

Blacknight Joins Global Encryption Coalition and Signs Open Letter In Support of Opposition to New US Encryption Law

(Carlow, Ireland) 29 July 2020 - Blacknight, Ireland's largest web host and domain registrar, has joined the Global Encryption Coalition and signed an open letter with over 90 other internet organisations and cybersecurity experts objecting to the Lawful Access to Encrypted Data Act, a bill currently under consideration by the United States Senate. This bill is designed to weaken and undermine end-to-end user encryption, thus violating the privacy and security of millions of internet users.



“Encryption helps make the internet a more secure place,” said Michele Neylon, CEO of Blacknight. “Without strong encryption, internet users will be placed in greater danger from bad actors. Encryption protects all internet users. This bill will completely destroy encryption as we know it. The bill paints encryption as something that is dangerous and facilitates criminal activity, when, in fact, billions of consumers rely on it to be safe on the internet from criminals.”

The Lawful Access to Encrypted Data Act will give the US government and its law enforcement agencies the ability to demand access into any software or service that uses encryption. This access makes end-to-end user encryption pointless, and abuses user's rights to privacy on the internet. It would also require companies and other organisations to provide 'technical assistance' to law enforcement and governments in accessing their encrypted user-data.

"If someone has the keys to your house, even if they're law enforcement, your house is effectively no longer locked," continued Neylon. "Giving any corporation or governmental organisation, the keys to encrypted data is a fundamental violation of freedom and privacy that as Europeans, we cherish."

While the law will only affect those in US jurisdictions, most tech companies are based in the USA and will generally roll out changes to comply with these laws on a global scale, thus affecting all end-users. This puts Irish, and European, internet users at greater risk of having their privacy and security violated under this sweeping act, without an option to opt-out of this legislation.

"It's the job of tech companies all over the world to stand up to overreach by governmental bodies that fundamentally misunderstand how the internet works and can work," said Neylon. "I urge the key US senators to read this letter and take the views of this global group of international organisations into consideration as it deliberates this far-reaching bill."

Blacknight has officially joined the Global Encryption Coalition and also signed the letter with other tech companies and civil society organizations such as the Electronic Frontier Foundation, Internet Society, Wikimedia Foundation, The World Wide Web Consortium, Afilias, among others, to let their objections be known.

"We are excited to welcome Blacknight to the Global Encryption Coalition," added Ryan Polk, Senior Policy Advisor at the Internet Society and a member of the Global Encryption Coalition steering committee. "With their services across the Internet ecosystem, Blacknight showcases the importance of strong encryption for the entire Internet - not just encrypted messaging applications."

Based in Carlow, Blacknight provides domain names, hosting, email, broadband and cloud services. They employ almost 50 people. Blacknight is the number one Irish web hosting company and domain name registrar, with almost of a third of Irish websites hosted on its servers in Carlow and Dublin. The company recently announced its entry into the broadband market and embarked on a major redevelopment of its offices in Carlow to support its growth.

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Photo: Michele Neylon, CEO, Blacknight



ABOUT BLACKNIGHT

Blacknight (<http://www.blacknight.com/>) are an Irish based, ICANN accredited domain registrar and hosting company. Recipients of several awards for their revolutionary use of social media, Blacknight are one of Europe's most cutting edge Internet companies. Blacknight constantly seek to lead the way by introducing innovative solutions for its client base and provide dedicated servers and co-location as well as a comprehensive range of Microsoft Windows and Linux based hosting plans and domain name registration services to business globally. IP transit services and other solutions for more demanding business and academic customers are offered a la carte.

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