

April 2, 2018

Michael D. Thibodeau, President of the Senate
Sara Gideon, Speaker of the House
Maine State House
3 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: LD 1610 (Bellows)—SUPPORT

Dear President Thibodeau and Speaker Gideon,

The undersigned organizations write to strongly support LD 1610, which would provide Maine residents with increased choice, security, and transparency over how internet service providers (ISPs) use the data they collect from their customers. In light of the recent decision by Congress to repeal the Federal Communications Commission's Broadband Privacy Rule under the Congressional Review Act, it is incumbent upon local governments to fill that gap in protections for consumers.

Maine residents need strong privacy protections over how ISPs treat their data. Consumers depend on the internet and they need sufficient protections for their online information. And ISPs have unique insight into customer activity because they provide internet service, for which they charge customers a substantial subscription fee, giving them access to a vast amount of data from and about their consumers. While it may be possible for some consumers to take action and reduce their privacy risks once they are online, they have no choice but to use an ISP to access the internet and thus share data with the ISP. And *all* of a consumer's traffic flows over that internet connection, traffic which can convey very sensitive information such as race or nationality, sexual preference, religion, physical location, presence at home, personal banking details, and physical ailments.¹

With such comprehensive data, ISPs can create intricately detailed profiles of their customers to sell to the highest bidder for a variety of purposes, including targeted digital advertisements for products like payday loans or expensive and unnecessary medications. Maine residents should have options over whether their ISP monetizes the data it collects to provide those residents internet service.

Maine residents need the protections that LD 1610 would provide and we are proud to support this measure.

Sincerely,

Center for Digital Democracy
Center for Democracy & Technology

¹ See *What ISPs Can See*, UPTURN (Mar. 2016), <https://www.teamupturn.com/reports/2016/what-isps-can-see>.

Common Cause
Consumer Action
Consumer Federation of America
Consumers Union
Consumer Watchdog
Electronic Frontier Foundation
National Consumers League
New America's Open Technology Institute
Privacy Rights Clearinghouse
Public Knowledge
U.S. Public Interest Research Group