



March 11, 2020

Washington State Legislature
Olympia, WA 98504-0436

SB 6281, Washington Privacy Act: SUPPORT

Consumer Reports¹ supports SB 6281, the Washington Privacy Act (WPA). The bill would extend to Washington consumers key baseline privacy protections: the right to access, delete, correct, and opt out of the sale of their personal information, and additional protections for sensitive data. This bill is a marked improvement over last year's version.² It provides consumers clear, affirmative rights that companies must respect. The bill also adds new obligations for companies like data security. We particularly appreciate that the bill ensures that companies can't treat you worse, such as charging you more, for exercising your rights.

These protections are crucial for consumers. Consumers are constantly tracked: online, through apps, and in the physical world. Without protections over the sharing of data, our personal information could be sold without our permission or awareness, or otherwise disseminated in ways that could mean getting charged more for insurance, or even facing job discrimination.³ This information is often widely traded as a matter of course. As just one example, a recent study found that 10 apps, including dating and period-tracking apps, together sent sensitive personal information on consumers (such as location data) to at least 135 companies involved in advertising and behavioral profiling.⁴

¹ Consumer Reports is an expert, independent, non-profit organization whose mission is to work for a fair, just, and safe marketplace for all consumers and to empower consumers to protect themselves. Consumer Reports is the world's largest independent product-testing organization, using its dozens of labs, auto test center, and survey research department to rate thousands of products and services annually. Founded in 1936, Consumer Reports has over 6 million members and publishes its magazine, website, and other publications.

² Letter from Consumer Reports et al. to The Honorable Christine Rolfes (Feb. 21, 2019), <https://advocacy.consumerreports.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SB-5376-Privacy-Coalition-Letter-Oppose.pdf>; Letter from Consumer Reports et al. to The Honorable Zach Hudgins (March 25, 2019), <https://advocacy.consumerreports.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Privacy-Coalition-Letter-Opposing-ITED-v.-4.pdf>

³ Donna Rosato, *What Your Period Tracker App Knows About You*, CONSUMER REPORTS (Jan. 28, 2020), <https://www.consumerreports.org/health-privacy/what-your-period-tracker-app-knows-about-you/>.

⁴ *Out of Control: How consumers are exploited by the online advertising industry*, NORWEGIAN CONSUMERS COUNCIL at 5-6 (Jan. 14, 2020), <https://fil.forbrukerradet.no/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/2020-01-14-out-of-control-final-version.pdf>.

This important bill in many ways goes beyond the California Consumer Privacy Act to provide consumers with even more effective controls over their personal information. We thank you again for your work on consumer privacy, and urge you to vote YES on SB 6281.

Sincerely,

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