

BINARY BOMBSHELLS

Privacy is a right, not earned privilege



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A group of U.S. Senators are spreading something nasty around Capitol Hill and it's not COVID-19.

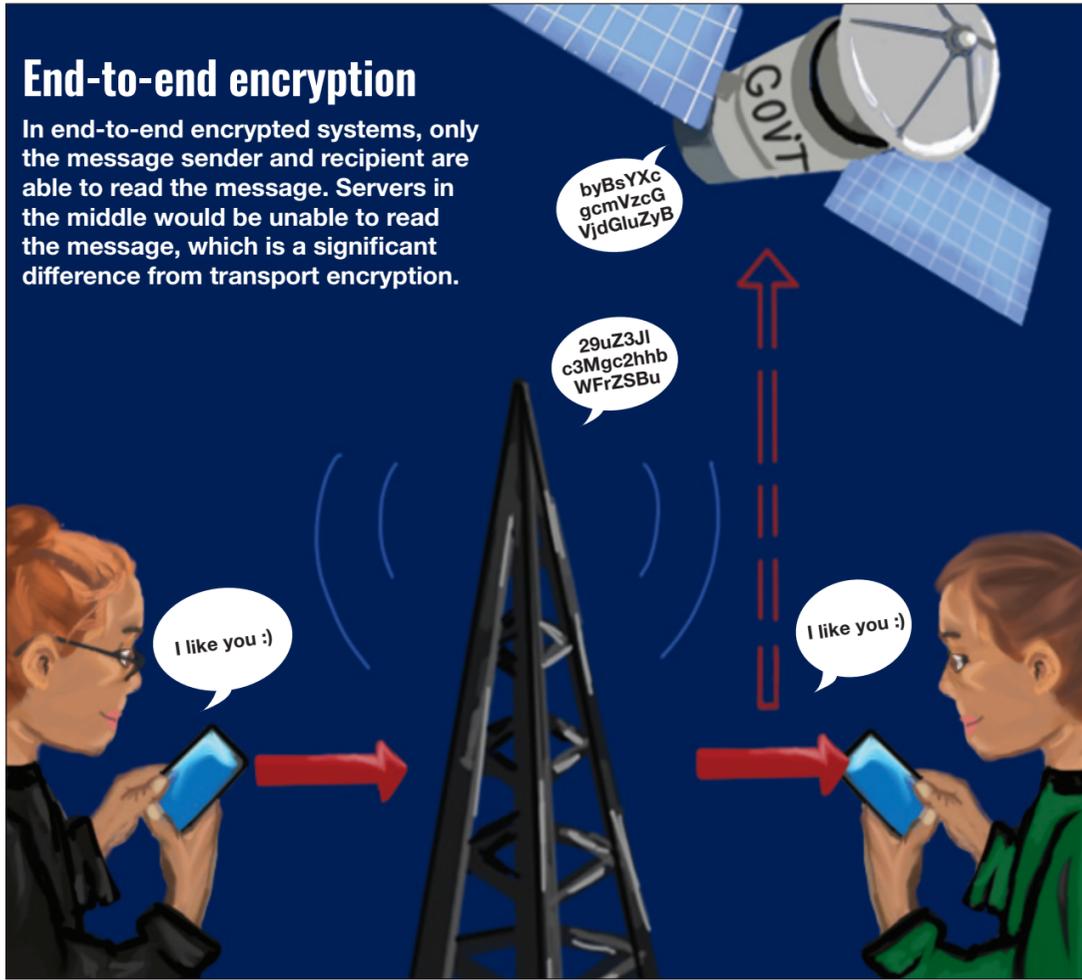
Touted as bipartisan legislation, the EARN IT Act would effectively end the ability to legally have private conversations online, ending free speech as we know it.

Officially known as the Eliminating Abusive and Rampant Neglect of Interactive Technologies Act, a draft of the bill is being circulated by Republican Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina and Democratic Sen. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, according to Bloomberg, which published a leaked copy.

The authors are simply trying to take advantage of public sentiment that "Big Tech" needs more regulation. No doubt we could all benefit from a well-regulated tech industry, but this isn't the way to go about it.

