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Key Vote NO on House Cybersecurity Bills, H.R. 1560 and H.R. 1731

As one of our over 6.9 million FreedomWorks members nationwide, I urge you to contact your representative and ask him or her to vote NO on both the Protecting Cyber Networks Act (H.R. 1560) and the National Cybersecurity Protection Advancement Act (H.R. 1731).

The base purpose of these bills is supposed to be facilitating the sharing of data on cyber threats between companies and government agencies in order to promote better security against hackers. Unfortunately, neither of these bills thoroughly addresses the problem of personally identifiable information (PII) attached to this shared information.

This PII is generally irrelevant to identifying the source of these cyber attacks and sharing solutions to prevent them, and therefore there is no reason for these companies or individuals not to be required to scrub this information from info they share with the government (and vice-versa). Although both bills claim to require PII be removed, these bills both not only leave broad room for private information to be shared, but also grant companies sharing the data broad immunity from any sort of prosecution if such information is misused.

These privacy concerns are worsened manifold because the bills both also allow the government agencies receiving this cyber threat data to share that information broadly across agencies, including to the NSA. Those agencies would be allowed to use this information to investigate crimes outside the realm of cyber-attacks. These two problems start to make these bills look as much like cyber-surveillance bills as cybersecurity bills.

At the very minimum, these bills must be amended strongly to protect both the privacy of innocent Americans' personal data, and to narrow the use of this cyber threat data to combating cyber attacks.

Barring such amendments, we will count votes against these bills towards their score in FreedomWorks' Economic Freedom Scorecard for 2015. The Scorecard is used to determine eligibility for the FreedomFighter Award, which recognizes members of Congress with voting records that support economic freedom.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Matt Kibbe
President and Founder,
FreedomWorks