



March 14, 2025

To: Sen. Harrison, Chair, Senate Committee on Institutions
Members of the Senate Committee on Institutions

From: Tina Zuk, Government Relations Director, American Heart Association

Re: S.71 and S.93 data privacy legislation

We appreciate the thoughtful consideration you have given to the issue of data privacy. The American Heart Association (AHA) supports consumer data privacy and the Vermont Legislature's desire to establish important consumer protections. AHA uses industry standard security protocols to protect our donors' and volunteers' information and readily make our privacy policy available to the public.

We are concerned with S.71, including the lack of exemption for non-profits, as it would create unintended consequences in the form of significant compliance costs for non-profit organizations.

Every dollar that a public charity must devote to data privacy compliance is a dollar that we cannot use to further our missions. For AHA, this means less going toward funding cardiovascular research, setting clinical guidelines for cardiac and stroke care, and providing CPR training materials and courses that are used throughout the U.S.

Moreover, when a public charity like AHA does not commercialize that data (i.e., sell it), the costs are even more painful. Donors expect their funds to support the mission, not for handling consumer data questions and portability support requests, and they can easily read the privacy policies and charity watchdog ratings to see how their data is used.

With that in mind, we support S.93 as a better option as the committee has discussed. As you've heard from the diverse organizations supporting this alternative bill, it strikes a responsible balance between protecting consumer data and ensuring businesses and nonprofits can continue to thrive.

Thank you for considering this as a positive solution that meets the needs of both nonprofit organizations and the people of Vermont.

Tina Zuk
Government Relations Dir., VT
American Heart Association
Tina.zuk@heart.org