



accessnow

Jonathan R. Cantor, Acting Chief Privacy Officer
Privacy Office
Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528-0655

October 18, 2017

Via Electronic Filing

Re: Notice on DHS/USCIS-001 Alien File, Index, and National File Tracking System of Records (Docket Number: DHS-2017-0038)

Mr. Cantor:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide feedback to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS)'s Notice of Modified Privacy Act System of Records, which envisions an expansion to the collection and retention of data related to current individuals' official immigration status. Access Now urges DHS to withdraw this proposal.¹

In addition, DHS should conduct a full evaluation of social media monitoring programs for their impact, scope, and efficacy.² DHS should make the results of this evaluation publicly available to facilitate a better understanding of the use of these programs and enable discussion over necessary safeguards. Special attention should be paid to the use of social media monitoring and related surveillance at the borders.

I. About Access Now and Our Prior Work.

Access Now is an international organization that defends and extends the digital rights of users at risk around the world. By combining innovative policy, user engagement, and direct technical support, we fight for open and secure communications for all. As part of this mission, we fight for the right to speak freely, which is critical for demonstrating dissent, guaranteeing a free press, and defending human rights, online and offline. Access Now helped launch the International Principles on the Application of Human Rights to Communications Surveillance and has extensive experience analyzing and responding to social media surveillance programs, particularly those impacting travelers and immigrants.

In early 2016, following the San Bernardino terror attack, Access Now published a two-part analysis of social media monitoring. We explained, in part, “[a]ny government monitoring of social media poses significant risks to users’ privacy and free expression.”³ We then proposed necessary safeguards to

¹ Privacy Act of 1974; System of Records, Federal Register, Homeland Security Department, 82 Fed. Reg. 43556 (proposed Sep. 18, 2017), available at <https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2017-19365/page-43557>. We specifically draw attention to Point (5), to “expand the categories of records to include ... social media handles, aliases, associated identifiable information, and search results ...”, and Point (11), to “update record source categories to include publicly available information obtained from the internet, public records, public institutions, interviewees, commercial data providers, and information obtained and disclosed pursuant to information sharing agreements.”

² An internal evaluation report concluded that the previous DHS social media monitoring pilots program were not adequate to “ensure an effective and successful social media screening program.” See Office of Inspector General, Homeland Security, OIG-17-40, *DHS’ Pilots for Social Media Screening Need Increased Rigor to Ensure Scalability and Long-term Success* (2017), available at <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/2017/OIG-17-40-Feb17.pdf>.

³ Keir Lamont, *The Human Rights Problem with Social Media Monitoring*, Access Now (Jan. 8, 2016, 10:55AM), <https://www.accessnow.org/13503-2/>.

protect human rights in the commission of this type of surveillance.⁴ We re-examined the topic later in 2016 in response to a proposal by the U.S. Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to collect “social media identifiers” for certain U.S. visitors. In preparing our response, Access Now conducted a survey which produced responses from more than 2,300 people broadly opposing the proposal for reasons including intrusion on rights and failure to demonstrate efficacy. We provided these results to CBP.⁵ Unfortunately, despite our intervention the program was nonetheless instituted.

Earlier this year we joined more than two dozen human rights and civil liberties groups requesting the United Nations to conduct a broad investigation into a U.S. border policy that demanded visitors to provide access to their social media accounts.⁶ In our letter, we explained, “the request for social media data ... will have a deleterious impact on the speech and privacy of the applicants as well as the Americans with whom they communicate.”⁷

Shortly after our letter to the United Nations, and partly in response to comments by then-Secretary of Homeland Security John Kelly, we launched flydontspy.com, a coalition effort to oppose any proposal to require visa applicants, refugees, or other foreign visitors to provide passwords for online accounts, including social media, in order to enter the United States. We have also formally responded to additional proposals to expand surveillance of social media information at the borders.⁸ Among other things we emphasized how “[s]urveillance of this sort has a disparate impact on users at risk, including communities of color, religious groups, LGBTQI communities, and other marginalized communities.” We also explained that “large-scale analysis of social media...is of questionable value due to the highly-contextual nature of expression on social media.”

