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(Original Signature of Member)

115TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R.

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To amend title 18, United States Code, to specify the circumstances in which a person may acquire geolocation information and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. CHAFFETZ introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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# A BILL

To amend title 18, United States Code, to specify the circumstances in which a person may acquire geolocation information and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLES.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Geolocational Privacy  
5 and Surveillance Act” or the “GPS Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. PROTECTION OF GEOLOCATION INFORMATION.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—Part 1 of title 18, United States  
3 Code, is amended by inserting after chapter 119 the fol-  
4 lowing:

5 **“CHAPTER 120—GEOLOCATION**  
6 **INFORMATION**

“Sec.

“2601. Definitions.

“2602. Interception and disclosure of geolocation information.

“2603. Prohibition of use as evidence of acquired geolocation information.

“2604. Emergency situation exception.

“2605. Recovery of civil damages authorized.

7 **“§ 2601. Definitions**

8 “In this chapter:

9 “(1) ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION SERVICE.—

10 The term ‘electronic communication service’ has the  
11 meaning given that term in section 2510.

12 “(2) ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE.—The term  
13 ‘electronic surveillance’ has the meaning given that  
14 term in section 101 of the Foreign Intelligence Sur-  
15 veillance Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1801).

16 “(3) GEOLOCATION INFORMATION.—The term  
17 ‘geolocation information’ means, with respect to a  
18 person, any information that is not the content of a  
19 communication, concerning the location of a wireless  
20 communication device or tracking device (as that  
21 term is defined section 3117) that, in whole or in  
22 part, is generated by or derived from the operation

1 of that device and that could be used to determine  
2 or infer information regarding the location of the  
3 person.

4 “(4) GEOLOCATION INFORMATION SERVICE.—  
5 The term ‘geolocation information service’ means the  
6 provision of a global positioning service or other  
7 mapping, locational, or directional information serv-  
8 ice to the public, or to such class of users as to be  
9 effectively available to the public, by or through the  
10 operation of any wireless communication device, in-  
11 cluding any mobile telephone, global positioning sys-  
12 tem receiving device, mobile computer, or other simi-  
13 lar or successor device.

14 “(5) INTERCEPT.—The term ‘intercept’ means  
15 the acquisition of geolocation information through  
16 the use of any electronic, mechanical, or other de-  
17 vice.

18 “(6) INVESTIGATIVE OR LAW ENFORCEMENT  
19 OFFICER.—The term ‘investigative or law enforce-  
20 ment officer’ means any officer of the United States  
21 or of a State or political subdivision thereof, who is  
22 empowered by law to conduct investigations of, or to  
23 make arrests for, offenses enumerated in this chap-  
24 ter, and any attorney authorized by law to prosecute  
25 or participate in the prosecution of such offenses.

1           “(7) PERSON.—The term ‘person’ means any  
2           employee or agent of the United States, or any State  
3           or political subdivision thereof, and any individual,  
4           partnership, association, joint stock company, trust,  
5           or corporation.

6           “(8) REMOTE COMPUTING SERVICE.—The term  
7           ‘remote computing service’ has the meaning given  
8           that term in section 2711.

9           “(9) STATE.—The term ‘State’ means any  
10          State of the United States, the District of Columbia,  
11          the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and any territory  
12          or possession of the United States.

13          “(10) WIRELESS COMMUNICATION DEVICE.—  
14          The term ‘wireless communication device’ means any  
15          device that enables access to, or use of, an electronic  
16          communication system or service, remote computing  
17          service, or geolocation information service, if that de-  
18          vice utilizes a radio or other wireless connection to  
19          access such system or service.

20          “(11) COVERED SERVICE.—The term ‘covered  
21          services’ means electronic communication service, re-  
22          mote computing service, or of geolocation informa-  
23          tion service.

