

Massachusetts Pirate Party

Fall/Winter 2015 Quarterly Newsletter

Party of the Open



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Massachusetts Public Records Law Update

Massachusetts took a step closer to improving its public records law when the Judiciary Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight reported favorably on H.3665 (An Act to improve public records). The bill next goes to the committee on House Ways and Means and we need your help in making sure it passes. Massachusetts' public records laws rank 39th and received an F in the Center for Public Integrity's rankings. As Common Cause notes, this bill would:

Allow courts to award attorney's fees when agencies block access to public information, giving "teeth" to enforcement and promoting compliance with the law and bringing our laws up to the standards of most other states;

Make records affordable, with only nominal costs that aren't large enough to actually inhibit access;

Promote electronic distribution of public records, and make more public documents available online;

Designate "records access officers" in government agencies, streamlining the access process and reducing bureaucratic complexity by assigning responsibility for answering requests.

The ACLU of Massachusetts, Common Cause Massachusetts, MA Newspaper Publishers Association and the New England First Amendment Coalition have done great work advocating for this bill, but we need to help them get this bill passed.

Take a moment and tell your state representative and senator that they need to pass this bill. Those who oppose greater government transparency and accountability are trying to kill this bill. We have to stop them!

Thank you.

Organizations we support

May First/People Link Black Lives Matter Somerville Community Access TV Move
to Amend Occupy Wall Street Occupy Boston Somerville Public Library
Fight for the Future Electronic Frontier Foundation Stone Soup Worcester
Free Software Foundation Internet Defense League
BLU Shanti Mission Libre Boston NLG Massachusetts ACLU Massachusetts
JOBS Not Jails ADA Project Free Software Conservancy Common Cause
Open Hatch Restore the Fourth Outreachy Free Software Consevancy
The Mass Alliance Against Predatory Lending South End Tech Center E5
Jobs Not Jails Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless

Upcoming Events

Monthly Cryptoparty at Parts and Crafts Weds 9/30, 10/28, 11/25 6-9pm

Freedom Rally September 25-27 Fri-Sun @ Boston Common

EFF and Cory Doctorow

STEVE REVILAK FIRST ELECTED INTERNATIONAL PIRATE IN THE USA!!!!

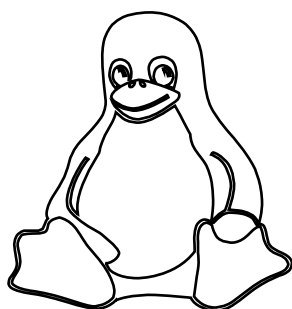
Congratulations to MPP Quarter Master Steve Revilak for being the first elected pirate to political office in the United States. Steve was elected to city manager this past election season in Arlington MA as an independent and will serve for three years. Steve is our webmaster as well as quartermaster and a Computer Scientist who keeps us all informed and educated to the latest innovation in digital security.

LOVE YOU MAN KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK



May First People Link DDOS Attacks Continue

May First People Link has been under a series of DDOS attacks on reproductive rights sites. We need to spread the word about the good work that MF/PL is doing in providing progressive organizations on the political left a platform and a voice. Read Alfredo Lopez's latest update on the attacks [here](#).



Police Brutality and State Terrorism

by Kendra Moyer

The long fought American battles for civil liberties and equal right have always been litmus tested in communities of color before reaching the mainstream. The current epidemic of police shootings of both unarmed and armed civilians has called into question gun control laws, police militarization and restraint, racial attitudes mental health and the question of gun safety as a public health issue. There is a clear disconnect between state, local, county and city police forces working in African American communities. There has also clearly been an up-tick in staged and unplanned confrontations with law enforcement resulting in the armed offenders quite effectively committing suicide by cop. In other instances, some police departments seem to be both fed up with the criminal element in the African American community and responding either with lack luster responses or the overly aggressive enthusiasm resulting in the many deadly stories that pepper our headlines. Clearly a balance, in the form of justice, needs to be achieved. More importantly are the unanswered questions of an overly militarized local community police force expected to protect and serve for the good of a peaceful community, rather than a punitive and intimidating force with no connection or investment in the communities they assigned to. A military is not accustomed to treating the area it patrols as a community, but more as an occupied territory. The "us vs them" mentality has long prevailed in the notion of the Thin Blue Line and the brother hood. Of police in refusing to rat out rotten apples ion the bunch . On the other hand there are communities that are plagued with street crime due to the depressed economy, lack of employment and economic opportunity and the lack of mobility. These areas are prone to low level street crime and drug dealing when people are desperate for a psychological and financial escape from grinding inequality and poverty. This has led to the ease trap of mass incarceration removing parents, most specifically fathers from the family setting an creating spiral of overtaxed mothers raising under supervised childcare

