



July 20, 2011

The Honorable Cliff Stearns (R-FL-06)  
The Honorable Mike Pompeo (R-KS-04)

Dear Congressmen Stearns and Pompeo,

On behalf of the Marketing Research Association (MRA), representing the survey and opinion research profession,<sup>1</sup> I write to wholeheartedly endorse your amendment to the Secure and Fortify Electronic (SAFE) Data Act, which would restrict the Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) authority to promulgate regulations on data minimization.

As a broad principle, not collecting or maintaining more data than necessary to fulfill a given purpose makes sense. However, data collection limits and retention periods specifically directed by the FTC could be intensely problematic. Within various modes and methods of data collection, and across many different purposes, the need to collect and retain data will vary, and should be properly subject to those needs, not an arbitrary decision by a regulatory body unfamiliar with the processes and practices of those modes, methods and purposes. Prescribed retention periods would diminish the long-term value of data, including survey and opinion research data. We would thus be concerned about the FTC setting regulations without being familiar with the processes and practices of all businesses that would be impacted by their implementation.

Thank you for your dedication in pursuing this important amendment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Howard Fienberg', written in a cursive style.

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<sup>1</sup> The research profession is a multi-billion dollar worldwide industry, comprised of pollsters and government, public opinion, academic and goods and services researchers. Purchasers of opinion and survey research include the government (the world's largest purchaser), media, political campaigns, and commercial and non-profit entities.