



Tech Companies Fear Privacy Laws Under Jeff Sessions

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Recently confirmed U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions could have major opponents in Silicon Valley, Axios reports, as the technology industry fears what effects his office could have on privacy and immigration.

Sessions slammed Apple last year for refusing to cooperate with the FBI to decrypt an iPhone connected to the attack in San Bernardino, Calif.

"Coming from a law enforcement background, I believe this is a more serious issue than [Apple CEO] Tim Cook understands," he told Bloomberg News last February.

"In a criminal case, or could be a life and death terrorist case, accessing a phone means the case is over. Time and time again, that kind of information results in an immediate guilty plea, case over," Sessions said, adding that government should not abuse the ability to access private information, but that such access is critical for law enforcement.

Neema Singh Guliani, legislative counsel with the American Civil Liberties Union, told Politico last November, "When it comes to privacy and mass surveillance, Sessions has repeatedly been on the wrong side of the Constitution, public opinion and laws passed by a Republican-controlled Congress."

"Insofar as one of the functions of the Justice Department is to ensure other law enforcement agencies are themselves obeying the law, it is unsettling that Trump has chosen for attorney general one of the most strident opponents . . . of civil liberties safeguards on surveillance authorities or law enforcement generally," Julian Sanchez, a Cato Institute senior fellow, told Politico, adding that Sessions is "someone who seems to think law enforcement can do no wrong."

Sessions has also decried Silicon Valley companies hiring foreign workers with H-1B visas, which he called a "tremendous threat" to Americans in an interview with former Breitbart News head Steve Bannon in November of 2015.