

Republicans Under Criticism For Pushing A Bill To Allow Internet Providers To Sell Your Browsing History



Republicans in the House and the Senate voted nearly unanimously to pass a bill that will allow ISP providers such as Comcast, AT&T, Time Warner, and Verizon to sell your browsing history and other personal data that may include your Social Security number, passwords, and health information. You can protect your privacy by subscribing to a virtual private network (VPN) that encrypts your browsing history. A free program called TOR can disguise your web traffic by mixing it with everyone else's and adding "Internet Noise" that will render your web history meaningless by constantly conducting random Google searches. -GEG

Republicans Are About To Sell Your Browser History. Here's How To Protect Yourself.

Comcast has done the impossible. Somehow, Americans are about to hate it (and just about every other large internet service provider in the country) more than they already do.

Thanks in no small part to the efforts of those ISPs, the House of Representatives passed a bill Tuesday that would allow internet and telecom companies to share customers' personal information, including web browsing history, without

their consent.

Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.), who introduced the legislation in the House, has received \$693,000 from the internet and telecom industry over the course of her 14-year political career, including \$77,000 from Comcast, \$98,600 from Verizon, and \$104,000 from AT&T. While we're on the subject, here's a complete list of every politician who voted for Tuesday's bill, and how much the telecom industry gave them in their most recent election cycle. Yeah.

Unfortunately, you can't just go and drop your ISP for one that *will* protect your data, since many of them are local monopolies and you don't have a choice.

"ISPs are in a position to see a lot of what you do online. They kind of have to be, since they have to carry all of your traffic," Jeremy Guillula, a senior staff technologist at the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a nonprofit that advocates for internet privacy, said in a statement to The Huffington Post.

That's different than the rest of the internet, where "if I don't like the practices of Google, I can go to Bing; if I don't like the practices of Bing, I can go to Firefox," former Federal Communications Commission Chairman Tom Wheeler told HuffPost on Monday. "But if I don't like the practice of my network provider, I'm out of luck."

The bill has now passed in both the House and the Senate, with Republicans almost unanimously in favor and Democrats mostly opposed. President Donald Trump has said he strongly supports the measure, meaning a veto is unlikely.

So, in the very likely event that this becomes law, here's what you can do to protect your privacy:

Get A Virtual Private Network

A virtual private network guards your web traffic by

encrypting it as it flows from your device, through your ISP, and to a private server, which then directs you to your ultimate internet destination. They're extremely common in the corporate world as a way to shield sensitive data when, say, an employee logs on to the free Wi-Fi at Starbucks to do some work.

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