Every day, unregulated data brokers buy and sell personal location data from apps on our cellphones, revealing where we live, work, play, and more. To protect our privacy, safety, and access to essential health care, Massachusetts needs to ban this practice now by passing the Location Shield Act.

**BACKGROUND**

Our cellphones keep track of where we go, every minute of every day, revealing the most sensitive and intimate things about us. That personal location data can be used to provide useful services like maps, fitness tracking, and taxi rides. However, it can also be exploited for profit and extremist agendas, putting every cellphone user at risk.

Today, data brokers are allowed to buy this information, repackaged, and sold it to anyone with a credit card. There are no state or federal laws prohibiting this practice.

**WHY IT MATTERS**

Our personal location information reveals the most sensitive and intimate things about each of us, and we all deserve legal protections to keep that information private.

- Unscrupulous data brokers have already bought, repackaged, and sold the location data of people visiting abortion clinics. Since the overturning of Roe v. Wade, this puts patients and providers in Massachusetts at risk of prosecution and harassment.
- Domestic abusers can purchase location data to track the whereabouts of their victims.
- Foreign governments can buy location data and use it to track intelligence personnel, elected officials, military employees, police officers, and scientific researchers.
- Employers can buy cellphone location data to track and discriminate against employees.
IT’S ALREADY HAPPENING

Brokers and bad actors are already abusing our personal location data:

- Since the Supreme Court’s Dobbs decision, data brokers have come under increased scrutiny. In 2022, reporters revealed that several companies were selling detailed location data and demographic information about people who visit abortion clinics.
- In 2019, reporters revealed that bounty hunters and debt collectors have purchased location data for years in order to stalk and harass people.
- In 2021, an extremist right-wing organization bought location data to target gay Catholics, tracked a specific priest to several locations including gay bars, and publiclyouted him.

If we care about patient privacy, protecting victims from harassment and violence, and personal freedom, we must stop the sale of personal location data.

VOTERS SUPPORT A BAN

Bay Staters overwhelmingly agree: Using a cellphone shouldn’t require you to give up your privacy. Massachusetts should ban the sale and trade of our personal location data.

- Ninety-two percent (92%) of Massachusetts voters support passing a law to prohibit the sale of personal location data.
- By a 3-to-1 margin, voters think the state has a responsibility to protect the privacy of people’s location data.
- Massachusetts can protect people by banning the sale of cellphone location information. We should lead the nation by passing this popular, commonsense privacy reform.

THE LOCATION SHIELD ACT

An Act protecting reproductive health access, LGBTQ lives, religious liberty, and freedom of movement by banning the sale of cell phone location information (H.357|S.148) would:

- Prohibit companies from selling, leasing, trading, or renting location data.
- Require companies to obtain consent before collecting or processing location data.
- Allow companies to collect and process location data—with user consent—for legitimate purposes, such as:
  > Providing requested services to consumers
  > Responding to emergencies
  > Complying with state and federal law

YOUR LOCATION

It’s None of Their Business

To learn more or take action, visit aclum.org/locationshield