There should be a citizen's review board in every community independent of the police force that handles citizxen complaints objectively. This concept and strategy has long been an uphill battle for police unions and fraternities that do not want to face the safe scrutiny and accountability that the average citizen is held to. As history demonstrates, the policing of the most vulnerable communities is most aggressive and usually the testing ground for the policing of the entire population. The institution of body cameras and more oversight of law enforcement agencies is not a solution to the deeply entrenched and underlying attitudes about power, class, race and the hierarchical aspect of human and social relationships currently plaguing our nation.

The direct correlation between the lack of stable steady employment in the black communities and the rising rates of incarceration have been studied and attested to. Our role as Pirates is to continue to speak out against police brutality and state sponsored surveillance and harassment of oppressed communities. We believe that people should have the right to bear arms responsibly. We do not believe that law enforcement officers should be allowed to openly associate with racist identity and white nationalist parties or harbor latent racialized attitudes while aggressively policing communities of color. The Massachusetts Pirate Party calls for transparency from all state sponsored law enforcement agencies. As the Party of the Open we do not accept closed judicial procedures that do not allow the participation of tax payers. We believe that all judicial proceedings and decisions related to police deaths and violence should be conducted in the open and all cases reviewed and evaluated by neutral but invested third parties. Law enforcement agencies at every level should be subjected to the highest standards of review in cases of deadly injury and deaths, particularly in traditionally oppressed communities with a history of conflict with law enforcement agencies. The Massachusetts Pirate Party stands with and supports oppressed people.

Why I Joined Mass Pirates by Anonymous



After working with Occupy Boston, I became engaged with the infotech team and met a some engaging activists who persuaded me to consider the MPP. Since then I have had a very interesting time sharing my own experiences and insights in a group that is open, fair, kind and accepting. I have worked with many political organizing groups and they all have crazy drama. However, the Mass Pirates are the most consistent group that approaches political organizing practically and realistically, building coalitions, taking the initiative and stepping back at times. Overall, no political group is perfect, but at times it is a good thing to find yourself simply able to exchange ideas in a open setting.

Most importantly we are allowed to be ourselves, to have different perspectives and opinions, and still find a place and role with the International Pirates. I am happy to have found what I was looking for addressing the growing Surveillance State .

Election News

Scott Walker punked in New Hampshire.

Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker was greeted with a gigantic check verifying his receiving campaign donations from the Koch Brothers.

These Merry Pranksters met Scott Walker in New Hampshire with a sign greeting his arrival that when turned over presented this ridiculous campaign donation. check from the Koch Borthers to this outstanding outcome. The point was probably not well received, but was surely delivered. Fine work indeed.



....speaking of Getting Money out Of Politics

Move to Amend is challenging citizen's United and will be holding a campaign for signatures to over turn this law. If you are at all interested in helping Move to Amend end Corporate Personhood, please be intouch with Steve Revialk for more details on signature drives to get the bill on the ballot or check out the website: movetoamend.org/

Privacy Toolkit

Prism Break <https://prism-break.org/en/>

Tor Project <https://www.torproject.org/>

Bit-Mask

Rise Up Email Service <https://help.riseup.net/en>

Linux Operating Systems

I2P <https://geti2p.net/en/>

Email Self-Defense <https://emailselfdefense.fsf.org/en/>

cyanogen mod

gnu social

Jitsi Encrypted Internet Chat jitsi.org

Bitcoin

PGP Encryption <https://securityinabox.org/en/guide/thunderbird/windows>

<https://www.enigmail.net/home/index.php>



JOIN MASS PIRATES ON SOMMERVILLE COMMUNITY ACCESS TELEVISION!!!

