

# House committee OK's phone-privacy bill

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The House Energy and Commerce Committee Wednesday unanimously approved an act to protect private phone records.

The Prevention of Fraudulent Access to Phone Records Act will stop data sellers from lying to obtain phone records and will fine phone companies that do not protect the information.

"These telephone calling records, which detail some of the most intimate and sensitive aspects of our lives, are easily available to anyone with an Internet connection, a credit card and \$100 to spend," Committee Chairman Joe Barton, R-Texas, said in a news release. "Americans are rightfully concerned that identity thieves, stalkers and unscrupulous data brokers can access such information they believed was kept private by their telephone company," he added.

Phone carriers that violate the law will be fined a maximum of \$300,000 per incident from the initial fine of \$100,000, with a maximum fine of \$3 million for multiple violations.

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