Much of the work we have done in the U.S. expands upon our global efforts in support of the rights to freedom of association and expression, among other human rights, including the right to travel. In the European Union, for example, we have opposed international and regional Passenger Name Records programs, and related “smart borders” package, since 2013.⁹ In November 2016, in a detailed analysis on the impact of the Smart Borders proposal, we explained how, in contravention of human rights, the program would create a massive database of people’s sensitive information with insufficient oversight or redress mechanisms and without strong protection rules for access and transfer of data or proportionate data retention mandates.¹⁰

DHS’ current proposal, like its predecessors, will further undermine human rights of people around the world. The proposal expands and compounds human rights violations in social media monitoring programs by further formalizing an overbroad surveillance program that will indefinitely retain files on the social media activity of immigrants.¹¹ This type of surveillance intrudes into people’s lives and violates fundamental human rights to freedom of speech and association, and privacy - well-recognized in international law.

⁴ See Keir Lamont, *Lurkers Prohibited: Human Rights Apply to Social Media Monitoring*, Access Now (Jan. 13, 2016, 5:44PM), <https://www.accessnow.org/lurkers-prohibited-human-rights-apply-to-social-media-monitoring/>.

⁵ Reply Comment from Access Now, *Re: Agency Information Collection Activities: Arrival and Departure Record (Forms I-94 and I-94W) and Electronic System for Travel Authorization* (Aug. 22, 2016), available at <https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2016/08/Access-Now-Submission-to-CBP-Proposal.pdf>.

⁶ Letter from Access Now et al. to Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein et al., <https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2017/02/JointLetterUSBorderSearches-final.pdf>.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ See *supra* note 5; also Reply Comment from Access Now, *Re: Notice of Collection Under OMB Emergency Review: Supplemental Questions for Visa Applicants* (May 18, 2017), available at https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2017/07/CommentstoStateDept_AccessNow.pdf.

⁹ Proposal for a Directive on an EU Passenger Name Record: No freedoms, no security, available at <https://edri.org/files/PNR2015/PNRbrief-EDRi.pdf> (last visited on Oct. 17, 2017); see also Access Now’s Response to Public Consultation on the Smart Borders Package (Oct. 29, 2015), https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-is-new/public-consultation/2015/docs/consultation_030/contribution_access_now_en.pdf; see also *In Win for Privacy, European Court Rejects EU-Canada “PNR” Agreement*, Access Now (26 July, 2017, 4:14 AM), <https://www.accessnow.org/win-privacy-european-court-rejects-eu-canada-pnr-agreement/>.

¹⁰ Access Now, *Smart Borders Policy Analysis* (Nov. 2016), available at <https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2016/12/Access-Now-Smart-Border-Policy-paper.pdf>.

¹¹ See *supra* note 1.

II. DHS' Proposal Would Chill the Exercise of Rights to Freedom of Expression and Association.

The U.S. Constitution protects the rights to freedom of speech and assembly.¹² The federal government has also ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which commits the government to further respect these rights as expressed in international law.¹³ In our 2016 survey, Access Now was able to demonstrate how people felt that CBP's proposal to monitor social media of travelers would create a chilling effect on speech.¹⁴ "This is a horrible, speech-chilling proposal," wrote one respondent. Another explained, "[t]he advantage of social media is that it allows dissemination of ideas and allows you to interact with a wide range of people. Knowing your ideas could potentially be used against you would have a chilling effect on this." The results were reminiscent of a survey of writers by PEN America: of those who responded, 42% from "free countries," 46% in "partly free countries" and 53% in "not free countries," had curtailed or avoided activities on social media, or seriously considered it, due to fear of government surveillance of social media.¹⁵

This type of chilling effect often has a disparate impact on marginalized communities, including communities of color, religious groups, and LGBTQI individuals. As we noted in a previous submission, the internet has become a space for these communities to connect with one another and the rest of the world.¹⁶ Due to a history of targeting, these communities are often the first to self-censor.¹⁷ Here, rather than helping address some of the real and significant challenges these groups face online, social media monitoring exacerbates these challenges leading to further marginalization.