Check your local schedules: <http://www.scatsomerville.org/>

MPP Annual Picnic at George's Island

Mass Pirates met for the annual ferry boat trip over to Georges Island for snacks and compelling discussion about freedom of speech and electoral politics.

While there was no old timey baseball, we were treated to real pirates stories along with vivid descriptions of mutinies, walking the plank and hangings shared by the friendly park ranger. The park previously served as an internment camp for war prisoners during the American Civil War. The beautiful sights of the Island were deceptively used as a military fort with multiple cannons and a great strategic military and navel history.



Mass Alliance Against Predatory Lending (MAAPL) Hackathon

Event: The David and Goliath Hackathon: Fight against Predatory Lending

For: MAAPL ,The Mass Alliance Against Predatory Lending

Who: Anybody with Computer Word processing skills or programming skills (See details below)

When: July 18th from 11am to 2pm

Where: Stone Soup, 4 King St., Worcester, 01610 (maps below)

Details:

Participants (Steve, Jamie, Noe, and Kendra along with other community members) helped MAAPL build their website that will be used to defend Massachusetts' families against illegal foreclosure. Participants with helped build content by uploading documents or transferring content from the old MAAPL website. Participants with programming skills also helped in the design and creation of web forms and SQL procedures.

Three hours of participation literally helps to save a family from losing their home.

Sponsored by: The Mass Alliance Against Predatory Lending, Worcester Unemployment Action Group, Massachusetts Pirate Party

P2P Conference

The MPP hosted an in house crypto-party at this year's annual P2P conference featuring James Bamford and Bruce Schneier. Thanks to all who helped our supporters learn the fundamentals of cryptography.

Left Forum

The MPP hosted an event on Third Party candidates and the need for open government at the Annual Left Forum in New York City hosted at the John Jay College of Law. Mass Pirates James O'keefe, Kendra Moyer and Steve Revilak discussed state surveillance, police brutality and digital privacy tools for political activists. Catch more about the Left Forum and videos from the conference at <http://www.leftforum.org>.

Massachusetts Pirate Party Platform

Our Issues

Putting People Before Corporations

The Supreme Court and Congress have expanded the power of corporations for over a hundred years and made them more powerful than people. Whether it is the Supreme Court's Citizens United decision that allows corporations to buy elections, or Congress' cuts in corporate tax rates while raising payroll taxes, real people end up with the short end of the stick. The Pirate Party will make sure our laws put people before corporations.

Opening up Government

In order for citizens to control their democratic destiny, we need to know what our government is doing and which special interests are influencing our public elected officials. Increasingly government officials ignore open meeting laws, make deals favorable to corporations behind closed doors and sell off your public information to private interests. Massachusetts laws prevent people from recording public officials in their duties, such as a police officer making an arrest, but the police cameras can record your actions without your permission. The Pirate Party will make sure that our government is transparent and accountable to the people.

Defending Your Privacy

Whether it was the PATRIOT ACT, illegal NSA wiretapping or local surveillance cameras, our government has used 9/11 to increase its surveillance and control over us. Corporations have increased their spying on employees in order to get more work out of them. The arguments for each step on the road to a surveillance state may sound convincing, but that road leads to less control by people and more by government and corporate elites. Terrorists may attack the open society, but only governments can abolish it. The Pirate Party will prevent that from happening.

Promoting Culture & Knowledge Through Copyright Reform

The Founding Fathers created our copyright laws to promote knowledge & culture by giving the creator a limited monopoly over their creations. Congress, under the influence of corporations, has extended the duration of that government granted monopoly to seventy years after the death of the creator. Increasingly corporations have sought broader laws to ensure that they control and profit from more of our culture. Through Digital Rights Management (DRM) technologies they have locked down our culture, hindered sharing and criminalized their customers.

The Pirate Party will:

- *limit the copyright to five years for electronic media and fourteen years for tangible objects,
- *make sure that all non-commercial copying, sharing and remixing are legal and
- *ban DRM software.

There is no reason for copyright to continue until 70 years after death.

Everyone must have equal access to the internet, and the Pirate Party will foster network neutrality so that internet service providers cannot give preferential treatment to preferred web sites and we oppose three strikes laws that ban anyone from using the internet because of copyright violations. The internet has the potential to be a new Library of Alexandria, if we don't let corporations and government lock it down.

