



The Future of Connected Devices and Secure Data in Wisconsin

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As October's Cybersecurity Month comes to a close, we spend the final week looking toward the future of connected devices and secure data. At this time last year, the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) announced the formation of the Data Privacy and Security Advisory Committee. Under the leadership of Governor Tony Evers and DATCP Secretary-designee Randy Romanski, a coalition of 25 members from all sectors of industry, governmental agencies, and consumer advocates joined together to evaluate how Wisconsin could effectively keep consumer data secure in our ever-changing technological economy.

Over a nine-month period, the committee heard from subject matter experts who presented the impacts of the growing multibillion-dollar data storage industry, as well as how that data is shared, sold, and often compromised. We discussed the ethics of data analytics and the role government can and should play in the company's algorithmic manipulation of the consumer data it collects. We evaluated laws that have been passed in states around the country and proposed here in Wisconsin to keep data private and secure. Significantly, we learned where the collection of consumer data is not regulated and thus not protected, and at risk from both a privacy and data breach perspective.

We also heard from many of you through public comments at our meetings as well as through participation in a Wisconsin consumer survey conducted by Consumer Reports. Survey results showed 94% of Wisconsinites want companies to be required by law to keep their personal data secure. Ninety-seven percent of Wisconsin residents surveyed believe companies should be required to notify them if their data has been breached. Half of Wisconsin residents surveyed say companies should not be allowed to share their personal data at all. More than a third (36%) say companies should be allowed do this, as long as they get permission each time.

As we look towards the future, understanding how technological innovations influence online security will be critical for securing and protecting both consumer and business data. Regulatory agencies and lawmakers need to understand how infrastructure can be adapted to the continuous evolution of connected devices moving forward. The Data Security and Privacy Advisory Committee's work uncovered the complex issues surrounding lawmaking and regulation. The committee's final report provides a detailed analysis of these issues and the status of data security and privacy for lawmakers and stakeholders.

The regulation of data privacy, security, and breach presents a host of complex and important issues. The decision of how to regulate the privacy and security of consumer data will have significant impacts on the residents of Wisconsin and its economy for years to come. Without a comprehensive set of ground rules for all, businesses are more susceptible to a data breach, consumers are less likely to find relief if they are a victim of fraud, and businesses and consumers alike are left unaware of how their data is being collected and used without their permission.

No matter what the future holds, every individual or organizational user needs to be empowered to do their part for cybersecurity. Data privacy and security is a complex, multi-faceted issue. In some instances, one can be the beneficiary of the collected data and in others, the same entity or person may be the victim of a data breach. Resolving the challenges presented by data collection, storage, and sharing will require the sustained involvement of multiple parties, including consumers, businesses, industry leaders, industry standards organizations, legislators, and regulators.

To learn more and read the Data Privacy and Security Advisory Committee's final report, visit [DATCP.WI.gov](https://www.datcp.wi.gov).

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