

Petition against internet 'lawful access' bills

Proposed rules invade privacy and boost internet costs, Open Media says

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Associated Press

Advocates for internet users and civil liberties groups have launched a petition against proposed laws that would give police in new powers to monitor and intercept internet communications in Canada.

"These invasive surveillance bills will transform the internet to a closed, rigid, paranoid space," said Steve Anderson, executive director of Open Media, the group leading the campaign, in a statement. The group had previously mobilized internet users against usage-based internet billing.

The new "Stop Spying" petition opposes three bills that were introduced by Stephen Harper's Conservative government in the last session of Parliament, saying they will invade privacy, leave personal information less secure and boost the cost of internet service.

The Conservatives promised as part of their election platform to reintroduce legislation tabled before the May 2 election that would "give law enforcement and national security agencies up-to-date tools to fight crime in today's high-tech telecommunications environment." They committed to passing the legislation within their first 100 sitting days in office.

The bills from the last session included:

- C-50, Access to Investigative Tools for Serious Crimes Act,

which would give police the power to intercept private communications without a warrant under certain circumstances.

- C-51, Investigative Powers for the 21st Century Act, which would allow police to get a) warrants to obtain information transmitted over the internet and data related to its transmission, including locations of individuals and transactions; b) orders that would compel other parties to preserve electronic evidence.
- C-52, Investigating and Preventing Criminal Electronic Communications Act, which would require internet service providers to a) have infrastructure that will allow law enforcement agents to intercept internet communications of their customers; b) provide basic information about their subscribers to law enforcement.

The government and law enforcement officials say the laws are necessary because technology provides new ways of committing crimes and makes them harder to investigate. The Conservative government has previously tried to introduce similar legislation multiple times.

Open Media said the police interception of private communications without a warrant will "invade the private lives of law-abiding Canadians." It believes the legislation will leave personal and financial information less secure and will boost the cost of internet service, since internet service providers will likely pass on the cost of installing "millions of dollars worth" of technology to make communications interceptable.

By Wednesday evening, the same day the petition was launched,

30,000 people had signed, Open Media reported.

The petition is backed by the Canadian and B.C. civil liberties associations, the Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic at the University of Ottawa and the Tyee, a B.C.-based news and culture website. Several unions and independent media outlets are also supporting the campaign.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/story/2011/06/23/technology-internet-intercept-lawful-petition.html>

Related Links

[Tories reintroduce ISP intercept bill](#)
[Electronic snooping bill a 'data grab': privacy advocates](#)
[ISPs must help police snoop on internet under new bill](#)

External Links

[Bill C-50](#)
[Bill C-51](#)
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[Conservative platform](#)
[Open Media's petition](#)