Fostering Innovation by Abolishing Patents

We seek the abolition of patents. The patent system stifles innovation by making it difficult to incorporate an existing invention into a new one. It discourages researchers from sharing their new ideas until after a patent application. It prevents hundreds of thousands of people in poor countries from receiving the drugs they need. Currently pharmaceutical companies spend only 15% of their revenue on new drug research. The remaining 85% is spent on activities such as marketing and profit taking. A reformed system would dramatically increase the money available for innovation, while removing the obstacles to innovation posed by the current patent system.

Positions on Other Issues

The scope of the Pirate Party was originally limited to a few core issues. However now the Massachusetts Pirate Party, in common with many other Pirate Parties, is drafting policies on a variety of different issues. We need your help in deciding positions on every policy that matters to Massachusetts voters. sure that all non-commercial copying, sharing and remixing are legal and ban DRM software.

There is no reason for copyright to continue until 70 years after death. Everyone must have equal access to the internet, and the Pirate Party will foster network neutrality so that internet service providers cannot give preferential treatment to preferred web sites and we oppose three strikes laws that ban anyone from using the internet because of copyright violations. The internet has the potential to be a new Library of Alexandria, if we don't let corporations and government lock it down.



Monthly Cryptoparty at Parts and Crafts

CRYPTOPARTY

Last Wednesdays of the Month: 6 – 9pm
Aug 26, Sept 30, Oct 28, Nov 25.

A Crypto Party (aka Encryption Potluck) is a space to hang out and teach each other practical tools of digital security, such as how to set up email encryption on your computer and how to browse the web anonymously.

Don't know much about computers? Don't worry! We will use accessible language and help you in every step of the way. Bringing a computer isn't mandatory to participate—there is lots of conversation to be had as well. But a goal of the cryptoparty is that people leave with actively implemented encryption tools on their devices to go start using in the real world.

Schedule:

Potluck snacks/BYOB. Kids welcome to join.

- Introductions/ What do you want to learn?/ What can you teach?
- The basics: an introduction to crypto, the impacts of surveillance on everyday people, and deconstructing the idea of “but I have nothing to hide.”
- after that: bust out the laptops/devices and get to work! We will break into groups depending on what people are interested in learning, such as: PGP email encryption, TextSecure for sending secure SMS messages, the Tor Browser for searching anonymously online, and more.



@ Parts and Crafts

577 Somerville Ave

Somerville, MA

wheelchair accessible

MBTA Porter Sq. red line / bus 87

Parts and Crafts is a makerspace and community workshop in Somerville. On this night, the usually kid-filled space is inviting grown-ups to come participate here. We ask that all grown-ups who use the space keep this in mind and respect the kid-friendly environment.

More info:

cryptoparty.in/boston

About

The Massachusetts Pirate Party was formed in May, 2010 by James O'Keefe, Chris Reynolds and Erik Zoltan. Since then it has been active in promoting promoting privacy, transparent government, innovation by reining in copyright laws and eliminating patent laws. It ran candidates for State Representative in 2014 and elected its first office holder in 2015.

Pirate Council

Captain – James O'Keefe / jokeefe@jamesokeefe.org / 617-447-0210 / @jpokeefe / Key Id: 0xAAFF1FEC

First Officer – Noelani Kamelamela / noeseek@gmail.com / 617-901-4076 / Key Id: 0x358758A8

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Web/Info Director – Benjamin Cook / blj54@wildcats.unh.edu / Key Id: 0x2D69B366

Council of Arbitrators

Olivia Pineyro / bestpiggy@riseup.net / 617-416-1143 / @bestpiggy

Eli Haber / fighterofoo9@gmail.com / @aquaticonions

Representative to the United States Pirate Party

Lucia Fiero / sutralu@gmail.com / 617-462-7361 / @Bluelustreak / Key Id: 0xBCADDE22





Freedom Rally

We're there every year because it's a great time and a good opportunity to meet activists (aka future pirates!)

We will be tabling at the 26th Freedom Rally on September 26th and 27th. It will be on Boston Common and both days are currently scheduled from noon to 8pm. This is our sixth year at Freedom Rally and fifth year tabling at it. We hope you will help us make it a success.

