

Cablefax Daily™

WHAT THE INDUSTRY READS FIRST

Movement: Positive Momentum Surrounds Data Privacy Draft

It was clear at the **House Innovation Subcommittee** markup Thursday on the American Privacy Rights Act that members on both sides of the aisle are more ready than ever to put a national data privacy framework in place.

The discussion draft, affectionately known as APRA, is the product of months of work by **House Commerce** Chair *Cathy McMorris Rodgers* (R-WA) and **Senate Commerce** Chair *Maria Cantwell* (D-WA). It would eliminate the patchwork of state legislation that exists today, give individuals the right to sue bad actors that violate their privacy rights, mandates data security standards to prevent the hacking or theft of data and authorizes the **FTC** and state officials to enforce the law.

NCTA, **NAB** and **CTIA** are among the organizations that have stood in support of the discussion draft thus far. “As the influence of Big Tech companies remains largely unchecked, we appreciate these congressional leaders for their bipartisan efforts to foster a more sustainable digital environment for local journalism,” NAB said in a statement following the markup.

But the sponsors of APRA know that it remains, in its current form, far from a perfect bill, and it likely will never be able to achieve the lofty goals lawmakers have for it.

“There hasn’t been a perfect law since Moses came down from the mountain,” Rodgers said during the hearing while encouraging members from both sides of the aisle to continue to voice their concerns to her.

Spirits were high as everyone was prepared for a unanimous voice vote to send the discussion draft to the full committee, but many took time to make statements surrounding their concerns and the amendments they have waiting in the wings for the next markup. A number of representatives, including *Tim Walberg* (R-MI) and *Kathy Castor* (D-FL), expressed concerns that the integration of COPPA 2.0 provisions designed to protect children online into APRA left many of the bill’s most important aspects out of the discussion draft. Rep *Jay Obernolte* (R-CA) also previewed a number of amendments that he believes will make changes based on lessons learned following the implementation of the California Consumer Privacy Act. Ranking Member *Jan Schakowsky* (D-IL) requested greater protections around biometric data, and Rodgers agreed to work with everyone on these issues.

Stakeholders have their own concerns as well about the unintended consequences that could come with the language that currently exists in the discussion draft. In a post on Medium, **INCOMPAS** CEO *Chip Pickering* called APRA a well-intentioned attempt at federal privacy legislation that will have a slew of unintended consequences. He said the data minimization provisions would limit the ability of advertisers to measure the efficiency of their digital ads and America could lose its leadership in AI because of restrictions that could halt tech innovation.

“There is bipartisan consensus that something like APRA is needed to bring comprehensive reform to the increasingly murky area of privacy and enhance online safety measures as we depend on the digital world more every day,” Pickering

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said. “But this legislation has the potential to lead to far too many unintended consequences that will harm competition, consumers and our global leadership in the tech space.”

And even if APRA doesn’t pass, states will continue to push forward in enacting their own data privacy rules. Vermont is poised to enact one of the strictest pieces of state legislation with the Vermont Data Privacy Act, which passed the legislature earlier this month and is awaiting a signature from Governor *Phil Scott*.

The bill takes inspiration from a number of state and federal proposals, including Maryland’s privacy law and the American Data Privacy and Protection Act. It includes data minimization provisions like the ability to opt out of targeted advertising, digital civil rights protections, private right of action like what’s included in California’s state privacy law and a tiered timeline for when the provisions become applicable to organizations within the state’s borders.

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PARAMOUNT, CHARTER STRIKE DEAL WITH STREAMING INCLUDED

Paramount Global has one less thing on its to-do list, having reached a new multi-year distribution deal with **Charter**. The two made the announcement in a press release that bore resemblances to the Charter-**Disney deal** from the fall, with ad-supported **Paramount+ Essential** and **BET+ Essential** to be included in Spectrum Video packages at no additional cost to customers later this year. Spectrum customers that have Paramount+ Essential included will be offered the opportunity to upgrade to the ad-free version of Paramount+ with Showtime later this year. Charter also will make Paramount DTC offerings available for purchase by its broadband-only customers. Paramount’s contract with Charter expired at the end of April, with the two agreeing to extend as they hammered out a deal. One notable difference from the Disney pact is that the agreement includes the entire Paramount portfolio of linear cable networks. Charter dropped Disney-owned **Baby TV**, **Disney Junior**, **Disney XD**, **Freeform**, **FXM**, **FXX**, **Nat Geo Wild** and **Nat Geo Mundo** from its Spectrum video packages. The Paramount deal of course covers the **CBS** owned-and-operated broadcast stations, with the two declaring that it creates “new distribution opportunities and a glide path to a healthier video ecosystem.” The companies said they also will innovate their advanced advertising partnerships.

