

International Association of Privacy Professionals
Leadership Award Acceptance Speech
March 7, 2014

Thank you, Jim, for your kind introduction. And thanks so much to Trevor Hughes, Scott Taylor, and the entire IAPP Board for this recognition. I am thrilled and deeply honored to receive the IAPP's Privacy Leadership Award.

It's a particular honor to be recognized by the IAPP. This organization has done a tremendous amount to advance privacy protections both in the United States and internationally. IAPP prepares and trains privacy professionals around the world, fosters debate about important privacy issues through its terrific summits and other events, and has become an indispensable resource to policy makers and practitioners. As we've seen this past year, it is essential for companies, regulators and other stakeholders to be able to rely on people who can bring principles down to earth through privacy-enhancing practices and technologies.

You – the privacy professionals gathered at this Global Summit – know this better than anyone. You play a critical role in helping your companies and agencies to improve their privacy protections. Many industry leaders have begun to recognize that protecting their customers' privacy is essential to earning and maintaining their trust, and those companies are devoting real resources to improving their privacy practices.

Like you, I have worked to bring practical solutions to privacy problems throughout my career.

I have participated actively with my colleagues at the Federal Trade Commission to make it an effective and creative enforcer of our privacy and data security laws. Our resulting enforcement actions under the FTC Act, COPPA, the FCRA, GLB, and the US-EU Safe Harbor Framework have brought stronger privacy protections to millions of consumers in the United States and around the world. We also bring emerging issues into the open for debate through our reports and workshops. I am enormously proud of the FTC's effectiveness in this arena, and we owe a great debt to Jessica Rich, Maneesha Mithal, and the rest of our enormously talented and dedicated staff who make it all happen. And I owe thanks to Chairwoman Ramirez for her generosity to me and leadership on these issues. And thanks to my fellow Commissioners, Maureen Ohlhausen and Josh Wright.

But there are many difficult privacy challenges ahead of us. Mobile devices, sensors, and "smart" devices in our homes provide new ways to keep track of where we are and what we're doing. In addition, data brokers and other analytic firms are creating and using vast quantities of data about individuals' health, race, sexual orientation, economic status, and other highly sensitive traits. The technical capabilities to generate, store, analyze and use all of this data are not waiting around for policy makers to figure out how to respond. These developments challenge some of our bedrock principles of transparency and consumer control.

Here in the United States we have some excellent tools to address these challenges. Policy makers and enforcement officials at the federal, state, and local levels will continue to use

their authority to protect consumers. Privacy advocates will sharpen our understanding of the risks and benefits of becoming an increasingly data-driven society. Academics are training the next generation to protect privacy, not only through law and policy, but also through ethics and technology.

But we need to do more. As many of you know, I believe we need new laws in this country to address some of these challenges – laws that would provide consumers with better data security, with baseline privacy protections, and with greater control over data broker practices. And even before legislation is enacted, there is much more that industry can do to develop practical tools, like my Reclaim Your Name initiative, that provide consumers with greater transparency and control over their data.

The potential benefits of our new technological age are clear, but so are the risks to our sense of economic and social well-being, if we cannot exercise appropriate control over our data. This is an issue that will affect the bottom line for all your companies, as consumers' trust is key to their embracing the exciting new technologies and services you create.

I will continue to work tirelessly to maintain and strengthen privacy protections as our society becomes more connected, and to continue to build bridges with our international counterparts. We rely on the IAPP to continue to prepare the next generation of privacy leaders. And ultimately, we rely on you – the privacy professionals of today. You are on the front lines. You have the best view of where data practices are today and where they will be tomorrow. Keeping companies on the right track in the midst of rapid change is a big job, and you do it extremely well. I know you will continue to keep in mind the basic value of privacy as you strive to address these challenges every day.

Thank you.