

222 W. Merchandise Mart Plaza, 12th Floor
Chicago, IL 60654

April 12, 2018

Senator Michael Sirotkin, Chair
Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs
Vermont State House
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633-5301

Dear Sen. Sirotkin:

I write to you from the Digital Privacy Alliance, a nonprofit comprised of technologists, corporations, attorneys, and everyday people interested in the advancement of digital privacy rights for consumers across the United States. We advocate for commonsense protections designed to ensure that bad or negligent actors are held accountable for the mistreatment of their user's personal information, while not setting up roadblocks for businesses that are responsible stewards of the private data entrusted to them.

I am writing in favor of bill H764. This bill provides important regulation around the business practices of data brokers, an industry most people are only lightly familiar with if at all.

In order to generate the revenue to support many of the free and below-cost services available around the world, personal data is gathered from users interacting with these services. This data is then stored, aggregated, and analyzed by data brokers who produce profiles on the individuals they have data on. Access to these profiles are then sold to essentially whomever can offer enough money. Given the amount of personal data they are being entrusted with, it is vital to regulate this industry. There must be guarantees that the data is being collected and stored responsibly, as well as additional protective measures for when the data broker suffers a data breach.

H764 provides a means for the state of Vermont to step up and protect its citizens from potential problems related to a poorly understood, often unseen industry, without providing undue burdens on innovative businesses. For this reason, we support the passage of H764 out of committee.

Sincerely,

Matthew Erickson
Executive Director
Digital Privacy Alliance