

Monday October 16th, 2023

To: Judiciary Committee

From: Scarlet Labbé-Watson

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 1977, An Act to Create the Data Privacy and Protection Act

My name is Scarlet and I live in Rockland ME. I am writing as a student, activist and concerned citizen to urge you to vote "ought to pass" on LD 1977 and "not ought to pass" on LD 1973. Rep. O'Neil's bill, LD 1977, provides important protections that currently do not exist in Maine or federal law. LD 1973 should be rejected because it is written by industry lobbyists to maintain their current practices, not to protect consumers.

I am taking a media literacy class at school right now and one thing my teacher emphasizes is that your attention is the hottest commodity on the internet. The priority of the tech companies is to make money, which is understandable, but they go about it by mining people for data and using that data to capture more and more of their attention. I have a phone and a computer and use them a lot for everything from school, socializing, and entertainment. It terrifies me that I am being constantly served while I am trying to do my homework and I think it is critical that the government protects my privacy.

- It is important that Maine passes a law that **actually protects consumers**, rather than passing a law that allows these **abusive** practices to continue. LD 1973 is written largely by industry lobbyists. Until recently, industry lobbyists used to push **stop regulation** of how **they use our personal data**. As major privacy **laws** have passed in other jurisdictions, including the **EU** and **California**, they have shifted tactics to write weak laws themselves. They want to see **weak laws pass** so they can continue their current practices. LD 1977 would provide **actual protections for Mainers**. It is based on a **bipartisan bill** that was negotiated by **consumer advocates** and industry alike. Please do not weaken this bill. It is already a compromise and will provide meaningful protections for Mainers.
- Without a modern information privacy law, Maine residents **lack the ability to control their own lives**. Fortunately, other states have passed consumer privacy laws giving their residents some power to take back control over their digital lives. The state whose motto is "**I lead**" **needs to catch up**, and LD 1977 offers the **necessary change**.
- People are concerned about how much information is being collected about them, and rightfully so. Many feel their data could be more secure. And they aren't wrong. It feels as if we read reports about a **new privacy violation each day**.

I feel so out of control of my life because of the data I am being mined for. Phones and computers have become an essential part of my life and I know that every time I get on them I am giving up private parts of myself. Some of my most personal thoughts and interests are now being bought and sold by multi-billion dollar companies. I also feel like I have no time anymore, my phone is a finely tuned instrument that knows exactly how to suck me in. If I get on my phone to check an assignment I will find that an hour later I have been churning YouTube videos. These devices would not steal so much of my time if it was not mining copious amounts of personal data. So please, help me reassert control over my life, my time and my privacy.

Respectfully submitted,
Scarlet

Scarlet Labbé-Watson
Rockland
LD 1977

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