

PUBLIC POLICY ISSUE BRIEF

Securing the Data Privacy of Americans

Overview: Technology has fundamentally and undeniably transformed the lives of all Americans. Although the impact of technology is often beneficial, it also increases risks to consumers through data breaches, privacy violations, and other cybercrimes. To mitigate these potential threats, The IIA supports Federal data privacy legislation that recognizes the value of strengthening data governance and internal controls through an internal audit function's independent assurance.

Role of Internal Audit

An internal audit function, adhering to The IIA's [Global Internal Audit Standards](#), provides **independent**, **risk-based**, and **objective** assurance over data-related risk, governance and internal control processes.

Since internal audit is independent from management – and reports directly to the organization's governing body – it is properly positioned to monitor processes such as system access, platform security, etc. Ensuring internal audit is properly structured represents a core strategy designed to promote **transparency** and **accountability** in the protection of consumer data.



IIA Key Objectives

Strengthen Internal Data Oversight: Require internal audit-led assurance processes at large data-holding companies to evaluate relevant internal controls and governance structures. The presence of this qualified internal audit function will strengthen independent oversight efforts and increase consumer confidence.

Promote Transparency and Accountability: Ensure that executive certifications of internal controls and reporting structures related to consumer data are reviewed by an internal audit function. This independent analysis will provide Americans with greater assurance that an organization is properly securing data.

Mitigate the Risk of Non-Compliance: The current patchwork of state data privacy laws and regulations produces a substantial risk of organizational non-compliance. Such inconsistency – particularly in a rapidly changing policy environment – creates confusion and uncertainty. It is for this reason The IIA supports comprehensive Federal data privacy legislation that mitigates the risk of non-compliance and creates a uniform legal and control framework.

IIA Data Privacy Resources

The following links provide additional information regarding the role of internal audit in data privacy:

- [Global Perspective and Insights: Cybersecurity](#)
- [Legislative Proposal: Recommended Amendments to the American Data Privacy & Protection Act](#)

For any questions regarding the internal audit profession, please contact Michael Downing, Senior Director for North American Advocacy, at Michael.Downing@TheIIA.org.