



DATA BROKER HARMS TO PUBLIC OFFICIALS

SUMMARY

Data brokers build extensive dossiers of information on Americans, including law enforcement officers, judges, and other public officials.

Personal data is collected as we browse the internet and use online services. Companies sell that information to **data brokers, who compile and resell records containing personal information** like home address, names of close relatives, phone numbers, and location data.

By selling this information, data brokers inadvertently provide tools to locate and track public officials, **creating severe safety threats.**

Violence against public officials and their families is on the rise.

July 2020: Daniel Anderl, son of U.S. District Court Judge Esther Salas, was murdered at home.

October 2022: Paul Pelosi, husband of then House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, was attacked at home.

February 2023: New Jersey Councilwoman Eunice Dwumfour was murdered outside of her home.

October 2023: Maryland Judge Andrew Wilkinson was murdered outside of his home.

June 2025: Minnesota state Representative Melissa Hortman and her husband were murdered at their home. The same gunman is also accused of shooting and injuring state Senator John Hoffman and his wife. Court documents show that the man accused of shooting the Minnesota lawmakers and their family members used online people search data broker websites to find their home addresses.

CURRENT PROTECTIONS

In response to recent violence against public officials and their families, Congress and twelve states have passed laws to protect the personal information of public officials, including home addresses, personal contact information, social security numbers, bank account details, and identities of family members. However, these laws do not protect all public officials.

REINING IN DATA BROKERS WOULD PROTECT PUBLIC OFFICIALS

Data brokers enable violence against public officials and their families. **At both the federal and state level, stronger laws and rules are necessary** to provide guardrails around data brokers' collection and sale of personal information to help prevent harm to public officials.

Minimizing the data that brokers amass and sell would help to protect public officials who are not covered by the federal and state laws already on the books.

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND A PLAIN TEXT VERSION:

<https://epic.org/documents/data-broker-harms-to-public-officials/>

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RELEVANT LEGISLATION

US	The Daniel Anderl Judicial Security and Privacy Act - Protects current, senior, recalled, and retired Federal judges.
Delaware	Del. Stat. Ann. Tit. 10 §§ 1921–24 (2023) - Protects specifically named active, formerly active, or retired state judicial officers and their families.
Florida	Fla. Stat. § 119.071 (2024) - Protects judges, law enforcement officers, court staff, staff of the clerk of court, firefighters, state attorneys, prosecutors, public defenders, certain state agency personnel, and their spouses and children.
Georgia	Ga. Code Ann §§ 15-5-110 – 15-5-112 (2024) - Protects elected and appointed state, county, or municipal judges or justices; federal judges or justices; and their spouses.
Hawaii	Haw. Rev. Stat § 92H (2024) - Protects governor; lieutenant governor; administrative director; any department head; members of the legislature; active, formerly active, or retired state and federal justices and judges; administrative directors of courts; deputy administrative directors of courts; election employees and volunteers; appointed public officials; and their families.
Maryland	Md. Code Ann., Cts. & Jud. Proc. § 3-2301 (2024) - Protects current and retired state and federal judges, magistrates, court commissioners and their spouses, children, and dependents living with them.
Minnesota	Minn. Stat. § 13.991 (2025) - Protects active, senior, and retired judges; Minnesota Supreme Court justices; Minnesota judicial branch employees; and judicial referees.
Missouri	Mo. Rev. Stat. § 476.1300(4) (2023) - Protects active, former, and retired judges, prosecuting or circuit.
Nebraska	Neb. Rev. Stat. § 23-3211 (2022) - Protects judges, law enforcement officers, and members of the Nebraska National Guard.
New Jersey	N.J.S.A. 47:1B-1 (2024) - Protects judges; law enforcement officers; active, formerly active, and retired judicial officers; prosecutors; and their family members.
New York	N.Y. Jud. Law § 859 (2024) - Protects active or former judges and their immediate families.
Oklahoma	Okla. Stat. §§ 3012 (2024) - Protects active and retired members of the State Judiciary; municipal, county, tribal, and federal judges; and spouses, children, or parents living with them.
Wisconsin	Wis. Stat. § 757.07 (2025) - Protects current and former Supreme Court justices; current and former court of appeals, circuit court, and municipal judges; current and former circuit court commissioners; and their immediate family.

WORKS CITED

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2. Alonzo Martinez, Protecting Public Officials: Impact of Judicial Privacy Laws on Background Checks, Forbes (May 31, 2024), <https://www.forbes.com/sites/alonzomartinez/2024/05/31/protecting-public-officials-impact-of-judicial-privacy-laws-on-background-checks/>.
3. Justin Sherman, Data Brokers and Threats to Government Employees, Lawfare (Oct. 22, 2024), <https://www.lawfaremedia.org/article/data-brokers-and-threats-to-government-employees>.
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5. Ingo Dachwitz & Sebastian Meineck, Data Broker Files: Targeting the EU, Netzpolitik (Nov. 4, 2025), <https://netzpolitik.org/2025/databroker-files-targeting-the-eu/>.