



Senators want to revive 'dead' anti-encryption bill, leak shows

The bill met resistance from Congress, the White House, and Silicon Valley.

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A controversial bipartisan bill that would prevent tech companies from using strong encryption isn't as dead as was once thought.

The bill, which critics argue would have outlawed end-to-end encrypted apps and services because it ensured that companies must turn over readable data to law enforcement, had no support from the Senate, where the bill was raised because it would "undermine the foundation of cybersecurity for millions of Americans".

It also had no support from the Obama administration, or even the intelligence community, which the bill aimed to help.

Tech companies were also vehemently against the bill's efforts to compel companies to decrypt data at a court's request.

The bill was eventually declared dead. But that isn't going to stop Sens. Richard Burr (R-NC) and Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) from fighting to get it back on the table.

A leaked copy of a revised draft detailing the proposed changes was obtained by Julian Sanchez, a senior fellow at the Cato Institute and writer at Just Security. The senators are said to be narrowing the scope of the bill but not in any meaningful way.

"Incorporating these changes... would yield something a good deal narrower than the original version of the bill, and therefore not subject to all the same objections that one met with," he said.

"It would still be a pretty bad idea," he said bluntly about the bill. "This debate clearly isn't going anywhere, however, and we're likely to see a good deal more evolution before anything is formally introduced," he added.

According to Vocativ, there is no formal new draft of the bill, but Feinstein is in the process of "soliciting ideas" to create a version of the bill that is more likely to pass.