



March 10, 2015

<http://engine.is>

Honorable Mark Leno
California State Senate
State Capitol Room 5100
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: SB 178 - Support

Dear Senator Leno:

Engine strongly supports SB 178, the California Electronic Communications Privacy Act ("CalECPA"). Considering California is the nation's center for technology and innovation, California must take immediate steps to update its long obsolete and ill-advised electronic privacy laws. The diverse group of startups and entrepreneurs that we represent need clear rules governing compliance with law enforcement requests, and SB 178 provides sensible safeguards that balance consumer privacy interests with law enforcement needs.

Since data plays an increasingly important role for many startups, any uncertainty over compliance with outdated regulations puts them in a difficult position. Startups may be forced to choose between spending valuable time and resources complying with complex requests for data from law enforcement or facing fines and legal action for protecting their users' privacy rights. These small companies simply don't have the bandwidth to respond to spurious requests for information, so having a clear set of protocols will make it much easier to comply with the law.

Federal and state consumer privacy laws are hopelessly out of date, inconsistent with changing technology, and routinely applied in unpredictable ways. If consumers feel that the information they store digitally is freely accessible by law enforcement without adequate procedural safeguards, they will stop using online services—services often provided by the innovative startups that have historically driven California's economy. SB 178 will help revive consumer confidence in the security of their digitally stored information, which will in turn benefit California's entrepreneurs and California's economy.

Engine thanks you for your efforts in reforming California's digital privacy laws, and we are looking forward to helping get CalECPA passed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Evan Engstrom".

Evan Engstrom
Policy Director