



Five Ways Americans' Cybersecurity Will Suffer If Congress Repeals the FCC Privacy Rules

If the House votes to repeal the FCC's recent privacy rules, Americans' cybersecurity will be put at risk. That's because privacy and security are two sides of the same coin: privacy is about controlling who has access to information about you, and security is how you maintain that control. You usually can't break one without breaking the other, and that's especially true in this context. To show how, here are five ways repealing the FCC's privacy rules will weaken Americans' cybersecurity.

1. Internet providers will record our browsing history, and the systems they use to record that information (not to mention the information itself) will become very tempting targets for hackers. (Just imagine what would happen if a foreign hacker thought she could blackmail a politician or a celebrity based on their browsing history.)
2. In order to record encrypted browsing history (i.e. [https](https://) websites), Internet providers will start deploying systems that remove the encryption so they can inspect the data. Although US-CERT (part of DHS) just put out an alert saying that this is extremely dangerous for Americans' cybersecurity, FCC Chairman Pai just decided *not* to enforce rules that keep Internet providers from doing this.
3. Internet providers will insert ads into our browsing, but that could break the existing code on webpages. That means security features might be broken, which could expose Americans to a greater risk of attack.
4. Internet providers will insert tracking tags into our browsing—and that means every website will be able to track you, not just your Internet provider, and there's nothing you can do to stop them.
5. Internet providers will pre-install software to record information directly from our mobile phones (after all, it's just one more source of information they can monetize). But if the software that does that recording has bugs or vulnerabilities, hackers could break into that software, and then access everything the Internet provider could see. Do you trust your Internet provider, which can't even keep an appointment to fix your cable, to write completely bug-free software?

The net result is simple: repealing the FCC's privacy rules won't just be a disaster for Americans' privacy. It will be a disaster for America's cybersecurity, too.