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BARKLEY RIPS INTO WBD AMID NBA RIGHTS RUMORS

As the **NBA** enters crunch time for its next media rights deal that’ll kick in following the 2024-25 season, the possibility of **Warner Bros. Discovery** and **TNT Sports** being left out is

becoming more apparent. For those on TNT’s beloved “Inside the NBA” program, the reality is starting to settle—and it’s not settling well. “Morale sucks. Plain and simple,” *Charles Barkley*, an analyst on Inside the NBA, said on “The Dan Patrick Show.” “I just feel so bad for the people I work with. These people have families... These people I worked with, they screwed this thing up, clearly. We don’t have [any] idea what’s going to happen. I don’t feel good, I’m not going to lie.” Barkley brought up Wednesday’s announcement that TNT Sports was going to **sublicense College Football Playoff games** from **ESPN**, noting how the decision to spend money for that entity could signal that there aren’t plans for WBD leadership to splash the cash and retain its NBA rights—especially since TNT Sports and WBD aren’t exactly a big player in college football. Barkley’s anger really showed when he referred to those within the WBD/TNT Sports sphere who are part of the negotiations as “clowns” and “fools.” “My two favorite wines are Inglenook and Opus, and these clowns I work for, they’ve turned us into Ripple, Boone’s Farm and Thunderbird,” Barkley said. “It’s so funny. We just won the best studio show, but these fools turn us from Inglenook and Opus into damn Boone’s Farm and Ripple. It’s crazy.” If the suspected scenario plays out, fans will wonder what will happen to the studio show. *Dan Patrick* asked Barkley about the possibility of forming a production company and hiring the Inside the NBA personnel to then sell that show to either **NBC** or **Prime Video**. Lo and behold, Barkley has his own production company, and the idea Patrick floated is something Barkley has already circulated among his fellow panelists. “I’ve talked to the guys about everybody signing with my production company. I would love to do that if we lose [the NBA rights],” Barkley said.

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BREEZELINE MOBILE UP & RUNNING

Breezeline’s mobile phone service has officially been turned on throughout its footprint. **Breezeline Mobile** is bundled with the company’s internet, in which customers will get an additional multi-service discount of up to \$10/month when they add the mobile offering. At release, Breezeline Mobile includes unlimited talk and text, by-the-gig data plans and unlimited data plans starting at \$35/month per line.

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FCC MEETING NOTES

The **FCC** had a quiet open meeting Thursday with commissioners unanimously approving an NRPM to launch a proceeding to ensure that telecommunications certification bodies and test labs that participate in the agency’s equipment authorization program are not being influenced by untrustworthy entities. The



A Cablefax feature highlighting industry doings spotted in the real world.

Graduation season is upon us, which means so are the commencement speeches and awards of honorary degrees. While comedian Jerry Seinfeld and Kansas City kicker Harrison Butker may have nabbed the most headlines, plenty of industry leaders also had their turns on the dais. Here's a sampling of the wisdom given to the Class of 2024:

Randy Barbato, Executive Producer of "RuPaul's Drag Race," at Emerson College:

"I do want you to take the time to discover yourself in the world. Trust the timing in your life. Things will not turn out how you planned. But that's OK... RuPaul says, 'Good luck and don't f**k it up...' I say it's OK to f**k it up...over and over and over again. It's experiences that create the opportunities. It's the experiences that build your endurance and the connections with one another that remind you and reinforce your kindness."

Barbato told the students that his family celebrates special occasions with lottery tickets and he placed envelopes under their chairs with tickets inside. "Maybe someone will win. Probably most of you will lose. But that's OK because losing is the new winning. Good luck Class of 2024!"

