



Consumer Federation of America

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Consumer Groups' Statement on OECD Internet Policy Principles

Consumers Union (CU) and the Consumer Federation of America (CFA) today made the following statement regarding the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) *Draft Communiqué of Principles for Internet Policy-Making*.

We find much to support in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) *Communiqué*, which lays out broad principles that promote openness and the global free flow of information online.

We are encouraged by the *Communiqué's* focus on promoting robust competition in the provision of high speed broadband Internet. Such competition is likely to result in more affordable prices for consumers, as well as providing increased geographic coverage of broadband internet. We also agree that the best way to develop Internet policy in today's rapidly changing environment is through transparent, multi-stakeholder convenings that seek to create a balanced approach between rights and obligations on the Internet. In addition, we believe that privacy rules online must be based on globally recognized principles that would empower individuals to exercise greater control over the way their data is collected and shared online.

CFA and CU support the decision, however, by the Civil Society Information Society Advisory Council (CSISAC) to the OECD Committee on Information, Computer and Communications Policy not to endorse the communiqué because of concerns that it may encourage or allow governments to use Internet intermediaries to police online content. Although we recognize the importance of protecting intellectual property online, Internet intermediaries are neither competent, nor the appropriate entities to determine the legality of the content passing through their networks, and should not be charged with blocking or filtering potentially "unlawful" online activity. We fear that such a principle would undermine access and freedom of expression, the very goals that this document seeks to promote.

CFA and CU will continue to work with other civil society groups, governments and Internet companies to promote principles for Internet policy that do not inadvertently hamper consumer access and freedom of expression online.

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