1 **“§ 2602. Interception and disclosure of geolocation in-**  
2 **formation**

3 “(a) IN GENERAL.—

4 “(1) PROHIBITION ON DISCLOSURE OR USE.—

5 Except as otherwise specifically provided in this  
6 chapter, it shall be unlawful for any person to—

7 “(A) intentionally intercept, endeavor to  
8 intercept, or procure any other person to inter-  
9 cept or endeavor to intercept, geolocation infor-  
10 mation pertaining to another person;

11 “(B) intentionally disclose, or endeavor to  
12 disclose, to any other person geolocation infor-  
13 mation pertaining to another person, knowing  
14 or having reason to know that the information  
15 was obtained through the interception of such  
16 information in violation of this paragraph;

17 “(C) intentionally use, or endeavor to use,  
18 any geolocation information, knowing or having  
19 reason to know that the information was ob-  
20 tained through the interception of such infor-  
21 mation in violation of this paragraph; or

22 “(D)(i) intentionally disclose, or endeavor  
23 to disclose, to any other person the geolocation  
24 information pertaining to another person inter-  
25 cepted by means authorized by subsections (b)

1 through (h), except as provided in such sub-  
2 sections;

3 “(ii) knowing or having reason to know  
4 that the information was obtained through the  
5 interception of such information in connection  
6 with a criminal investigation;

7 “(iii) having obtained or received the infor-  
8 mation in connection with a criminal investiga-  
9 tion; and

10 “(iv) with intent to improperly obstruct,  
11 impede, or interfere with a duly authorized  
12 criminal investigation.

13 “(2) PENALTY.—Any person who violates para-  
14 graph (1) shall be fined under this title, imprisoned  
15 not more than five years, or both.

16 “(b) EXCEPTION FOR INFORMATION ACQUIRED IN  
17 THE NORMAL COURSE OF BUSINESS.—It shall not be un-  
18 lawful under this chapter for an officer, employee, or agent  
19 of a provider of covered services, whose facilities are used  
20 in the transmission of geolocation information, to inter-  
21 cept, disclose, or use that information in the normal course  
22 of the officer, employee, or agent’s employment while en-  
23 gaged in any activity which is a necessary incident to the  
24 rendition of service or to the protection of the rights or  
25 property of the provider of that service, except that a pro-

1 vider of a geolocation information service to the public  
2 shall not utilize service observing or random monitoring  
3 except for mechanical or service quality control checks.

4 “(c) EXCEPTION FOR CONDUCTING FOREIGN INTEL-  
5 LIGENCE SURVEILLANCE.—Notwithstanding any other  
6 provision of this chapter, it shall not be unlawful for an  
7 officer, employee, or agent of the United States in the nor-  
8 mal course of the official duty of the officer, employee,  
9 or agent to conduct electronic surveillance, as authorized  
10 by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (50  
11 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.).

12 “(d) EXCEPTION FOR CONSENT.—

13 “(1) IN GENERAL.—It shall not be unlawful  
14 under this chapter for a person to intercept  
15 geolocation information pertaining to another person  
16 if such other person has given prior consent to such  
17 interception unless such information is intercepted  
18 for the purpose of committing any criminal or  
19 tortious act in violation of the Constitution or laws  
20 of the United States or of any State.

21 “(2) CHILDREN.—The exception in paragraph  
22 (1) permits a parent or legal guardian of a child to  
23 intercept geolocation information pertaining to that  
24 child or to give consent for another person to inter-  
25 cept such information.

1       “(e) EXCEPTION FOR PUBLIC INFORMATION.—It  
2 shall not be unlawful under this chapter for any person  
3 to intercept or access geolocation information relating to  
4 another person through any system that is configured so  
5 that such information is readily accessible to the general  
6 public.

7       “(f) EXCEPTION FOR EMERGENCY INFORMATION.—  
8 It shall not be unlawful under this chapter for any inves-  
9 tigative or law enforcement officer or other emergency re-  
10 sponder to intercept or access geolocation information re-  
11 lating to a person if such information is used—

12               “(1) to respond to a request made by such per-  
13 son for assistance; or

14               “(2) in circumstances in which it is reasonable  
15 to believe that the life or safety of the person is  
16 threatened, to assist the person.

17       “(g) EXCEPTION FOR THEFT OR FRAUD.—It shall  
18 not be unlawful under this chapter for a person acting  
19 under color of law to intercept geolocation information  
20 pertaining to the location of another person who has un-  
21 lawfully taken the device sending the geolocation informa-  
22 tion if—

23               “(1) the owner or operator of such device au-  
24 thORIZES the interception of the person’s geolocation  
25 information;



1           “(2) the person acting under color of law is  
2 lawfully engaged in an investigation; and

3           “(3) the person acting under color of law has  
4 reasonable grounds to believe that the geolocation  
5 information of the other person will be relevant to  
6 the investigation.

