



# Privacy

## Issue Summary

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The use of the Internet and e-commerce has skyrocketed. Consumers continue to use the Internet to shop and research, companies use the Internet to purchase goods and services, and businesses everywhere are using the Internet and e-commerce for a host of services for their customers, from travel and banking services to efficient and targeted marketing.

However, both state and federal governments are examining ways to regulate the Internet and Internet commerce that could have a severe chilling effect on e-commerce, with little or no positive benefit for businesses or consumers. Instead of spending time on destructive regulations and impediments to the Internet, government at all levels should focus on ways to continue to foster this growing medium.

Currently, there are more than 30 federal privacy regulations already in place, governing all types of “sensitive” information such as medical and financial records, movie rental habits and children. These rules govern the areas that consumers care the most about and protect the most sensitive areas.

## U.S. Chamber Position

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In the area of online privacy specifically, the Chamber believes that:

- The business community has done an outstanding job responding to consumer demands for privacy, with more than 90% of the most visited Web sites now posting privacy policies and voluntarily subjecting themselves to potential litigation;
- There has been no evidence of consumer harm in the online privacy arena, and Congress should resist adding burdens to the Internet without even anecdotal evidence of consumer harm; and
- The Internet and e-commerce are a key example of interstate commerce, and therefore if Congress acts in this area, it should insure that the Internet is not burdened by multiple state requirements and regulations that adversely impact businesses of every size and region.

## Staff Contact Information

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