

Health Committee Unanimously Passes Cassidy's Health Privacy Bill

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The Senate health committee on Thursday (July 30) unanimously passed a data privacy bill that would require health technologies that fall outside the scope of HIPAA to disclose how consumer information is collected and shared, and tap the Federal Trade Commission as the primary enforcer of the expanded privacy policies.

The bill passed out of committee 22-0 and without discussion.

At issue is Chair Bill Cassidy's (R-LA) Health Information Privacy Reform Act, which would let consumers opt out of personal health information data sharing. The bill would also give consumers opportunities to share their health data to support future research and be compensated for their contributions. If the bill became law, HHS and FTC would draft new regulations to protect health information collected by health tools that fall outside of HIPAA.

Cassidy's push for FTC to develop privacy regulations covering health apps comes as Trump administration officials point to the agency's breach notification rule as a backup privacy guardrail. FTC has declined to answer *Inside Health Policy's* repeated inquiries on whether it is enforcing the Biden administration's controversial rule expanding the breach notification requirements to include health apps not covered by the federal privacy law Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. An *IHP* search for the 2024 page describing the expansion produced language saying it had been removed from FTC's website. -- Cara Smith (csmith@iwpnews.com)