What is it?

The Connected Consumer Product End of Life Disclosure Act will boost national and personal security while also providing transparency around how long consumers can expect their connected devices to operate in a safe and secure manner.

Why does it matter?

More and more consumer products are connected to the internet. But when consumers keep connected devices such as routers and IoT products online after they have stopped receiving software and security updates, it leaves these products open to cyberattack. We call these **devices zombies.** Nation states and malicious actors have taken over routers and IoT products that have reached their end of life to launch botnets, and access consumer networks.

Consumers may be unaware that their connected products lose software support, which can affect their security and also their features. In December 2024, **Consumer Reports conducted a nationally representative survey** of 2,130 Americans that found that four in ten (43%) owners of a connected device said that the last time they purchased one they were not aware that it might lose software support at some point. Roughly a third of consumers with a connected device (35%) said that they had been aware that their product would lose software support at some point, and 22% said they did not recall.

As these products lose software support and become insecure, consumers may choose to throw them away or replace them, contributing to the problem of e-waste.

Some manufacturers already disclose some information.

Major brands such as Amazon, Google, and Signify (maker of Philips Hue lights) share how long they plan to provide security updates on their respective web sites.

Brands that sell connected consumer products in the UK must abide by the UK's Product Security and Telecoms Infrastructure Act which requires them to publish how long they plan to support a connected device.

But not enough.

The **Federal Trade Commission researched 184 connected products** only to discover that only 21 or 11.4% disclosed the device's software support duration or end date on the product web page.

Consumer Reports **surveyed 21 of the top large appliance brands** and found that only three brands tell consumers how long they guarantee updates to their appliances' software and applications.

More >

Consumers support this action.

Consumers can't find this essential information, and after 15 years of selling connected devices, it's time for the industry to step up and disclose how long they plan to support the software associated with their connected products.

72%
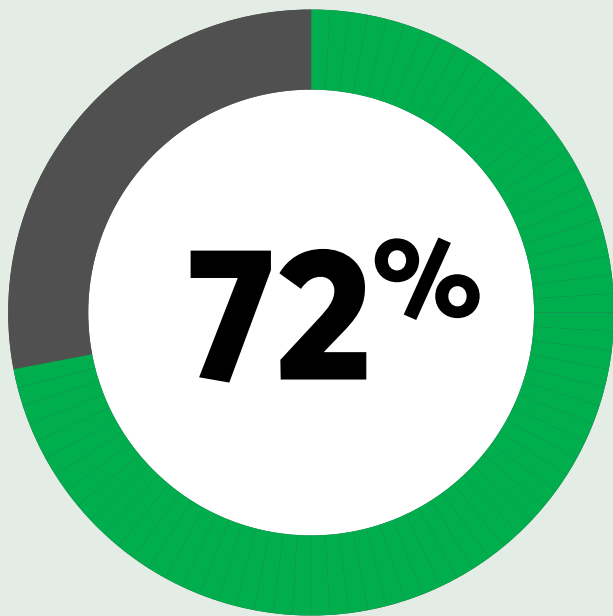
Consumer Reports' December 2024 survey **research shows** that 72% of Americans who have purchased smart devices believe manufacturers should be required to disclose how long they will support those devices.

The Connected Consumer Product End of Life Disclosure law is part of the solution.

Solving this problem will require action by manufacturers as well as consumer education. The Connected Consumer Product End of Life Disclosure law will help by requiring the following from manufacturers and ISPs:

- Manufacturers must clearly disclose minimum guaranteed support time frames by which they will provide security and software updates for connected consumer products, and place that date on the product package or share that information at the point of sale. This time frame must fit with reasonable consumer expectations for the life of the product.
- Manufacturers should also share the minimum guaranteed support time frame end date on the connected consumer product web page and keep that updated.
- Manufacturers must proactively notify consumers when their connected consumer products will lose support and provide advice as to how a consumer should handle the connected consumer product's end of life.
- Notifications about the end of product support must include clear information about actions the user can take if they want to continue using the product in a secure manner and provide a list of features lost, and vulnerabilities and security risks that are likely to result from the end of support.
- The law also requires ISPs to remove company-provided connected consumer products (including routers) from consumer homes when they reach end of life.