Gigi Sohn, Public Interest Advocate, AAPB Executive Director, speaking to Berkley School of Information:

"I'm speaking to you today because regardless of what happened during the 16 long and difficult months of my Senate confirmation process, I wouldn't have changed a thing that I did before or during it... While fighting for what you believe in can be exhausting — and sometimes can cost you friends — it can also be exhilarating."



Doug Holloway, Homewood Media President & Cable Hall of Fame 2023 honoree, at Emerson College:



"You are the architects of tomorrow. Your fresh minds will shape and create industries. Your words will, and have, ignited change. As you step into the world beyond these walls remember that you carry the spirit of Emerson with you—the spirit that celebrates diversity, equity and

inclusion and embraces curiosity and dares to challenge the status quo."

Ainsley Earhardt, Fox News "Fox & Friends" co-host, at University of South Carolina:

"I remember being where you are—stressed about the future, everyone asking what you are going to do after graduation. All of you were born with so many God-given talents and my advice is use them. There is only one path and that is hard work. Say yes to every opportunity because if you don't another colleague will."

proceeding looks to permanently block entities on the FCC's covered list from participating in any way in the equipment authorization program while also seeking comment on whether the Commission should consider national security determinations made in other Executive Branch agency lists when establishing eligibility qualifications for FCC recognition of a certification body or test lab in the equipment authorization program.

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COALITION STILL PREACHING THE VALUE OF STREAMING

It's been almost a year since the **Preserve Viewer Choice Coalition** launched, and the group is continuing its mission to protect consumer choice and innovation in the streaming video space. This week, the coalition held a reception on the Hill for policymakers and staff that included Reps *Ben Cline* (R-VA), *John Joyce* (R-PA), *Tony Cardenas* (D-CA) and *Jim Costas* (D-CA) as attendees. "The purpose was to get people to interact with streaming services—and all of them kind of at once. I think we all have our own services that we interact with on a daily basis, but it was neat to have them all there. Part of what this coalition has been doing is letting people know that there is a lot of choice in streaming, particularly as it relates to local," said coalition spokesperson *Bryce Harlow*, who explained that members and staffers at the event got to search through the local newscasts available on **Roku** from all over the country. The coalition launched to push back against large affiliate broadcast station groups that want an **FCC** rule change that would force online video providers and streaming platforms to be subject to the same rules as cable and satellite operators, including retransmission consent. There hasn't been much movement in that area, with FCC Chairwoman *Jessica Rosenworcel* stating that she doesn't believe the agency has the authority to regulate video streamers. The coalition had nine members at launch and is now up to 12, adding folks like **YouTube TV** and **Hulu**. Also on hand at Tuesday's reception were reps from various coalition member companies, including **Warner Bros. Discovery's** SVP of Public Policy *Neil Fried*, **Roku** VP & Deputy General Counsel *Jared Sher*, **Fox Corp** Government Relations Director *Joanna Orlando* and **YouTube TV** Government Affairs & Public Policy leader *Jasmine Vasquez*. "I think the biggest concern from our members is just to continue to press the messaging that streaming is a net positive for viewers in a number of different ways," Harlow said. "It's been a bit of an education effort on the Hill and at the FCC, and one that I think has gained a lot of traction as people have recognized that local is available and that local broadcasters all across the country control the rights to their programming and are free to license that wherever they like."

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COMCAST BUSINESS INTRODUCES NEW MOBILE PLANS

Comcast Business is looking to add more mobile options for its small business customers, doing so with the addition of

new mobile plans that come with options including unlimited data. Customers can combine different data options for each line in their plans. Calls, text and roaming within the U.S. as well as to and from Canada and Mexico are also included in unlimited plans with no additional charge.

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NEW INITIATIVE WANTS HOLLYWOOD TO SHOWCASE THE GREEN

Cable operators have long focused on how to make set-top boxes more energy efficient. Now the entertainment industry is looking to make the content shown on the boxes greener. Electrification nonprofit **Rewiring America** announced new initiative, [Electric Creatives](#), to help TV and film studios, creators and producers switch from fossil fuel-powered appliances to greener, electric ones. That includes everything from induction ranges to solar panels and electric lawn equipment. To help spark movement, a council of advisors was formed that includes **HGTV** personality *Jonathan Scott* and political leader/author *Stacey Abrams*. “Viewers look to our programs for guidance on making their homes as happy and healthy as possible. By modeling sustainable and efficient technology such as induction ranges in our renovations, our hope is that viewers take notice and realize that these technologies are accessible to everyone,” Scott said in a statement. Rewiring America has worked with Scott Brothers Entertainment and JUMA Entertainment to incorporate electric appliances into their shows, including “Celebrity IOU” and “Secret Celebrity Renovation.”