What is the Freedom Rally? An opportunity for activists interested in ending the war on drugs and extending civil liberties to meet other like-minded individuals. You can also attend interesting lectures and presentations given by vendors and activists.

This is an opportunity for us specifically to meet more people at our table and tell them about the Pirate Party. We can share ongoing revelations about the US government's mass. surveillance, in the name of "homeland security" and what citizens can do to stay connected and anonymous, since these post 9/11 powers have been used mostly to spy on drug enthusiasts, not on terrorists. We teach folks about how the internet and social media make excellent tools for getting out the word about the safety and efficacy of cannabis, since the commercial media has shown us they are dead set against legalization. We teach people about the racist origins of the war on hemp, and how useful and free it is: Easy to grow, easy to share, and how big government and big business despise a market they can't get a big cut from. And if you have technology related hemp education teachings to share, we especially welcome you!

Before or after your shift you can enjoy the rally, which will feature live music and speakers, as well as alternative religion, philosophies, and politics, and a great variety of vendors selling nifty stuff you can't find anywhere else. We really want to take full advantage of this opportunity to network and recruit new Pirates. Plus cannabis reform is a very critical civil liberties issue.

We encourage you to dress in your favorite pirate gear, be loud and show your support for the Internet, civil liberties and Chelsea Manning.

Please, invite your friends and family and help us find more Pirates to join us! If you are unable to table, please help in other ways, such as spreading the word about the Rally as well as our presence there. We need supporters to help from noon to 6pm as well as during set-up on Saturday and take down on Sunday. You don't have to table all day. An hour or two is great, though we would never turn you away if you want to help longer. Generally, it's a mellow time to get to know your fellow Pirates as well as meet non-Pirates. Thanks!

CISA: The Dirty Deal between Google and the NSA that No One is Talking About

By Evan Greer and Donny Shaw

One of the things that civil liberties activists like to lament about is that the general public seems to care more about Google and Facebook using their personal data to target advertising than the government using it to target drone strikes.

The reality is that both types of abuse are dangerous, and they work hand in hand.

It's hard to find a more perfect example of this collusion than in a bill that's headed for a vote soon in the U.S. Senate: the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act, or CISA.

CISA is an out and out surveillance bill masquerading as a cybersecurity bill. It won't stop hackers. Instead, it essentially legalizes all forms of government and corporate spying.

Here's how it works. Companies would be given new authority to monitor their users -- on their own systems as well as those of any other entity -- and then, in order to get immunity from virtually all existing surveillance laws, they would be encouraged to share vaguely defined "cyber threat indicators" with the government. This could be anything from email content, to passwords, IP addresses, or personal information associated with an account. The language of the bill is written to encourage companies to share liberally and include as many personal details as possible.

That information could then be used to further exploit a loophole in surveillance laws that gives the government legal authority for their holy grail -- "upstream" collection of domestic data directly from the cables and switches that make up the Internet.

Thanks to Edwards Snowden, we know that the NSA, FBI, and CIA have already been conducting this type of upstream surveillance on suspected hackers. CISA would give the government tons of new domestic cyber threat indicators to use for their upstream collection of information that passes over the Internet. This means they will be gathering not just data on the alleged threat, but also all of the sensitive data that may have been hacked as part of the threat. So if someone hacks all of Gmail, the hacker doesn't just get those emails, so does the U.S. government.

The information they gather, including all the hacked data and any incidental information that happens to get swept up in the process, would be added to massive databases on people in the U.S. and all over the world that the FBI, CIA, and NSA are free to query at their leisure. This is how CISA would create a huge expansion of the "backdoor" search capabilities that the government uses to skirt the 4th Amendment and spy on Internet users without warrants and with virtually no oversight.

All of this information can be passed around the government and handed down to local law enforcement to be used in investigations that have nothing to do with cyber crime, without requiring them to ever pull a warrant. So CISA would give law enforcement a ton of new data with which to prosecute you for virtually any crime while simultaneously protecting the corporations that share the data from prosecution for any crimes possibly related to it.

There's little hope for ever challenging this system in court because you'll never know if your private information has been shared under CISA or hoovered up under a related upstream collection. In a particularly stunning display of shadyness, the bill specifically exempts all of this information from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act or any state, local, or tribal law.