7           “(h) EXCEPTION FOR WARRANT.—

8           “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

9           “(A) COURT OF COMPETENT JURISDIC-  
10 TION.—The term ‘court of competent jurisdic-  
11 tion’ includes—

12           “(i) any district court of the United  
13 States (including a magistrate judge of  
14 such a court) or any United States court  
15 of appeals that—

16           “(I) has jurisdiction over the of-  
17 fense being investigated;

18           “(II) is in or for a district in  
19 which the provider of a geolocation in-  
20 formation service is located or in  
21 which the geolocation information is  
22 stored; or

23           “(III) is acting on a request for  
24 foreign assistance pursuant to section  
25 3512 of this title; or

1                   “(ii) a court of general criminal juris-  
2                   diction of a State authorized by the law of  
3                   that State to issue search warrants.

4                   “(B) GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY.—The term  
5                   ‘governmental entity’ means a department or  
6                   agency of the United States or any State or po-  
7                   litical subdivision thereof.

8                   “(2) WARRANT.—A governmental entity may  
9                   intercept geolocation information or require the dis-  
10                  closure by a provider of covered services of  
11                  geolocation information only pursuant to a warrant  
12                  issued using the procedures described in the Federal  
13                  Rules of Criminal Procedure (or, in the case of a  
14                  State court, issued using State warrant procedures)  
15                  by a court of competent jurisdiction, or as otherwise  
16                  provided in this chapter or the Foreign Intelligence  
17                  Surveillance Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.).

18                  “(i) PROHIBITION ON DIVULGING GEOLOCATION IN-  
19                  FORMATION.—

20                  “(1) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in para-  
21                  graph (2), a person providing covered services shall  
22                  not intentionally divulge geolocation information per-  
23                  taining to another person.

24                  “(2) EXCEPTIONS.—A person providing covered  
25                  services may divulge geolocation information—

1           “(A) as otherwise authorized in subsections  
2           (b) through (h);

3           “(B) with the lawful consent of such other  
4           person;

5           “(C) to another person employed or au-  
6           thorized, or whose facilities are used, to forward  
7           such geolocation information to its destination;  
8           or

9           “(D) which was inadvertently obtained by  
10          the service provider and which appears to per-  
11          tain to the commission of a crime, if such divul-  
12          gence is made to a law enforcement agency.

13   **“§ 2603. Prohibition of use as evidence of acquired**  
14                           **geolocation information**

15          “Whenever any geolocation information has been ac-  
16          quired, no part of such information and no evidence de-  
17          rived therefrom may be received in evidence in any trial,  
18          hearing, or other proceeding in or before any court, grand  
19          jury, department, officer, agency, regulatory body, legisla-  
20          tive committee, or other authority of the United States,  
21          a State, or a political subdivision thereof if the disclosure  
22          of that information would be in violation of this chapter.

23   **“§ 2604. Emergency situation exception**

24          “(a) EMERGENCY SITUATION EXCEPTION.—Not-  
25          withstanding any other provision of this chapter, any in-

1 vestigative or law enforcement officer, specially designated  
2 by the Attorney General, the Deputy Attorney General,  
3 the Associate Attorney General, or by the principal pro-  
4 secuting attorney of any State or subdivision thereof acting  
5 pursuant to a statute of that State, may intercept  
6 geolocation information if—

7           “(1) such officer reasonably determines that an  
8 emergency situation exists that—

9                   “(A) involves—

10                           “(i) immediate danger of death or se-  
11 rious physical injury to any person;

12                           “(ii) conspiratorial activities threat-  
13 ening the national security interest; or

14                           “(iii) conspiratorial activities char-  
15 acteristic of organized crime; and

16                   “(B) requires geolocation information be  
17 intercepted before an order authorizing such  
18 interception can, with due diligence, be ob-  
19 tained;

20           “(2) there are grounds upon which an order  
21 could be entered to authorize such interception; and

22           “(3) an application for an order approving such  
23 interception is made within 48 hours after the inter-  
24 ception has occurred or begins to occur.

25           “(b) FAILURE TO OBTAIN COURT ORDER.—

1           “(1) TERMINATION OF ACQUISITION.—In the  
2           absence of an order, an interception of geolocation  
3           information carried out under subsection (a) shall  
4           immediately terminate when the information sought  
5           is obtained or when the application for the order is  
6           denied, whichever is earlier.

