

Privacy Amendments Strengthen Cybersecurity Bill

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Leslie Harris, CDT President

Washington -- The Center for Democracy & Technology welcomed changes made to the Lieberman-Collins Cybersecurity Act that were unveiled this evening.

"The amendments address key civil liberties concerns that have dogged the cybersecurity debate. In terms of privacy, these changes make the Lieberman-Collins bill far superior to both the McCain bill and the House-passed CISPA," said CDT President and CEO Leslie Harris. "Senator Franken and his colleagues, who pushed hard for these amendments, and the co-sponsors of the bill, deserve praise and gratitude for listening to the concerns of the privacy community."

Lawmakers have struggled to draft legislation that would allow companies and the government to share information about attacks and cyberthreats without eroding privacy. The new amendments narrow the definition of what can be shared, focusing on true indicators of cybersecurity threats. In a second important change, companies will share cybersecurity information mainly with civilian agencies, not with military entities such as the National Security Agency. Further, the amendments specify that information shared with the government would be used only for cybersecurity, to protect against serious threats to children, or imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury.

"The amendments advance the principle that information shared for cybersecurity reasons should be used for cybersecurity reasons, and not other unrelated governmental goals," said Gregory T. Nojeim, Director of the CDT Project on Freedom, Security & Technology. "While more work needs to be done on the Senate floor to secure CDT's support for this legislation, these changes are very important to privacy on the Internet."

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