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Main Street Privacy Coalition Calls for Uniform Federal Legislation as it Launches New Website

WASHINGTON, June 22, 2020 – With privacy moving to the forefront in Congress amid the COVID-19 pandemic and growing activity at the state and international levels, the Main Street Privacy Coalition today called for uniform federal privacy legislation and launched a new website focused on principles policymakers should adopt in any new laws.

“American businesses have no higher priority than earning and maintaining trusted relationships with their customers,” the coalition said. “To preserve those relationships, businesses must protect and responsibly use the personal information that customers share with them.”

“Our associations are actively engaged in the discussions surrounding data privacy and have come together to support enactment of a comprehensive and uniform federal data privacy law,” the coalition said.

The website – www.MainStreetPrivacy.com – outlines principles Congress and federal agencies should adopt as they advance legislative solutions to address consumer privacy concerns. The principles include a comprehensive and uniform federal standard, transparency for consumers, preservation of customer services and benefits such as loyalty programs, legal responsibility for businesses’ own conduct, statutory obligations for all businesses that handle consumers’ personal information, and no exemptions for any industry sector that handles consumer data.

The coalition was formed in January 2019 and has actively worked with both federal agencies and congressional committees that have jurisdiction over privacy issues. Among other issues, the coalition has urged Washington policymakers to consider the principles above and noted that state privacy legislation has often over-burdened consumer-facing businesses even though lesser-known third-party businesses that buy and sell consumer data present a greater threat to consumers’ privacy. The coalition is also concerned that some privacy initiatives could inadvertently block technological innovations businesses have instituted to better serve consumers.

Privacy and data security legislation has been a perennial issue in Congress for the past two decades, but there has been an increase in the number of hearings and other activity in the past year, partly in response to actions abroad and in U.S. states. The General Data Protection Regulation, implemented by the European Union in 2018, impacts U.S. companies with European customers while the California Consumer Privacy Act, which took effect this year, places sweeping restrictions on how businesses collect and use information about their customers and has encouraged other states to consider similar legislation.

In recent weeks, issues such as contact-tracing and testing of employees for COVID-19 have prompted new proposals for privacy legislation in Congress.

The coalition includes 19 national trade associations representing a wide range of customer-serving Main Street businesses that interact with consumers every day. Members include:

- [American Hotel & Lodging Association](#)
- [American Beverage Licensees](#)
- [American Pizza Community](#)
- [Direct Selling Association](#)
- [Food Marketing Institute](#)
- [International Franchise Association](#)
- [National Association of Convenience Stores](#)
- [National Association of Home Builders](#)
- [National Association of Realtors](#)
- [National Council of Chain Restaurants](#)
- [National Grocers Association](#)
- [National Restaurant Association](#)
- [National Retail Federation](#)
- [NATSO – America’s Travel Plazas and Truckstops](#)
- [Petroleum Marketers Association of America](#)
- [Retail Industry Leaders Association](#)
- [Self Storage Association](#)
- [Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council](#)
- [The Society of Independent Gasoline Marketers of America \(SIGMA\)](#)

About MSPC

The Main Street Privacy Coalition is comprised of a broad array of national trade associations representing businesses that line America’s Main Streets. From retailers to Realtors, hotels to home builders, grocery stores to restaurants, and gas stations to convenience stores, its member companies interact with consumers day in and day out. Collectively, the industries that MSPC trade groups represent directly employ nearly 34 million Americans and constitute over one-fifth of the U.S. economy by contributing \$4.5 trillion to U.S. gross domestic product.