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INSTACART COLLABS WITH BRAVO'S 'THE VALLEY'

Peacock is expanding on its partnership with Instacart and bringing it to **Bravo's** new series “The Valley.” A custom-curated cart experience called “The Valley Block Party Cart” will be introduced for fans May 23. Viewers can engage with the cart that'll offer an array of meals, food and post-party essentials, from backyard classics like hot dogs, hamburgers, buns and cheese slices, to ibuprofen, Emergen-c and foam ear plugs.

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FIBER FRENZY

Mediacom wrapped up the first leg of construction on its project in Seminole County, Georgia. More than 100 of the 2,338 homes and businesses included in the project can now sign up for data, video and phone services. The project, which began in November, was assisted by a \$7.8 million grant from the Georgia Capital Project Fund Program. – **Ritter Communications** is nearly ready to roll out its RightFiber service to residents across Beebe, Kensett and Judsonia, Arkansas. The \$5.3 million infrastructure project will bring speed options of 750 Mbps for \$70/month, 1 Gig for \$80/month, 2 Gig for \$100/month and 5 Gig for \$120/month. – **Sparklight** rolled out multi-gig internet in Roswell, New Mexico, and surrounding

communities. Customers can get 2 Gbps internet with unlimited data included at no additional cost for \$120/month. – Over 4,800 residents and businesses in Ludlow, Massachusetts, can now receive **GoNetspeed's** internet offerings following the completion of a \$4.8 million project. That includes symmetrical speeds ranging from 250 Mbps to 2 Gbps.

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RATINGS

In a season that ended with Manchester City winning its fourth consecutive Premier League title, **NBC Sports** recorded its largest average PL audience in U.S. media history across **NBC**, **Peacock** and **USA**. NBC Sports averaged a total audience delivery of 546,000 viewers per TV match window, which is a 4% improvement from last season's 527,000 mark and beats the previous record of 541,000 set in 2015-16. **Telemundo** averaged 244,000 viewers per match, which is good for its most-watched season since 2014-15 and up 11% from last season. On Sunday, which was the league's final day and had all teams playing simultaneously, NBC Sports nabbed a TAD of 2.9 million across matches on linear networks and Peacock. That's good for the most-watched PL final day ever in the U.S. – The Boston Celtics' thrilling win over the Indiana Pacers averaged 6.43 million viewers across **ESPN** and **ESPN2**, making it the most-watched NBA Eastern Conference Finals Game 1 on ESPN since 2012. ESPN's viewership was the most-watched ECF Game 1 on any network since 2018, and the audience across both networks peaked at 10:30pm with 8.36 million viewers. Game 2 is set for tonight at 8pm on ESPN.

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PROGRAMMING

The next season of “Hoffman Family Gold” begins June 14 at 9pm on **Discovery Channel**. **Max** will have it available to stream. – **OWN** is releasing a new unscripted series “Family Empire: Houston” on June 28 at 8pm. It'll follow the Braden family and explore themes such as generational wealth and building a family legacy. – The **BLACK GIRLS ROCK!** Awards show will be on TV once again, with the event signing a partnership with **Lifetime** to air this year's edition Aug. 1. The show will be taped June 27 and highlight the trailblazers, activists and leaders who celebrate Black womanhood. – **Food Network's** “The Great Food Truck Race” franchise will make its return with “The Great Food Truck Race: Games on the Gulf” on June 30 at 8pm. Nine teams will begin at the NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston, with the finale set to take place at the South Beach Wine and Food Festival in Miami on Aug. 4 (also at 8pm).

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EDITOR'S NOTE

In observance of Memorial Day, the next issue of **Cablefax Daily** will not publish until Tuesday, May 28. Keep your eyes peeled in the meantime for any breaking news on [Cablefax.com](#).

