

Senate online privacy hearing to draw FTC, FCC chairs, Google, Apple and Facebook

The Senate Commerce Committee's [hearing](#) July 27 on online privacy will draw witness testimonies from the chairmen of the **Federal Trade Commission** and **Federal Communications Commission**, and representatives from **Apple**, **Google**, **AT&T** and [Facebook](#), according to sources.

The hearing comes amid greater momentum in the House to create a framework legislation on how Web sites can handle user information. Rep. **Bobby Rush** (D-Ill.), chairman of the Commerce, Trade and Consumer Protection Subcommittee, introduced a bill this week to empower the FTC to create a policy on Internet privacy. Rep. **Rick Boucher** (D-Va.) also has a privacy bill circulating in the House that would force Web sites to ask for explicit permission to gather some sensitive information such as on health and location.

A representative from **The Cato Institute** and Professor **Joe Turow** of the University of Pennsylvania will also testify.

Analysts said greater focus from Congress on online privacy has led Web sites and online ad networks to move toward self-regulation to fend off legislation. This self-regulation is aimed at greater disclosure on Web sites that consumers are being tracked, and an easy mechanism for opting out.

“We believe the odds are against Congress passing an online privacy bill in 2010. There is too little time left to move a bill that is fairly controversial,” said **Paul Gallant**, an analyst at Concept Capital in a note. “However, we continue to believe that there is a political consensus forming around the need for greater regulation of online advertising to better protect consumer privacy.”

By Cecilia Kang | July 23, 2010; 11:40 AM ET

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