Furthermore, the vagueness of this proposal would exacerbate the chilling effect. The proposal includes several undefined terms leaving ambiguous its potential scope. The proposal also provides few details on how the data will be collected and processed, how long the data would be retained, or for what specific purposes it can be distributed to and used by other agencies and under what limitations.¹⁸ If people feel their social media activities may be arbitrarily monitored, and that monitoring may implicate their ability to travel or immigrate, they may simply refrain from speaking at all.¹⁹

III. DHS' Proposal Would Infringe Upon the Right to Privacy.

DHS' proposal would further entrench its social media monitoring activities. These activities, specifically the broad collection and analysis of sensitive personal information, interferes with the right to privacy as ingrained in the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution as well as Article 17 of the ICCPR.²⁰

¹² U.S. Const. amend. I.

¹³ Status of Ratification Interactive Dashboard, Office of the High Commissioner, United Nations Human Rights, <http://indicators.ohchr.org/> (last visited on Oct. 17, 2017).

¹⁴ See *supra* note 5; see also Art.19, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, available at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx>.

¹⁵ PEN America, *GLOBAL CHILLING: The Impact of Mass Surveillance on International Writers* (Jan. 5, 2015), https://pen.org/sites/default/files/globalchilling_2015.pdf.

¹⁶ Reply Comments from Access Now, *Re: 60-Day Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Supplemental Questions for Visa Applicants* (Sep. 20, 2017), available at www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2017/09/State-Department-Supplemental-Questions-for-Visa-Applicants.pdf.

¹⁷ See *supra* note 5.

¹⁸ See *supra* note 1.

¹⁹ This tendency has been recognized by the U.S. Supreme Court. See *Reno v. ACLU*, 521 U.S. 844 (1997) ("The vagueness of the CDA is a matter of special concern for two reasons. First, the CDA is a content based regulation of speech. The vagueness of such a regulation raises special First Amendment concerns because of its obvious chilling effect on free speech.")

²⁰ See, e.g., *Necessary and Proportionate: International Principles on the Application of Human Rights to Communications Surveillance*, necessaryandproportionate.org (last visited on Oct. 17, 2017) ("In evaluating the invasiveness of State Communications Surveillance, it is necessary to consider both the potential of the surveillance to reveal Protected Information, as well as the purpose for which the information is sought by the State. Any Communication Surveillance is an interference with human rights and so international human rights law applies. Communications Surveillance that will likely lead to the revelation of Protected Information that may place a person at risk of investigation, discrimination, or violation of human rights will constitute a serious infringement on an individual's right to privacy, and will also undermine the enjoyment of other fundamental rights, including the right to free expression, association, and political participation. This is because these rights require people to be able to communicate free from the chilling effect of government surveillance. A determination of both the character and potential uses of the information sought will thus be necessary in each specific case.")

International law under the ICCPR dictates that surveillance should only be conducted when it is both necessary and proportionate to a legitimate government aim.²¹ Therefore, the scope of data collection is integrally connected to its human rights impact. DHS' proposal potentially encompasses the collection of massive amounts of personal data, all without any suspicion or connection to potential criminal activity.²² This suspicionless collection alone represents an unjustified invasion of individual privacy.²³

That violation is compounded by enhanced analysis of the data that is collected. Earlier this year, DHS disclosed details of data mining tools designed to automatically detect the existence and contents of "suspicious" social media accounts and people "linked to derogatory social media information."²⁴ These tools allow DHS officials to make judgments about non-public facets of a person's life. For example, academic studies have demonstrated that a single public data set, like a person's Facebook "likes," may be used to predict personality traits like openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism even more accurately than the judgments made by people's close friends, families, spouse, and colleagues.²⁵ Further, decisions made by DHS are often made without the necessary individual context needed to understand the full meaning of a person's speech.