The bill would end Section 230's protection for websites and service providers. Section 230 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 effectively states that if someone says something illegal online, that person will be held responsible, not the platform (with some exceptions).

This legal protection



INFOGRAPHIC BY CINDY CUELLAR AND KUNAL MEHTA

End-to-end encryption

In end-to-end encrypted systems, only the message sender and recipient are able to read the message. Servers in the middle would be unable to read the message, which is a significant difference from transport encryption.

allows for every user-generated content site to exist, from discussion forums to messaging apps.

It allowed the internet to transition from a place where everyone just published their own content to one where an emphasis is placed on participation.

In a future world under the EARN IT Act, websites would need to "earn" legal protection by complying with yet-to-be determined

guidelines issued by a commission reducing child exploitation. Yes, these Senators want to use a "think of the children" argument to upend how the entire internet works.

After Edward Snowden's 2013 revelations of global surveillance programs, activists ramped up promotion of a stronger form of security: end-to-end encryption.

Taking a step back, most online security these days

is what is referred to as transport encryption.

If I direct message a friend on Instagram, the message can't be read by whoever runs my Wi-Fi (the transport), but Instagram's servers and my friend can read it.

Whereas in an end-to-end encrypted service like WhatsApp or Signal, my message would be unreadable by everyone except its intended recipient. None of my

Wi-Fi operators, neither WhatsApp nor Signal servers would be able to read the messages.

It's been tested in court too – when Signal was subpoenaed in 2016, it responded that it had no message data or contact lists.

From a surveillance perspective, end-to-end encryption means that the government has no way of reading our messages unless they gain access to

one of the devices.

Alternatively, the government could pass legislation to make end-to-end encryption illegal, aka the EARN IT Act. Legislators aren't trying to hide their intentions either; Politico reported that in a December 2019 Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, Senators made it clear they wanted the government to be able to read users' messages.

"My advice to you is to get on with it, because this time next year, if we haven't found a way that you can live with, we will impose our will on you," Judiciary Committee chairman Graham said in the hearing, according to Politico.

Pushing this anti-encryption stance under the guise of protecting children simply won't work. End-to-end encrypted messaging apps already exist and will still be available in some form or another regardless of what legislation the U.S. implements.

People intent on breaking the law will have no problem using illegal end-to-end encrypted messengers, but it's the rest of us that will have an issue.

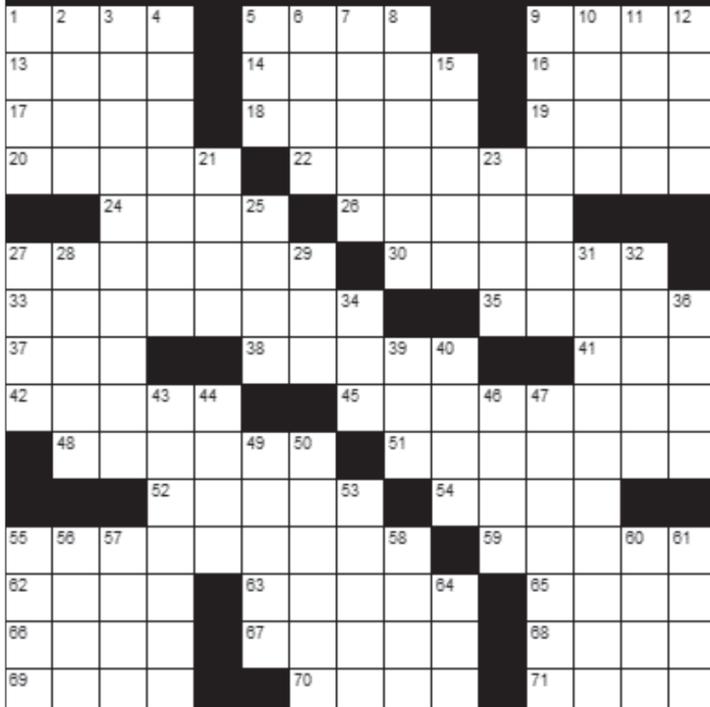
Most of us already don't trust those in power in Washington – I certainly don't want them reading my private messages and I'm sure you don't either.