The members of Congress who are pushing hardest for the bill, unsurprisingly, have taken more than twice as much money from the defense industry than those who are opposing it. These politicians claim that CISA is intended to beef up U.S. cybersecurity and stop foreign hackers from ruining everything, but, as their funders in the defense industry know well, it will really just give the government more data and create new opportunities for contractors to sell their data analysis services.

The world's cybersecurity experts say that CISA won't stop cyber attacks, but it will create a gaping loophole for law enforcement agencies from the NSA right down to your local police department to access people's private information without a warrant. Systems like this have chilling effects on our willingness to be ourselves and speak openly on the Internet, which threatens our most basic rights.

The Internet makes a lot of good things possible, but it also makes it possible for corporations and governments to exploit us in ways they never could before. The debate over CISA is not about hackers, or China, or cybersecurity -- it's about whether we want to further normalize ubiquitous monitoring, warrantless surveillance, and unfettered manipulation of our vulnerabilities, or if we want to protect the Internet as a promising platform for freedom and self expression.

Greer and Shaw are members of Fight for the Future, a nonprofit dedicated to a beneficial use of the Internet.

Originally published in The Hill

<http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/technology/249521-cisa-the-dirty-deal-between-google-and-the-nsa-that-no-one-is>



Your Right to Know

By Blue Streak aka Lucia Fiero

Let's set aside the issue of whether or not GMOs are safe to consume. For the purposes of the Pirate argument, this does not matter.

For the Pirates the issue of GMOs is about privatization. We oppose the privatization of the commons. The water that has been on this planet since before humans existed that falls from the sky, the seeds that *invented themselves* and therefore should not be able to be patented by any person, human or corporation. The usefulness of information that humans collect depends upon all that has been learned before for context and therefore needs to be free to use by all humanity.

Before we get into any points of why label, remember the stink food producers made when the law required them to merely list ingredients. Remember the stink the meat packing industry made against laws regulating safety of meat production. Power cedes nothing without a demand. With this in mind:

There are many reasons to oppose GMOs besides the safety concern.

Fairness: What makes a seed useful? What is the essence of any seed? Food? Material? Poison? Weed? What makes a seed of use to humanity, THAT has already been produced. by nature. What is changed in a GMO is less than .0099% (?) of the DNA nature has given us. For that tiny change a patent is granted. Patents are significant because they confer control. They allow companies to sue. People whose crops are contaminated by GMO pollen have two choices: Pay the licensing rights to the contaminator or go to court. Court cost money. Small farmers can't afford to fight.

Tradition: The seed companies demand that seeds not be reused. This is a waste. Farmers abhor this practice and will avoid the GMOs for this reason alone. But instead of leaving farmers to choose to use what seeds they want the M/D/B send "emissaries" out to the farms to strong arm and threaten them with financial ruin even physical violence.

Known toxins: There is little debate about whether glycosphate is dangerous for human consumption. And it is used in conjunction with GMOs 100% (?) of the time.

Effects on the Environment: Monoculture, pesticides, mega farming

Democracy: We haven't the power to ban GMOs outright. Congress is too corrupt, gets too much money from big biotech. We are often told though that we always have the right to vote with our pocketbook. But without consumer labelling we don't even have this. We have a right to know if a product we are looking to buy was produced with what we consider unfair business practices.

That's it. The whole point. It's a Massachusetts tradition to resist empire, to resist be it unfair taxes, mark ups, labor practices. The tea was perfectly safe to drink yet into the harbor it went. ON PRINCIPLE. On principle we have a right to make a choice to buy locally made pop or Coca Cola, to shop at Market Basket or Walmart, to support resistant farmers or compliant. This is reason enough for us to need labels to make informed choices.

As for the safety of GMOs, good luck getting any commercial media coverage of the dangerous of them, if any. The media's stated goal is profits and not the public interest. We used to have laws enforced about airwave use and public interest, but most of our news comes to us through cables now. And even regarding the airwaves, in the 90's a Florida Fox affiliate shut down a story on Monsanto, a TRUE story about cancer risk and rBGH, and fired the reporters for refusing to drop the matter. The supreme court sided with Fox, and this is where that famous edict "Fox won the right to lie to you" came from. From Monsanto silencing a studio. How many news editors and reporters do you think want to risk their livelihoods investigating a company who has already succeeded in shutting down a negative story, costing a Fox affiliate hefty legal fees and reporters their jobs? Consider that.