Conclusion

DHS' proposal does not meet international human rights standards. We urge the government to withdraw this proposal and conduct a thorough, detailed, and public analysis on the reach and efficacy of government social media monitoring programs generally. DHS should specifically make more information available about its use of social media monitoring at the border, including the extent to which algorithms are used to reveal non-public information and the scale of data collection of persons around the world.

Thank you,

Amie Stepanovich
U.S. Policy Manager
Access Now

Drew Mitnick
Policy Counsel
Access Now

Mingli Shi
Policy Fellow
Access Now

²¹ The Right to Privacy in the Digital Age, U.N. High Comm'r for Human Rights on its 27th Sess., A/HRC/27/37 (June 30, 2014), available at http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session27/Documents/A.HRC.27.37_en.pdf.

²² In addition, most social media platforms adopt confusing "opt-out" mechanisms so that people need to change the default options of privacy settings if they want to limit public access to certain information. See, Diane Gan and Lily R. Jenkins, Social Networking Privacy—Who's Stalking You? Accordingly, the DHS may collect many social data about people and store these data in their government files even without them noticing.

²³ See *supra* note 8; see also Art. 17, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

²⁴ Office of Inspector General, Homeland Security, OIG-17-40, DHS' Pilots for Social Media Screening Need Increased Rigor to Ensure Scalability and Long-term Success (2017), available at <https://www.oig.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/assets/2017/OIG-17-40-Feb17.pdf>.

²⁵ Wu Youyou, Michal Kosinski, and David Stillwell, *Computer-based Personality Judgments Are More Accurate Than Those Made By Humans*, 112 PNAS 1036, 1036, (2015).

Attachments:

1. Appendix I: Access Now's Reply Comments to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Re: Agency Information Collection Activities: Arrival and Departure Record (Forms I-94 and I-94W) and Electronic System for Travel Authorization, Docket No. 2016-14848, Aug. 22, 2016, <https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2016/08/Access-Now-Submission-to-CBP-Proposal.pdf>.
2. Appendix II: Access Now's Reply Comments to the Visa Office, Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, Re: Notice of Collection Under OMB Emergency Review: Supplemental Questions for Visa Applicants, Docket No. DOS-2017-0019, May 18, 2017, https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2017/07/CommentstoStateDept_AccessNow.pdf.
3. Appendix III: Access Now's Reply Comments to the Bureau of Consular Affairs, U.S. Department of State, Re: 60-Day Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Supplemental Questions for Visa Applicants, Docket Number: DOS-2017-0032, Sep. 20, 2017, <https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2017/09/State-Department-Supplemental-Questions-for-Visa-Applicants.pdf>.
4. Appendix IV: Coalition letter led by Access Now to the United Nations, <https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2017/02/JointLetterUSBorderSearches-final.pdf>.

Appendix I

U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Attn: Paperwork Reduction Act Officer
Regulations and Rulings, Office of Trade
90 K Street NE., 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20229-1177

August 22, 2016

Via Electronic Filing

Re: Agency Information Collection Activities: Arrival and Departure Record (Forms I-94 and I-94W) and Electronic System for Travel Authorization, Docket No. 2016-14848

To Whom It May Concern,

We write to submit comments on the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Customs and Border Protection (CBP)'s proposed changes to the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) and Form I-94W, which would ask respondents to "enter information associated with [their] online presence—Provider/Platform—Social media identifier." By asking travelers to provide the government with social media identifiers that could then be used to monitor online activity, the proposal risks undermining the rights to freedom of expression, freedom of association, and privacy. The CBP should withdraw the proposed rule change.

Access Now defends and extends the digital rights of users at risk around the world. By combining innovative policy, user engagement, and direct technical support, we fight for open and secure communications for all. As part of this mission, we fight for the right to speak freely, which is critical for demonstrating dissent, guaranteeing a free press, and defending human rights.

Following the publication of the request for comment, Access Now issued a survey requesting public responses to the proposed changes. More than 2,300 individuals responded to our survey. The overwhelming majority of respondents saw the proposal as negative. One respondent explained, "I believe that requesting this information would have a chilling effect on free and open discussion on social media -- discussion that is essential to democracy." Another worried, "I am terrified that a meta-analysis [sic] of my past years search history (often helping or showing students how to search for topics due on term papers -- on both the computers at my college, and my personal ones as well) would yield a very skewed view of who I am or what I believe." Several respondents called CBP's proposal an invasion of privacy.