7           “(2) PROHIBITION ON USE AS EVIDENCE.—In  
8           the event such application for approval is denied, the  
9           geolocation information shall be treated as having  
10          been obtained in violation of this chapter and an in-  
11          ventory shall be served on the person named in the  
12          application.

13       **“§ 2605. Recovery of civil damages authorized**

14          “(a) IN GENERAL.—Any person whose geolocation  
15          information is intercepted, disclosed, or intentionally used  
16          in violation of this chapter may in a civil action recover  
17          from the person, other than the United States, which en-  
18          gaged in that violation such relief as may be appropriate.

19          “(b) RELIEF.—In an action under this section, ap-  
20          propriate relief includes—

21               “(1) such preliminary and other equitable or  
22               declaratory relief as may be appropriate;

23               “(2) damages under subsection (c) and punitive  
24               damages in appropriate cases; and

1           “(3) a reasonable attorney’s fee and other liti-  
2           gation costs reasonably incurred.

3           “(c) COMPUTATION OF DAMAGES.—The court may  
4           assess as damages under this section whichever is the  
5           greater of—

6           “(1) the sum of the actual damages suffered by  
7           the plaintiff and any profits made by the violator as  
8           a result of the violation; or

9           “(2) statutory damages of whichever is the  
10          greater of \$100 a day for each day of violation or  
11          \$10,000.

12          “(d) DEFENSE.—It is a complete defense against any  
13          civil or criminal action brought against an individual for  
14          conduct in violation of this chapter if such individual acted  
15          in a good faith reliance on—

16          “(1) a court warrant or order, a grand jury  
17          subpoena, a legislative authorization, or a statutory  
18          authorization;

19          “(2) a request of an investigative or law en-  
20          forcement officer under section 2604; or

21          “(3) a good-faith determination that an excep-  
22          tion under section 2602 permitted the conduct com-  
23          plained of.

24          “(e) LIMITATION.—A civil action under this section  
25          may not be commenced later than two years after the date

1 upon which the claimant first has a reasonable oppor-  
2 tunity to discover the violation.

3       “(f) ADMINISTRATIVE DISCIPLINE.—If a court or ap-  
4 propriate department or agency determines that the  
5 United States or any of its departments or agencies has  
6 violated any provision of this chapter, and the court or  
7 appropriate department or agency finds that the cir-  
8 cumstances surrounding the violation raise serious ques-  
9 tions about whether or not an officer or employee of the  
10 United States acted willfully or intentionally with respect  
11 to the violation, the department or agency shall, upon re-  
12 ceipt of a true and correct copy of the decision and find-  
13 ings of the court or appropriate department or agency  
14 promptly initiate a proceeding to determine whether dis-  
15 ciplinary action against the officer or employee is war-  
16 ranted. If the head of the department or agency involved  
17 determines that disciplinary action is not warranted, such  
18 head shall notify the Inspector General with jurisdiction  
19 over the department or agency concerned and shall provide  
20 the Inspector General with the reasons for such deter-  
21 mination.

22       “(g) IMPROPER DISCLOSURE IS VIOLATION.—Any  
23 willful disclosure or use by an investigative or law enforce-  
24 ment officer or governmental entity of information beyond

1 the extent permitted by this chapter is a violation of this  
2 chapter for purposes of this section.”.

3 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of chapters  
4 for part 1 of title 18, United States Code, is amended by  
5 inserting after the item relating to chapter 119 the fol-  
6 lowing:

“120. Geolocation information ..... 2601”.

7 (c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 3512(a) of  
8 title 18, United States Code, is amended—

9 (1) in paragraph (2)—

10 (A) by redesignating subparagraphs (B),  
11 (C), and (D) as subparagraphs (C), (D), and  
12 (E), respectively; and

13 (B) by inserting after subparagraph (A)  
14 the following:

15 “(B) a warrant or order for geolocation in-  
16 formation or records related thereto, as pro-  
17 vided under section 2602 of this title;”.

18 **SEC. 3. REQUIREMENT FOR SEARCH WARRANTS TO AC-**  
19 **QUIRE GEOLOCATION INFORMATION.**

20 Rule 41(a) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Proce-  
21 dure is amended—

22 (1) in paragraph (2)(A), by striking the period  
23 at the end and inserting a comma and “including  
24 geolocation information.”; and

25 (2) by adding at the end the following:



1           “(F) ‘Geolocation information’ has the  
2           meaning given that term in section 2601 of title  
3           18, United States Code.”.

