

MEDIA RELEASE

EFA joins Global Call to World Leaders to Support Strong Encryption

Canberra, 12th January 2016

Today Electronic Frontiers Australia joins experts and organisations in more than 35 countries in asking world leaders to support strong encryption and to reject any law, policy, or mandate that would undermine digital security.

This open letter is now open to public support and is hosted at: SecureTheInternet.org.

In countries including France, India, the UK, China and the US, governments are considering legislation and other proposals that would undermine strong encryption. However, safety and privacy depend on secure communications tools and technologies. This letter represents the collective voice of technologists and organisations that rely on encryption.

“The internet belongs to the world’s people, not its governments. We refuse to let this precious resource become nationalized and broken by any nation. This letter seeks to unify the voices of global internet users by demanding the protection of tools necessary to the expression of our human rights,” said Brett Solomon, Executive Director of Access Now.

The letter allows organisations and individuals to declare their support for strong encryption. The letter will be delivered to world leaders who, according to press reports, are considering legislation and other steps that would undermine encryption.

“Encryption and anonymity, and the security concepts behind them, provide the privacy and security necessary for the exercise of the right to freedom of opinion and expression in the digital age,” said David Kaye, UN Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Opinion & Expression.

Several countries are considering proposals that would require companies to provide exceptional access to encrypted materials. This would create a “backdoor” to allow access to any encrypted file including personal conversations, medical and banking records.

EFA Executive Officer Jon Lawrence said today, “Calls to undermine encryption in the name of ‘national security’ are fundamentally misguided and dangerous. Encryption is a necessary and critical tool enabling individual privacy, a free media, online commerce and the operations of organisations of all types, including of course government agencies. Undermining encryption therefore represents a serious threat to national security in its own right, as well as threatening basic human rights and the enormous economic and social benefits that the digital revolution has brought for people across the globe.”

Other Australian organisations supporting this letter are the Australian Privacy Foundation, Australian Lawyers for Human Rights, Blueprint for Free Speech and FutureWise.



Electronic Frontiers
AUSTRALIA

About EFA

Established in January 1994, Electronic Frontiers Australia (EFA) is a national, membership-based non-profit organisation representing Internet users concerned with digital freedoms and rights.

EFA is independent of government and commerce, and is funded by membership subscriptions and donations from individuals and organisations with an altruistic interest in promoting civil liberties in the digital context. EFA members and supporters come from all parts of Australia and from diverse backgrounds.

EFA's major objectives are to protect and promote the civil liberties of users of digital communications systems (such as the Internet) and of those affected by their use and to educate the community at large about the social, political and civil liberties issues involved in the use of digital communications systems.

EFA Media Contact

Jon Lawrence – Executive Officer

0414 669 787

media@efa.org.au