U.S. law guarantees the rights to freedom of expression, freedom of association, and privacy as provided for in the U.S. Constitution as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Efforts to monitor social media activity have been shown to have a chilling effect on speech.¹ Government monitoring and analysis of social media content, even public content, can reveal a significant amount of non-public, protected information about a user and thus interfere with the right to privacy.

In addition to this comment, Access Now has joined nearly two dozen other organizations in a separate joint comment responding to this proposal. As that [comment](#) explains,

This inquiry goes far beyond the customary visa-waiver application questions regarding a person's name, address, criminal background, health status, and duration of stay. A person's online identifiers are gateways into an enormous amount of their online expression and associations, which can reflect highly sensitive information about that person's opinions, beliefs, identity, and community.

Surveillance of this sort has a disparate impact on users at risk, including communities of color, religious groups, LGBTQI communities, and other marginalized communities. As one respondent noted, this proposal “might bring a lot of harm when it is politically abused.” The internet has become a space for vulnerable communities to connect with one another. Social media surveillance is especially harmful to individuals living under repressive regimes where such expressions may be unlawful and subject to harsh penalties.

In addition, there is a high likelihood of confusion as to the purpose of CBP's collection and how the agency will use the data. For example, it is not immediately clear to what extent providing identifiers will impact decisions to grant immigration status to individuals entering the U.S. According to DHS, the ESTA “determines the eligibility of visitors to travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP).”² CBP determines admissibility into the U.S. upon arrival, and no information has been provided about how the social media identifiers will impact this determination. It is also unclear whether, how, or to what extent user data will be used by other government offices and agencies.

The stated goals of the proposed rule changes are to “provide DHS greater clarity and visibility to possible nefarious activity and connections by providing an additional tool set which analysts and investigators may use to better analyze and investigate the case.”³ Yet, the activity and communications of people willing to provide social media identifiers to DHS

¹ <https://www.accessnow.org/13503-2/>

² <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/esta>

³

<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2016/06/23/2016-14848/agency-information-collection-activities-arrival-and-departure-record-forms-i-94-and-i-94w-and>

are *least* likely to be of interest because individuals whose data DHS and other intelligence agencies seek would be unlikely to provide identifiers. Complicating matters further, large-scale analysis of social media implicit in the proposal is of questionable value due to the highly-contextual nature of expression on social media. As such, the proposal does not meet international human rights standards as articulated by the United Nations Human Rights Committee.⁴

Below, we provide additional data and the complete responses of the more than 2,300 survey participants.

For more information, please contact us at the addresses below.

Drew Mitnick
Policy Counsel
drew@accessnow.org

Amie Stepanovich
U.S. Policy Manager
Amie@accessnow.org

Nathan White
Senior Legislative Manager
nathan@accessnow.org

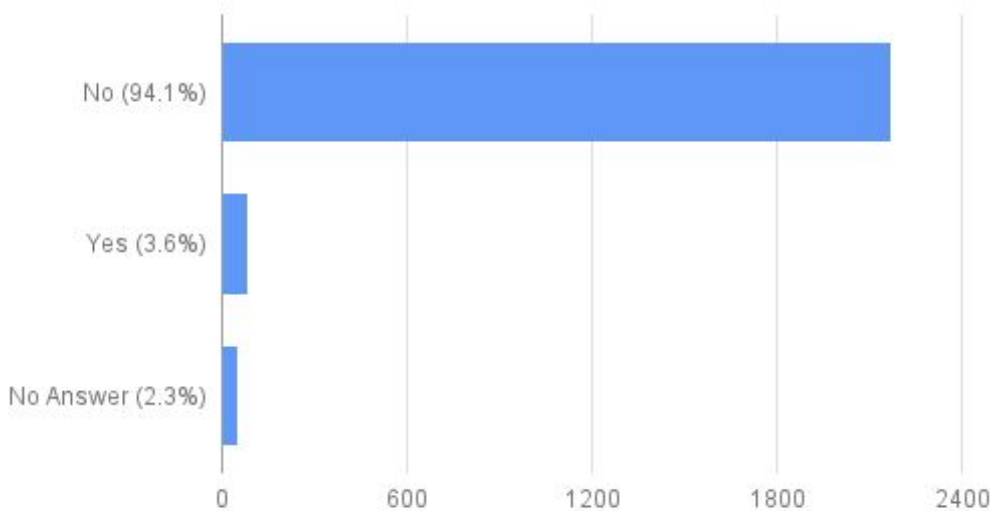
⁴ <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrc/docs/gc34.pdf>

