercial-privacy-bill-rights-act-2011-senators-kerry-and-m