

Internet Surveillance Proposal Raises Constitutional Questions

Posted By [Personal Liberty News Desk](#) On September 30, 2010 @ 12:01 am In [Conservative Politics](#), [Personal Liberty News](#) | [11 Comments](#)

There is a new legislative plan that, if implemented, would require social media services such as Skype or Facebook to comply with a wiretap order.

The Obama administration has announced it will push for Federal legislation that would compel email, instant messaging and other communication providers to allow law enforcement to bypass their encryption for surveillance purposes, according to *The New York Times*.

Law enforcement agencies, including the FBI, are reportedly concerned that technological progress makes it increasingly difficult to conduct wiretaps of suspected criminals, including terrorists, as individuals are switching away from phones and towards Internet-based communications.

Despite officials' claims that agents would still need a court order to access this type of data, there are growing concerns about what this would mean for privacy and constitutional protections, such as those provided for in the Fourth Amendment.

Among the critics of the proposal, which will likely be brought before the new Congress next year, is Jim Harper, an attorney and policy analyst at the Cato Institute. He said that "the migration to open source peer-to-peer services will accelerate and the Federal government will end up worse off than it is today," quoted by *CNet News*.

"This is a reason to worry about so-called 'cloud' services, which provide a centralized surveillance point," he added.

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