

PRESS RELEASE

EPIC Urges End to FCC Data Retention Mandate

June 16 Deadline for Comments to FCC

FOR RELEASE

Monday, June 12, 9:00 am EDT

CONTACT:

Marc Rotenberg, EPIC President (Rotenberg@epic.org @MarcRotenberg)
Alan Butler, EPIC Senior Counsel (butler@epic.org @AlanInDC)

WASHINGTON, DC – The Electronic Privacy Information Center (“EPIC”) is urging the public to support a proposal to end the FCC’s data retention mandate. The public can submit comments on the EPIC Petition to end the mass surveillance program through Friday, June 16th.

Under a 1986 regulation, the FCC requires telephone companies to keep the telephone numbers dialed, date, time, and call length of all U.S. telephone customers for an 18-month period.

The EPIC petition, filed in August 2015 with the support of technical experts, legal scholars, and dozens of privacy organizations, states that the FCC's mandate "violates the fundamental right to privacy, exposes consumers to data breaches, stifles innovation, and reduces competition. It is outdated and ineffective. It should end." As the petition explains:

- The mass retention of telecommunications records implicates privacy and freedom of association of millions of Americans who are suspected of no wrongdoing.
- The retention of sensitive phone records increases the likelihood of large-scale data breaches like the OPM data breach in 2015
- Modern non-measured, bundled phone billing makes the rule unnecessary.
- The US data retention requirement for telephone records is at odds with international law and fundamental rights

“The FCC has said it opposes unnecessary and outdated regulation,” said EPIC President Marc Rotenberg. “There is hardly a better regulation to end than the FCC’s data retention mandate. It is ineffective, burdensome, and costly.”

The FCC docket number is 17-130. Comments are due by June 16, 2017.

About EPIC

The Electronic Privacy Information Center (EPIC) is a non-partisan organization, established in 1994, to focus public attention on emerging privacy and civil liberties issues. The EPIC Advisory Board includes distinguished experts in law, technology, public policy and cyber security.

Links

Link for Comments

[https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/search/proceedings?q=name:\(\(17-130\)\)](https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/search/proceedings?q=name:((17-130)))

Petition for Rulemaking

<https://epic.org/privacy/fcc-data-retention-petition.pdf>

FCC Public Notice seeking comment

http://transition.fcc.gov/Daily_Releases/Daily_Business/2017/db0517/DA-17-472A1.pdf

EPIC: FCC Data Retention Mandate

<https://epic.org/privacy/fcc-data-retention/>