

New York Gets Behind 'Kill Switch' Bill

Andrew Berg

New York is joining California in seeking to adopt legislation that would require cell phone makers to install a so-called "kill switch" in their devices.

According to the [Wall Street Journal](#) [1], New York officials are set Monday to support a bill that would require smartphone and tablet OEMs to include technology in their products that would let owners delete data from stolen devices and render them useless to thieves.

New York Representative Jose Serrano is set Monday to introduce the "Smart Phone Theft Prevention Act". He will be joined by state Attorney General Eric Schneiderman and New York City Police Commissioner William Bratton.

The FCC estimates that one in three U.S. robberies involve phone theft.

The bill was authored by Minnesota Senator Amy Klobuchar, who said in a press release that cell phone thefts cost consumers more than \$30 billion every year.

"This legislation will help eliminate the incentives for criminals to target smartphones by empowering victims to take steps to keep their information private, protect their identity and finances, and render the phone inoperable to the thieves," Klobuchar said.

Wireless carriers in the United States have said they are already working to implement kill switch capabilities but are not in support of legislation that would require the technology.

Most companies that make devices already offer features that allow users to erase the contents of a lost or stolen device. Both Apple and Samsung, among others, offer some version of the feature.

Klobuchar, however, argues that as long as the devices are still operable, cell phone thefts will continue to escalate.

"That's why the proposed kill switch is the only way to get the job done," Klobuchar said. "We look forward to the swift passage of legislation that will ensure stolen devices no longer have any value to criminals on the street."

CTIA last year outlined in an FCC filing the potential threats presented by requiring a smartphone kill switch. CTIA noted that once the kill switch is used, the action cannot be undone and the device cannot be reused, and that a kill switch could be a target for hackers.

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