

Senator Hawley to Introduce Legislation to Give the American People a “Do Not Track” Option

WASHINGTON – Senator Josh Hawley, a top critic of big tech’s data collection practices, announced today that he will introduce the *Do Not Track Act* to give control over personal data back to users. Similar to the national “Do Not Call” list, the *Do Not Track Act* gives every person the power to block online companies from collecting any data beyond what is necessary for the companies’ online services.

Senator Hawley said, “Big tech companies collect incredible amounts of deeply personal, private data from people without giving them the option to meaningfully consent. They have gotten incredibly rich by employing creepy surveillance tactics on their users, but too often the extent of this data extraction is only known after a tech company irresponsibly handles the data and leaks it all over the internet. The American people didn't sign up for this, so I'm introducing this legislation to finally give them control over their personal information online.”

BACKGROUND

The sheer enormity of data big tech companies extract, and the unscrupulous ways they use that data, is distressing. These companies track our locations and spy on our Internet history—even when we tell them not to. In March, a senior official at Google [admitted](#), under oath, that Google still tracks a user’s geolocation hundreds of times a day even after that person turns off “location history.” Facebook even collects data on people [who don’t have](#) a Facebook account. These companies and others exploit this harvested data to build massive profiles on users and then rake in hundreds of billions of dollars monetizing that data.

For years, industry groups promoted a program called “Do Not Track” to give users control, and the FTC endorsed the program in 2010. But the program was voluntary, and tech giants that built their businesses around exploiting data refused to voluntarily comply. This bill would give Do Not Track legal force and expand it to cover all Internet activity, not just browser-based activity.

What Senator Hawley’s Legislation Does:

- Creates a program similar to the national Do Not Call list that gives every person the power, at a touch of a button, to block online companies from collecting any data beyond what is indispensable to the companies’ online services.
- Prohibits companies from profiling Americans who activate Do Not Track.
- Bans discriminating against people who activate Do Not Track.

- Bans companies from transferring data to other companies when a user activates Do Not Track unless the first company is an intended intermediary.
- Forces Internet companies to disclose to users their rights under this Act.
- Imposes strict penalties for violating these provisions.

How users would activate Do Not Track

- Users would have several options to enroll, including a one-time click in the settings on their browser or downloading a simple app.