Survey Results

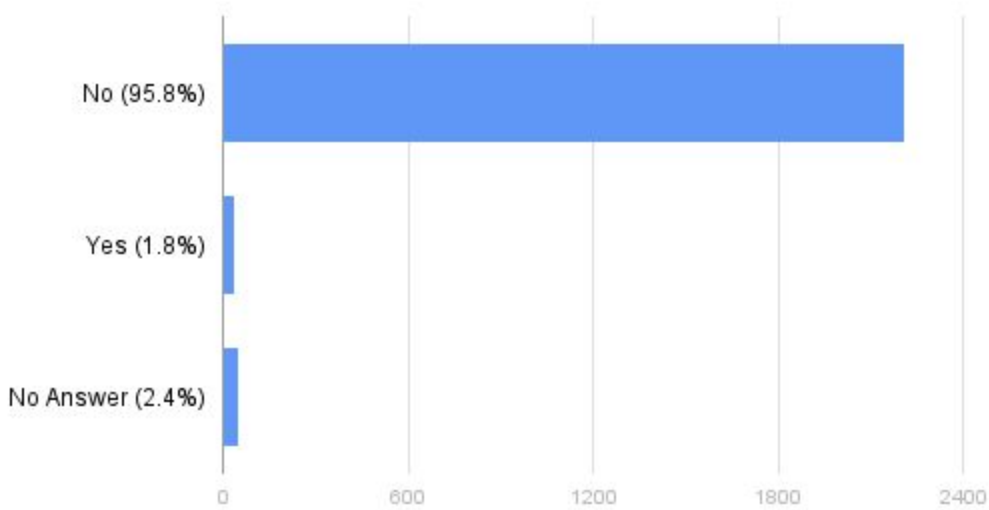
Drawing from a total number of more than 2,300 responses

I. As part of the process to enter the United States:

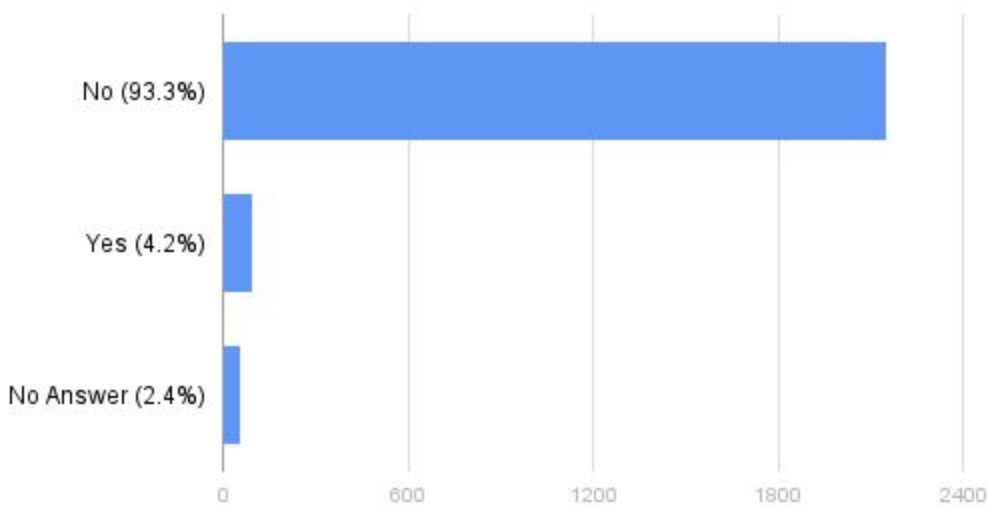
1. Should a U.S. customs agent be able to scan all of your recent posts on social media?



