

Resolution Encouraging Consumer Privacy Protections Across All Platforms

WHEREAS, the African American Mayors Association (AAMA) advocates for policies that increase the vitality and sustainability of our cities; and

WHEREAS, the emerging knowledge economy increases economic opportunity for communities of color while improving the level of convenience for accessing and purchasing goods and services online; and

WHEREAS, a disproportionate number of African American and Latino consumers access the Internet via mobile devices; and

WHEREAS, the persistent threat of high-tech profiling capabilities contributes to a history of discriminatory practices against African Americans; and

WHEREAS, big data, the accumulation of high-volume, high-velocity information assets, can be used by governments and corporations to gather insights into and data on certain consumer groups; and

WHEREAS, the emergence of new online platforms and the technological capacity of these platforms have increased access to consumers' private data; and

WHEREAS, among these new and emerging platforms are non-Internet service provider platforms such as smartphone operating systems, web browsers, search engines, and social networks all utilized by African American and Latino consumers; and

WHEREAS, disparate privacy obligations imposed on only one segment of the Internet ecosystem will harm competition and confuse consumers;

WHEREAS, in contrast to many other Internet ecosystem players, such as operating systems, search engines and social network that may have little or no contact with the individuals from whom they collect data, Internet service providers have a built-in incentive to safeguard the privacy of their subscribers due to their ongoing business relationship with their customers;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that to promote fair competition, avoid consumer confusion, and encourage investment and innovation, the AAMA calls on Congress to take the necessary steps to ensure that flexible privacy standards grounded in the appropriate fair information practice principles apply equally to all entities and all platforms across the Internet ecosystem; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Federal Communications Commission should refrain from adopting prescriptive rules regarding the use, disclosure, and security of consumers' personal information for Internet service providers that are not consistent with, or more onerous than, those that apply to the rest of the Internet ecosystem, as enforced by the Federal Trade Commission, as any such disparities in privacy rules would serve only to confuse consumers.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, members of the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate, the Chairman and Commissioners of the Federal Communications Commission, and other federal, state and local government officials as appropriate.