Follow Kunal on Mastodon @legoktm @mastodon.technology

Binary Bombshells appears every other week on Thursday.

CLASSIFIEDS

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS

- 1. Rescue
- 5. To cast aside (archaic)
- 9. Nobleman
- 13. "Smallest" particle
- 14. Golden
- 16. Always
- 17. Only
- 18. Shrimp-like crustacean
- 19. Not his
- 20. Goats
- 22. Loyal
- 24. Letters, etc.
- 26. Prevaricators
- 27. Artificially formal
- 30. Concise summary
- 33. Surfing with a sail
- 35. Busybody
- 37. Yore
- 38. Slowly losing life
- 41. Dab
- 42. Goons
- 45. Unnecessary
- 48. Sleeping sickness carrier
- 51. Otalgia
- 52. Dentist's direction
- 54. Hindu princess

- 55. Pervaded
- 59. Plateaux
- 62. Bright thought
- 63. Trimmed
- 65. Drunkard
- 66. Biblical garden
- 67. Attendance counter
- 68. Affirm
- 69. Handout
- 70. Evasive
- 71. Not nays

DOWN

- 1. Back talk
- 2. At the peak of
- 3. Copious
- 4. Green gem
- 5. East Indian tree
- 6. Emanation
- 7. Ruffle
- 8. Positive stimulus
- 9. Rupture
- 10. Eye layer
- 11. Composer Jerome _____
- 12. At one time (archaic)
- 15. Transparent
- 21. Seats oneself
- 23. Midway between white and black
- 25. A feudal vassal
- 27. Smack
- 28. Not loose
- 29. Not wet
- 31. Dithery
- 32. Hiding place
- 34. Flipper
- 36. Church alcove
- 39. Born as
- 40. Equipment
- 43. Relevant
- 44. Anagram of "Ties"
- 46. Apothecary's weight
- 47. Alley
- 49. Breaks
- 50. What's left behind
- 53. Creepy
- 55. Multicolored
- 56. Cocoyam
- 57. Bobbin
- 58. A small wooded hollow
- 60. Dwarf buffalo
- 61. Scatters seeds
- 64. Former North African ruler

SUDOKU PUZZLE

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

			3	4				1
			7			3		
	1			8			9	2
4	2							
7		3	1		2	8		4
							7	3
8	3		6					2
		6			9			
9			4	8				

SOLUTIONS 03/11/2020

P	A	S	T	E	S	T	E	W	A	P	E	D		
L	I	M	E	S	T	A	C	O	M	I	L	E		
A	D	U	L	T	A	F	R	O	B	E	E	N		
N	E	G	L	E	C	T	F	U	L	A	R	M	S	
			R	O	U	E	L	A	S	S	I	E		
E	Y	R	A		W	E	T		Y	E	S			
R	E	A	P	E	T	A	T	R	A	M	I	E		
R	A	P	P	O	R	T	E	R	O	D	I	N	G	
S	H	E	E	N	E	B	R	O		O	R	C	A	
			A	C	E		A	R	A		R	E	A	D
B	A	R	R	E	N		R	I	C	E				
A	R	E	A		F	O	R	T	H	R	I	G	H	T
S	E	E	N		O	L	I	O		I	C	I	E	R
T	A	L	C		L	E	E	R		C	E	L	L	O
E	S	S	E		D	O	R	Y		A	D	A	P	T

2	5	8	1	3	6	4	7	9
9	4	3	5	7	2	1	6	8
1	6	7	4	8	9	3	5	2
6	7	5	2	9	1	8	4	3
4	8	9	3	5	7	6	2	1
3	2	1	8	6	4	5	9	7
7	3	4	9	1	5	2	8	6
8	9	2	6	4	3	7	1	5
5	1	6	7	2	8	9	3	4

JOKIN' AROUND

What do you call a very religious person who sleepwalks?

A Roamin' Catholic.

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