

Tech giants hope for US data privacy law

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Senior tech company officials said Tuesday at CES that it hoped the US would soon enact a federal digital data law

Google, Twitter and Amazon are hopeful that Joe Biden's incoming administration in the United States will enact a federal digital data law, senior company officials said at CES, the annual electronics and technology show.

"I think the stars are better aligned than ever in the past," Keith Enright, Google's chief data privacy officer, told a discussion Tuesday on trust and privacy.

The European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which has applied since May 2018, has largely contributed to making consumers aware of the issues related to the data that they submit to large digital platforms on a daily basis.

This European data rights charter influenced California, which has now had the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA) for over a year.

"That tends to dramatically increase the chances that we can develop the political will at the federal level to do something, just to create a uniform rule of law so that companies know what the rules of the road are and individual users know what their rights and protections are," Enright said.

Biden's government will have leeway to legislate, as the Democrats will be in control of the House of Representatives and the Senate.

The incoming president will benefit from the experience of his deputy Kamala Harris, a former prosecutor in California, where the majority of the tech giants are located.

"There are more than 100 national data privacy laws in the world," said Anne Toth, director of Amazon's Alexa Trust. "We're dealing with a forever patchwork quilt but we're trying to minimize the differences."

"The laws must be interoperable," added Damien Kieran, director of data [privacy](#) at Twitter.

"The [federal government](#) as it thinks about this, has to really understand

the international future of this," he continued.

"If we get this wrong, not to put too much weight on it, but I think it is this important, you increase the chances for that balkanization of things."

Silicon Valley has long been close to elected Democrats, but the relationship has deteriorated since the election of Donald Trump in 2016 and the scandal of Cambridge Analytica, a British firm that hijacked the [personal data](#) of tens of millions of Facebook users for political propaganda purposes.

Google is the subject of an anti-trust lawsuit by the Department of Justice and a coalition of American states. Its YouTube platform, like Facebook and Twitter, is in the crosshairs of government officials for their management of personal information.

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