

Trump Administration Suggests Tighter Controls on Consumer Data

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The Trump administration is seeking public input on ways to protect consumer privacy and data online, suggesting that any plan should increase user control over what information to provide and should require that organizations be accountable for what they collect.

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is seeking the comments at a time when tech companies face greater scrutiny in Washington, in state legislatures and from state attorneys general, including over the breadth of information they collect from users.

The request announced Sept. 25 also comes a day before the Senate Commerce Committee is scheduled to hold a hearing on privacy with representatives from Alphabet Inc.'s Google, AT&T Inc., [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) Inc. and Apple Inc. The panel's Republican chairman, Sen. John Thune of South Dakota, has said he's looking at legislation that would likely proceed separately from the administration's efforts.

The administration wants comments on what it calls "desired outcomes" rather than dictates about data practices, and it doesn't define terms like control or accountability. It seeks comments on the idea that "the collection, use, storage and sharing of personal data should be reasonably minimized" with regard to the sensitivity of the information; that "organizations should employ security safeguards;" and that consumers should be able to correct information about them in reasonable circumstances.

In recent weeks, several industry groups have also proposed similar principles for privacy laws or rules as they seek to influence the momentum for policy action on privacy. Google on Sept. 24 proposed a "framework" for such regulation as well. Europe's new rules went into effect in May, and California passed a tough privacy law in June.

Comments are due by Oct. 26.