PROGRAMMER'S PAGE

'Bridgerton' Wins, Sparks Release Schedule Debate

There's no end in sight for the success of Netflix's Austen-esque "Bridgerton," and this Lady Whistledown continues to be as intrigued as ever with the gossip of the ton. I'm not alone with Netflix reporting Season 3 as its top English TV series for the week of May 13-19 after its debut on May 16 with 45.1 million views. The first four episodes of the season dropped at that time with Netflix subscribers viewing 165.2 million hours of that content. Rising tides lift all boats, and Bridgerton's first and second seasons also finding places on Netflix's Top 10s. Based on my own experience connecting with folks at a wedding over the weekend, I don't think the streamer is fudging those numbers. It seemed like every one of the 130 guests, including many that call Great Britain home, had an opinion on the romance between Penelope Featherington and Colin Bridgerton. But for each exclamatory comment about the plot, there were multiple complaints about the release schedule. When one guest asked why Netflix would think it was a good idea to delay the release of the other four episodes until June 13, another answered with the response that was one the tip of my tongue: "To keep everyone subscribing for another month!" This isn't the first time Netflix has experimented with its streaming schedule, but it does seem to be embracing the split-season model for its more established franchises. It is pushing the same approach even further for the final season of "Cobra Kai," which will be split into three, five-episode parts. The first will be released on July 18 with the second not arriving until Nov. 28. The split-season schedule seems like a solid middle ground between the single drop binge and weekly drop strategies while giving streamers a way to drop monthly churn. But with the breadth of content available on the market on each platform, not to mention the sheer amount of streaming services on the market, is there a point where a subscriber becomes so frustrated they cancel their plan and delay viewing until every episode drops? Or if they tune in on Day One, how often will they forget the release date of later episodes? We'll have to wait for the results of this experiment. – Sara Winegardner

REVIEWS

"Tires," streaming, Netflix. It's a good moment for Shane Gillis, the creator and one of the stars of this 6-ep comedy series. First, Netflix has re-upped the series for a second season, just days before its May 23 premiere debuted. In addition, Netflix has signed Gillis for a stand-up special, which is expected in 2025. All this follows his stand-up comedy special, "Beautiful Dogs," which was a hit on Netflix's most-streamed list in several countries, including the U.S., in 2023. Watching 30-seconds of "Tires" will be enough for some viewers. They'll see it as crude, predictable men's locker-room humor and they won't be wrong. On the other hand, at times Gillis, whose character Shane supplies much of the low-brow content, hits the funny bone. Comparing the misfits at the tire store that Will's (Steven Gerben) father owns with the cater-waiters of "Party Down" on Starz (2009) is apt. At Party, the waiters would prefer being anywhere else, though their manager, Ron (Ken Marino), is serious; he wants a career. In Will's case, his obsession is pleasing dad, something the crew at the store, with Shane in the lead, make exceedingly difficult. At a moment when smiles and laughs are in short supply, viewers who can abide the raunchiness could do a lot worse than binging Tires' eps. The content won't require intense thinking. – Seth Arenstein

BASIC CABLE		
P2+ PRIME RANKINGS*		
(05/13/24-05/19/24)		
MON-SUN	MC	MC
	US	US AA
	AA%	(000)
TNT	0.936	2951
FNC	0.621	1957
ESPN	0.586	1846
MSNBC	0.364	1149
HALL	0.216	682
HGTV	0.205	645
INSP	0.190	600
USA	0.162	512
HIST	0.159	501
FS1	0.157	496
TBSC	0.152	478
CNN	0.151	477
TRUTV	0.144	453
FOOD	0.125	395
ID	0.124	391
DISC	0.122	384
TVLAND	0.120	378
TLC	0.119	375
GSN	0.114	358
HALLMYS	0.103	324
BRAVO	0.101	318
REELZ	0.091	286
A&E	0.087	275
OXY	0.084	264
WETV	0.082	259
AMC	0.081	254
FX	0.079	250
NWSMX	0.072	227
SYFY	0.068	215
ESPN2	0.067	210
ADSM	0.065	204
NATGEO	0.064	202
COM	0.061	193
NAN	0.060	191
BET	0.058	184

*P2+ L+SD rankers are based on national Nielsen numbers, not coverage.



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