

THE CONSTITUTION PROJECT



Safeguarding Liberty, Justice & the Rule of Law

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Privacy Groups Urge House to Vote Against CISPA *TCP's Franklin: Bill Lacks 'Critical Safeguards' for Privacy & Civil Liberties*

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- The Constitution Project today joined with a coalition of twenty two other civil liberties and privacy groups urging Congress to vote against H.R. 3523, the Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act of 2011 (CISPA).

"This bill will allow companies that hold very sensitive and personal information to liberally share it with the government, which could then use the information without meaningful oversight for purposes unrelated to cybersecurity," the groups said in a [letter sent today](#) to all House members.

The groups noted that the House Rules Committee yesterday blocked consideration of key civil liberties amendments, including amendments to ensure that information from private companies not be shared with military and intelligence agencies like the National Security Agency or the Department of Defense Cyber Command, and to prevent the government's use of information shared for cybersecurity reasons for any national security purposes unrelated to cybersecurity.

"Because CISPA lacks critical safeguards needed to ensure robust protections for privacy rights and civil liberties," said Sharon Bradford Franklin, senior policy counsel at The Constitution Project (TCP), "and because the Rules Committee has denied any opportunity for the House members to vote on amendments needed to fully protect these rights, we urge Members to vote against passage."

The goal of the legislation is to promote public-private cooperation in providing cybersecurity, by allowing the government to provide otherwise potentially restricted information about cyberthreats to private sector partners, and allowing private companies--such as Facebook, Google or internet service providers--to share information about their networks, possibly including sensitive personal information or the content of emails, with federal authorities.

"Although a carefully-crafted information sharing program that strictly limits the information to be shared and includes robust privacy safeguards could be an effective approach to cybersecurity, CISPA lacks such protections for individual rights," the groups wrote.

In addition to TCP, other groups calling on the House to defeat CISPA include the American Civil Liberties Union, the Center for Democracy and Technology, the Competitive Enterprise Institute, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, Liberty Coalition and The Rutherford Institute.

The House began debating the legislation today, and a vote on it is expected later in the week. Senior Obama administration officials have indicated they intend to recommend vetoing the legislation unless adequate privacy protections are included.

[About The Constitution Project](#)

Created out of the belief that we must cast aside the labels that divide us in order to keep our democracy strong, The Constitution Project (TCP) brings together policy experts and legal practitioners from across the political spectrum to foster consensus-based solutions to the most difficult constitutional challenges of our time. TCP seeks to reform the nation's broken criminal justice system and to strengthen the rule of law through scholarship, advocacy, policy reform and public education initiatives. Established in 1997, TCP is based in Washington, D.C.

