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**Top Democrats On Key Senate Committees Unveil Principles For Comprehensive Federal Privacy Legislation**

*New Senate Dem Principles – A Framework For Comprehensive Federal Privacy Legislation - Would Strengthen Consumer And Civil Rights, Invigorate Competition, Establish Privacy Safeguards And Impose Real Accountability*

*Led By Senators Maria Cantwell (Commerce Committee), Dianne Feinstein (Judiciary Committee), Sherrod Brown (Banking Committee) And Patty Murray (HELP Committee), Senate Democrats Say New Principles Should Be The Baseline For Any Comprehensive Federal Privacy And Data Security Legislation*

**Washington, D.C.** – The top Democrats across four key Senate committees (Commerce, Judiciary, Banking, and HELP) today unveiled a new set of core principles they say should be the baseline for any comprehensive federal privacy and data protection legislation. Under the new framework agreed upon by Senate Committee on Commerce Ranking Member Maria Cantwell, Senate Committee on the Judiciary Ranking Member Dianne Feinstein, Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Ranking Member Sherrod Brown, and Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Ranking Member Patty Murray, consumers would be able to control their personal information, and corporations, non-profits, and political entities would be held to higher standards for when and how they collect, use, share and protect consumer data.

Specifically, the privacy principles strengthen individual consumer and civil rights protections, including for children and teens, invigorate competition by increasing consumer choice, establish data safeguards to ensure use abides by consumer expectations and increase accountability over data practices by those at the highest levels of organizations. The principles also put more teeth into enforcement by ensuring that both regulators and individuals have the tools they need to aggressively identify harmful or invasive privacy practices and pursue legal remedies.

The group of Senate Democratic Ranking Members first came together after Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer tasked the committees of primary jurisdiction over various privacy and data protection issues, like data security and civil rights, with developing principles to fill in the serious gaps in consumer protection not currently covered by existing federal laws and provide a strong nationwide foundation for comprehensive federal legislation. Senators Ron Wyden, Richard Blumenthal, Brian Schatz and Ed Markey, four of the Senate's leading advocates for comprehensive privacy protections, were also consulted and support the new principles.

Currently, there are a number of laws that are designed to protect privacy, however these laws provide specific privacy protections and are limited in scope by data types such as credit information protected by the Financial Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), protected health information created and maintained by payers and providers of healthcare, as is governed by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), or safeguards afforded to children's data by the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). The newly unveiled principles should not be interpreted to change or displace existing privacy laws, or privacy laws scheduled to go into effect.

The Senate Democrats' privacy principles can be found [here](#).

"In an ever-evolving information age, consumers deserve to have protections from websites and online services harvesting their personal data. They deserve to have privacy rights and have those rights protected," said Senator Cantwell.

"Individuals should have the ability to control their personal data, period. To prevent companies from abusing our personal data, we need to create more transparency and accountability and allow individuals to determine how their data is used. That is what we hope to accomplish with this framework," said Senator Feinstein.

"Too many corporations require Americans to sacrifice their privacy and share the most intimate details of their lives just to visit a website or to receive and use services," said Senator Brown. "We must establish rules that take the power away from companies like Facebook, Equifax, and others to violate Americans' privacy for profits and give it back to hardworking Americans."

"As data continues to play an important new role in families' lives in the 21st century, we need to make sure the constant development of new technology is matched by the development of new best practices and protections that speak to the needs for security, privacy, and good data stewardship," said Senator Murray. "People should be able to expect tech companies are going to treat their most sensitive information responsibly, and give them the tools they need to be able to control how and when their information is disclosed. Our objective should be to make sure tech companies are putting people in the driver's seat, not the other way around."

"I applaud my colleagues for their great work and am proud to support these strong principles," said Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer.

"I've said for more than a year now that corporations need to mind their own business when it comes to misusing Americans' private information. These principles make clear that Democrats support strong new protections for Americans' data, unprecedented transparency over how our information is used, and new enforcement with teeth that will hold corporations accountable," said Senator Wyden. "Leader Schumer and Ranking Members Cantwell, Feinstein, Brown and Murray deserve enormous credit for putting together a tough, comprehensive list of principles to protect Americans' private data and put consumers back in control of their most sensitive information."

"I know from having fought for stronger privacy protection over decades, federal action is woefully overdue and urgently necessary now. I will continue to work for bipartisan federal action because Americans absolutely want stronger privacy protection," said Senator Blumenthal. "They know from painful experience that the intimate details of our personal lives are used against us every day by unaccountable corporations and foreign actors, deeply endangering our safety and democracy. Americans deserve and rightly expect stronger privacy safeguards, regardless of their politics or their personal circumstance. I look forward to collaborating with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to pass—as soon as possible—new privacy laws that are as strong and comprehensive as possible."

"We need to update our privacy laws for the internet age," said Senator Schatz. "When consumers let companies use their information they should be able to trust that it will be protected, used ethically, and won't be used to harm them. These principles provide a framework for clear rules of the road for companies, and would give prosecutors and consumers the tools they need to hold big tech companies accountable."

"The American people are overdue for a privacy bill of rights that puts consumers first and effectively protects our personal information. And any comprehensive privacy legislation must include heightened safeguards for children and teens, who are uniquely vulnerable in today's digital age," said Senator Markey. "We cannot afford to shrug off the daily data breaches and privacy invasions as a new normal. I am pleased to work with my colleagues on this framework for comprehensive privacy legislation, and I look forward to continuing this important collaboration."

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