



Computer & Communications
Industry Association
Tech Advocacy Since 1972



Reform
Government
Surveillance

September 8, 2014

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Republican Leader McConnell:

The undersigned trade associations and organizations, representing leaders in the technology sector, write to urge your support for the bipartisan USA FREEDOM Act, S. 2685, introduced on July 29, 2014 by Senators Leahy, Franken, Lee, and Heller.

The revelations about the U.S. government's surveillance programs that began in June of 2013 have led to an erosion of public trust in the U.S. government and the U.S. technology sector. In an effort to begin restoring that trust, the USA FREEDOM Act will prevent the bulk collection of Internet metadata, call detail records, and other tangible things in a manner that both enhances privacy and protects national security. We note that in a recent letter to Chairman Leahy, Attorney General Holder and Director of National Intelligence Clapper pointed out that the USA FREEDOM Act "enhances privacy and civil liberties and increases transparency" yet at the same time, it "preserves essential Intelligence Community capabilities."

These reforms, among the others contained in the USA FREEDOM Act, will send a clear signal to the international community and to the American people that government surveillance programs are narrowly tailored, transparent, and subject to oversight.

As a result of the surveillance program revelations, U.S. technology companies have experienced negative economic implications in overseas markets. In addition, other countries are considering proposals that would limit data flows between countries, which would have a negative impact on the efficiencies upon which the borderless Internet relies. The transparency measures in the USA FREEDOM Act are designed to alleviate some of the concerns behind such actions by allowing companies to be more transparent about the orders they receive from the government pursuant to its surveillance authorities.

The surveillance reforms embodied in the USA FREEDOM Act are necessary to help restore public trust in both the U.S. government and the U.S. technology sector, as well as to continue the innovative and competitive success of the American tech sector in global markets.

We urge the Senate to act in a bipartisan fashion and swiftly pass the USA FREEDOM Act.

BSA | The Software Alliance
CCIA – Computer and Communications Industry Association
ITI – Information Technology Industry Council
RGS – Reform Government Surveillance
SIIA – Software and Information Industry Association

Cc: Members of the U.S. Senate