

**Committee on Energy and Commerce**

**Opening Statement as Prepared for Delivery  
of**

**Subcommittee on Innovation, Data, and Commerce Ranking Member Jan Schakowsky**

***Hearing on “Promoting U.S. Innovation and Individual Liberty Through a National Standard  
for Data Privacy.”***

**March 1, 2023**

We made it almost to the finish line on data privacy by working together. A majority of Americans agree: consumers need comprehensive federal data privacy protections.<sup>1</sup>

That’s because the internet is not living up to its promise. The early internet promised more social connections, new communities, and more innovation and economic opportunity. But these benefits have come at the expense of our privacy.

Big Tech has become dependent on collecting ever more personal and intimate data about us. Data on our habits, our finances, who we love, where we live, and our most sensitive health data. Every time you browse the web or wear a smart watch, a tech company is tracking you. They use this data to manipulate us, to addict us, and to keep us on their platforms so we can be fed more ads. Or they sell the data to the highest bidder so that companies you’ve never heard of can build profiles of you. Social media has become like cigarettes, addicting in the name of profit.

Like with cigarettes, our teenagers are particularly affected. Harmful targeted advertising on social media has exacerbated the mental health crisis plaguing our young people. Americans are tired of feeling helpless online. It is time to pass data privacy legislation that protects consumers and promotes innovation.

I’d like to acknowledge, with immense gratitude, the years of tireless work on both sides of the aisle. Our efforts prove, once again, that privacy is not a partisan or an extreme issue. The “American Data Privacy and Protection Act” represented a groundbreaking milestone and is inspiring privacy advocates across the country. Just last summer, it overwhelmingly passed the Energy & Commerce Committee 53-2.

I look forward to today’s bipartisan hearing to build on our momentum, years in the making, to pass transformational privacy protections for all Americans. It’s time to return control of their data back to the American people, and to finish what we started last year.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://iapp.org/news/a/poll-55-of-registered-us-voters-want-federal-privacy-law/>