

April 26, 2012

Dear Representative:

We the undersigned organizations urge you to vote 'no' on H.R. 3523, the Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act of 2011 (CISPA). We are gravely concerned that this bill will allow companies that hold very sensitive and personal information to liberally share it with the government, which could then use the information without meaningful oversight for purposes unrelated to cybersecurity. The House Rules Committee has denied votes on key civil liberties amendments, including amendments that would ensure that private communications information does not flow directly to a military intelligence agency in the name of cybersecurity, and to ensure that information shared for cybersecurity reasons is not used for unrelated national security purposes. Because votes on key civil liberties amendments have been blocked, our opposition will continue even if amendments made in order by the Rules Committee pass.

CISPA creates an exception to all privacy laws to permit companies to share our information with each other and with the government in the name of cybersecurity. Although a carefully-crafted information sharing program that strictly limits the information to be shared and includes robust privacy safeguards could be an effective approach to cybersecurity, CISPA lacks such protections for individual rights. CISPA's 'information sharing' regime allows the transfer of vast amounts of data, including sensitive information like internet use history or the content of emails, to any agency in the government including military and intelligence agencies like the National Security Agency or the Department of Defense Cyber Command. Once in government hands, this information can be used for undefined 'national security' purposes unrelated to cybersecurity.

While many of the amendments that will be brought up for a vote would enhance civil liberties to some degree and are worthy of support, key amendments that address the fundamental civil liberties issues in the bill have been left behind. Even if a number of amendments are adopted, on balance CISPA will still needlessly and unjustifiably impinge on Americans' privacy because amendments that are imperative won't even be considered. We strongly urge you to vote 'no.'

Sincerely,

Access	Fight for the Future, Center for Rights
American Association of Law Libraries	Free Press Action Fund
American Civil Liberties Union	Liberty Coalition
Association of Research Libraries	National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
Hon. Bob Barr	New America Foundation's Open Technology Institute
Competitive Enterprise Institute	OpenTheGovernment.org
Center for Democracy & Technology	Privacy Rights Clearinghouse
Center for Financial Privacy and Human Rights	The Rutherford Institute
The Constitution Project	World Privacy Forum
Cyber Privacy Project	
Demand Progress	
Doctor Patient Medical Association	
Electronic Frontier Foundation	
Entertainment Consumers Association	