Once you do, you may consider employing the Precautionary Principal when you shop, which is your right to do. But only if GMO products are labeled.

So safe or not, you have the right as a concerned consumer to know what is in the food you eat. And this is why your legislator should vote for labelling. And you need to let them know you want this, because armies of lobbyists have already descended upon the bay state to squash this bill dead.

MPP Newsletter Contributors

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MAAPL

Restore the Fourth

Layout, Design, and Editing by Kendra Moyer using Scribus free software scribus.org

Printing (???)

Current Bills Passing Through the Massachusetts State House

Massachusetts is up for some changes in several new bills pass the current round of legislative scrutiny and pass into law

We decided to vote on law to add a Computer Gaming Tax Credit. Here is information on the Film Tax Credit.

Summary

<http://www.mass.gov/dor/tax-professionals/news-and-reports/press-releases/2014-press-releases/dor-releases-3rd-annual-tax-credit-transparency-report-.html>

Report

<http://www.mass.gov/dor/docs/dor/stats/tax-credit-transparency/tax-credit-transparency-report-cy2013-final-report.pdf>

Older report:

<http://www.mass.gov/dor/docs/dor/news/reportcalendaryear2012.pdf>

Commentary

<http://commonwealthmagazine.org/economy/013-look-whos-getting-tax-credits/>

Bill S.169 189th (Current)

An Act to protect trade secrets and eliminate non-compete agreements

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/189/Senate/S169>

Bill H.175 189th (Current)

An Act relative to non-compete agreements for veterinarians

<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/189/House/H175>



Cory Doctorow Joins Mass Pirates and EFF

Join the MPP on October 15 at the Berkman Center for Media at Harvard Law School and at Suffolk Law School. The title of round table is "The Remote-Controlled Society".

No Matter Who's Winning the War on General Purpose Computing, You're Losing

If cyberwar were a hockey game, it'd be the end of the first period and the score would be tied 500-500. All offense, no defense. Meanwhile, a horrible convergence has occurred as everyone from car manufacturers to insulin pump makers have adopted the inkjet printer business model, insisting that only their authorized partners can make consumables, software and replacement parts -- with the side-effect of making it a felony to report showstopper, potentially fatal bugs in technology that we live and die by.

And then there's the FBI and the UK's David Cameron, who've joined in with the NSA and GCHQ in insisting that everyone must be vulnerable to Chinese spies and identity thieves and pervert voyeurs so that the spy agencies will always be able to spy on everyone and everything, everywhere.

It's been fifteen years since the copyright wars kicked off, and we're still treating the Internet as a glorified video-on-demand service --when we're not treating it as a more perfect pornography distribution system, or a jihadi recruitment tool.

It's all of those -- and more. Because it's the nervous system of the 21st century. We've got to stop treating it like a political football.



Cybersecurity Information and Sharing Act (CISA) Passes

The Cybersecurity Information and Sharing Act is new legislation introduced in the Senate as S. 2588 by Dianne Feinstein (D–CA) on July 10, 2014

Reintroduced in the Senate as S.754 by Richard Burr (R–NC) on March 17, 2015

Committee consideration by Senate Select Committee on Intelligence

The CISA bill passed in the Senate October 27, 2015. The stated goal of this legislation is to allow for the identification of online threats through the broad sharing of information between private information technology businesses and governmental agencies. Opponents to this bill argue that the duty to protect individual privacy is shifted from the responsibility of independent businesses and into the hands of overreaching governmental agencies. This shift would result in the widespread sharing of personal information with seven large governmental agencies including the NSA.

Additionally, the bill makes it simple for private companies to share information about perceived cyber threats with government and without the permission or knowledge of targeted individuals. The potential for abuse of this provision is staggering. With the current state of affairs and growing abuse of authority by law enforcement agencies against vulnerable communities, it is ever troubling to see more power given to law enforcement agencies to regularly intimidate and invade the privacy of individuals.