4 **SEC. 4. FRAUD AND RELATED ACTIVITY IN CONNECTION**  
5           **WITH OBTAINING GEOLOCATION INFORMA-**  
6           **TION.**

7           (a) **CRIMINAL VIOLATION.**—Section 1039(h) of title  
8           18, United States Code, is amended—

9           (1) in paragraph (2)—

10           (A) in subparagraph (A), by striking  
11           “and” at the end;

12           (B) in subparagraph (B), by striking the  
13           period at the end and inserting a semicolon and  
14           “and”; and

15           (C) by adding at the end the following new  
16           subparagraph:

17           “(C) includes any geolocation information  
18           service.”;

19           (2) by redesignating paragraph (4) as para-  
20           graph (5); and

21           (3) by inserting after paragraph (3) the fol-  
22           lowing:

23           “(4) **GEOLOCATION INFORMATION SERVICE.**—  
24           The term ‘geolocation information service’ has the  
25           meaning given that term in section 2601.”.

1 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

2 (1) DEFINITION AMENDMENTS.—Section  
3 1039(h)(1) of title 18, United States Code, is  
4 amended—

5 (A) in the paragraph heading, by inserting  
6 “OR GPS” after “PHONE”; and

7 (B) in the matter preceding subparagraph  
8 (A), by inserting “or GPS” after “phone”.

9 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 1039  
10 of title 18, United States Code, is amended—

11 (A) in the section heading by inserting “**or**  
12 **GPS**” after “**phone**”;

13 (B) in subsection (a)—

14 (i) in the matter preceding paragraph  
15 (1), by inserting “or GPS” after “phone”;

16 and

17 (ii) in paragraph (4), by inserting “or  
18 GPS” after “phone”;

19 (C) in subsection (b)—

20 (i) in the subsection heading, by in-  
21 serting “OR GPS” after “PHONE”;

22 (ii) in paragraph (1), by inserting “or  
23 GPS” after “phone” both places that term  
24 appears; and

1 (iii) in paragraph (2), by inserting “or  
2 GPS” after “phone”; and

3 (D) in subsection (c)—

4 (i) in the subsection heading, by in-  
5 serting “OR GPS” after “PHONE”;

6 (ii) in paragraph (1), by inserting “or  
7 GPS” after “phone” both places that term  
8 appears; and

9 (iii) in paragraph (2), by inserting “or  
10 GPS” after “phone”.

11 (3) CHAPTER ANALYSIS.—The table of sections  
12 for chapter 47 of title 18, United States Code, is  
13 amended by striking the item relating to section  
14 1039 and inserting the following:

“1039. Fraud and related activity in connection with obtaining confidential  
phone or GPS records information of a covered entity.”.

15 (c) SENTENCING GUIDELINES.—

16 (1) REVIEW AND AMENDMENT.—Not later than  
17 180 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the  
18 United States Sentencing Commission, pursuant to  
19 its authority under section 994 of title 28, United  
20 States Code, and in accordance with this section,  
21 shall review and, if appropriate, amend the Federal  
22 sentencing guidelines and policy statements applica-  
23 ble to persons convicted of any offense under section

1       1039 of title 18, United States Code, as amended by  
2       this section.

3           (2) AUTHORIZATION.—The United States Sen-  
4       tencing Commission may amend the Federal sen-  
5       tencing guidelines in accordance with the procedures  
6       set forth in section 21(a) of the Sentencing Act of  
7       1987 (28 U.S.C. 994 note) as though the authority  
8       under that section had not expired.

9       **SEC. 5. STATEMENT OF EXCLUSIVE MEANS OF ACQUIRING**  
10           **GEOLOCATION INFORMATION.**

11       (a) IN GENERAL.—No person may acquire the  
12       geolocation information of a person for protective activities  
13       or law enforcement or intelligence purposes except pursu-  
14       ant to a warrant issued pursuant to rule 41 of the Federal  
15       Rules of Criminal Procedure, as amended by section 3,  
16       or the amendments made by this Act, or the Foreign Intel-  
17       ligence Surveillance Act of 1978 (50 U.S.C. 1801).

18       (b) GEOLOCATION INFORMATION DEFINED.—In this  
19       section, the term “geolocation information” has the mean-  
20       ing given that term in section 2601 of title 18, United  
21       States Code, as amended by section 2.