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PRIVACY, DATA and CYBERSECURITY

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President-Elect Trump Taps Andrew Ferguson to Serve as FTC Chair and Nominates Mark Meador as Commissioner

By Trisha Sircar

On December 10, President-elect Donald Trump announced that the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) commissioner [Andrew Ferguson](#) will chair the agency while nominating [Mark Meador](#) to fill the commissioner vacancy. Ferguson was sworn in as FTC commissioner in April 2024 and can be elevated to FTC chair without US Senate confirmation because of his prior confirmation process as commissioner. The Senate will carry out formal confirmation for Meador. Chair Khan is expected to announce her resignation before Trump's inauguration on January 20, 2025. [Read more about what to expect based on these nominations.](#)



The US Government Charges China-Based Hacker for Exploiting Zero-Day Vulnerability

By Trisha Sircar

On December 10, 2024, the federal government [unsealed](#) an indictment in federal court in Indiana, charging Chinese national Guan Tianfeng (Guan) for his role in allegedly breaking into thousands of [Sophos Ltd.](#) (Sophos) firewall devices globally in 2020. In total, Guan and his co-conspirators infected approximately 81,000 firewall devices worldwide, including a firewall device used by an agency of the United States.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is investigating the Company's hacking activities and intrusions into various edge devices. [Read more about the indictment and the charges of conspiracy.](#)

The European Data Protection Board Releases

Opinion on Artificial Intelligence

By Trisha Sircar

On December 18, 2024, the European Data Protection Board (EDPB) issued an opinion on personal data use in artificial intelligence (AI) in response to the Irish Data Protection Commission's [request](#) for more clarity regarding how the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) applies to AI. The EDPB's opinion offers a robust framework for the ethical use and development of AI, and outlines that AI developers can use legitimate interest as a legal basis for model training. [Read more about the three-step test included in the EDPB opinion and additional forthcoming guidelines.](#)



Bipartisan Bill Introduced to Protect Consumers' Privacy and Vehicle Data

By Trisha Sircar

On December 18, Senators Mike Lee (R-UT) and Jeff Merkley (D-OR) introduced the bipartisan [Auto Data Privacy and Autonomy Act](#) (the Bill) to restore vehicle owners' control over their personal data. Representative Eric Burlison (R-MO) leads the companion bill in the House of Representatives. The text of the Bill outlines that the Bill is seeking to "prevent covered vehicle manufacturers from accessing, selling, or otherwise selling certain covered vehicle data, and for other purposes." According to a [Press Release](#) from the Senators, connected vehicles are projected to make up 95 percent of all new vehicles on the road by 2030. [Read more about the essential rights and protections the Bill provides for vehicle owners.](#)

Wishing our readers a joyful holiday season and happy new year!

CONTACTS

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