The bill included provisions for privacy, removing personal identification and information not relevant to a specific investigation. The shared cyber threat indicators can ultimately be used as evidence in a crime. As with the Patriot Act, the overall lack of transparency to the mechanisms of the legislation leads to broader concerns for the potential for abuse of power against those deemed enemies of the State or of a particular administration.

Proponents of the bill include the United States Chamber of Commerce and the National Cable & Telecommunications Association and the Financial Services Roundtable. Opponents to the bill include the Computer and Communications Industry Association and IT businesses such as Yelp, Reddit and Apple. BSA, The Software Alliance, recently drew heat for seemingly supporting cyber information sharing, through publishing a letter of support of CISA in July 21, 2015 and later sending a letter of support of CISA to Congress on September 14, 2015. The letter of support for sharing consumer data was signed by BSA board members Adobe, Apple Inc., Altium, Autodesk, CA Technologies, DataStax, IBM, Microsoft, Minitab, Oracle, Salesforce.com, Siemens, and Symantec. This action prompted a protest from the internet watchdog and digital rights advocacy Fight for the Future. In the face of the storm of backlash the BSA softened its position to one of supporting sharing information between private industry and government to thwart cyber threats, though not the CISA bill specifically

The main supporters of the bill include Diane Feinstein (D-CA), and Richard Burr (R-NC). Opponents of CISA included Ron Wyden (D-OR), Rand Paul (R-KY), and Bernie Sanders (I-VT).

Senator Wyden has opposed the bill based on its birth during the Bush Era and a judicial ruling made in secret by the Justice Department. The memo detailing the basis for this ruling has never been made public, prompting skepticism of the bill's transparency and integrity. Since 2010 Wyden has repeatedly requested the US Attorney General that the memo that this ruling was based on be declassified, to no avail.

The US Department of Homeland Security has also voiced concerns about the privacy issues related to the cyber-sharing legislation. DHS Secretary Jeh Johnson called for the bill to move forward in September 15, 2015, but DHS deputy secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, a month prior on August 3, 2015 wrote to Al Franken with concerns about potential abuses of power and privacy. The DHS has recommended that they handle and analyze the information and remove personally identifiable content. Critics again suspect and argue that there is no guarantee that the targets go unidentified in real life scenarios.

CISA has been compared to its predecessor CISPA, the Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act. CISPA initially passed in the House but failed at the Senate level under widespread protest following growing international, anti-government, student-led political movements worldwide. CISA's main opponents include organizations the Electronic Frontier Foundation, May First/People Link, the American Civil Liberties Union and Fight For the Future.

The Massachusetts Pirate Party stands in allegiance with these organizations in opposing the unmonitored sharing of personal information by private business in collusion with the growing Surveillance State. As demonstrated in the fight for Net Neutrality, the fight for personal privacy and an open internet is not one to be taken lightly. After CISPA, was defeated in the Senate, and after winning in the House, many activists lost sight of the greater problem and did not bring the same amount of wrath and vigor to the fight against the reconfigured CISA bill.

With legislation like the TPP gaining support and momentum in its final draft, there is no room to negotiate or drop the ball in fighting for people over corporations. We must be very active in calling our elected representatives and joining like-minded individuals and associations to spread the message of resistance to laws that trample on so many of our rights over the will and needs of the taxpayers. Nothing is gained without putting up in effort and putting up a fight.

With little oversight in mind, it is critical that all citizens stay engaged politically and hold our elected officials accountable for curtailing privacy and 4th amendment rights to protection from unwarranted and illegal search and seizure, including digitized information. With the passage of CISA it is ever crucial that we stay the course in fighting government overreach through creating realistic challenges to these proposed and intrusive bills. Direct action and vigilance are called for to oppose and defeat unfair laws that favor corporate interests over those of the people. It might again be time to get out the pitchforks on the TPP in the mean time.

For those interested in advocating, Evan Greer's recent appeal and call to arms against TPP can be found at Fight for the Future's main webpage.

"Final TPP text confirms worst fears: shadowy agreement poses a grave threat to the Internet and freedom of expression"

Advocating for social change through legislative change is hit or miss territory, and frequently frustrating, but the fight must continue on all fronts.