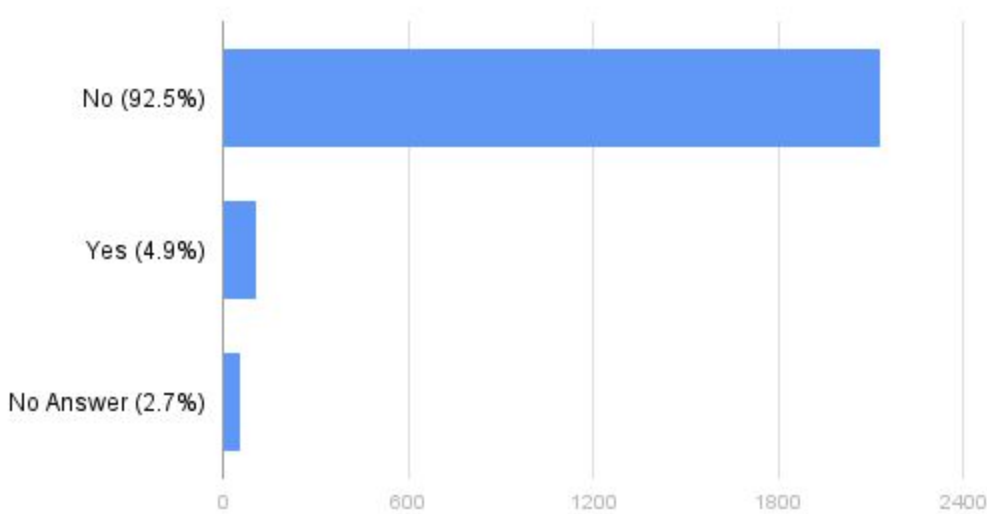
2. Should a secret computer program scan ALL of your posts on social media from the creation of those accounts?



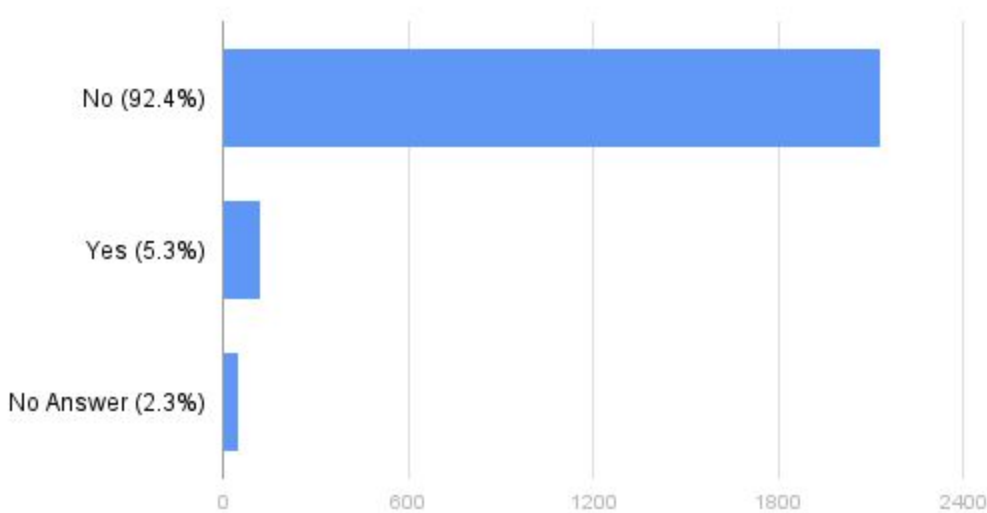
3. Should the U.S. government be able to examine whom you interact with and whom your friends are?



4. Should the U.S. government be able to conduct social media analysis to determine if any of your friends are in contact with people not welcome to travel in the United States?

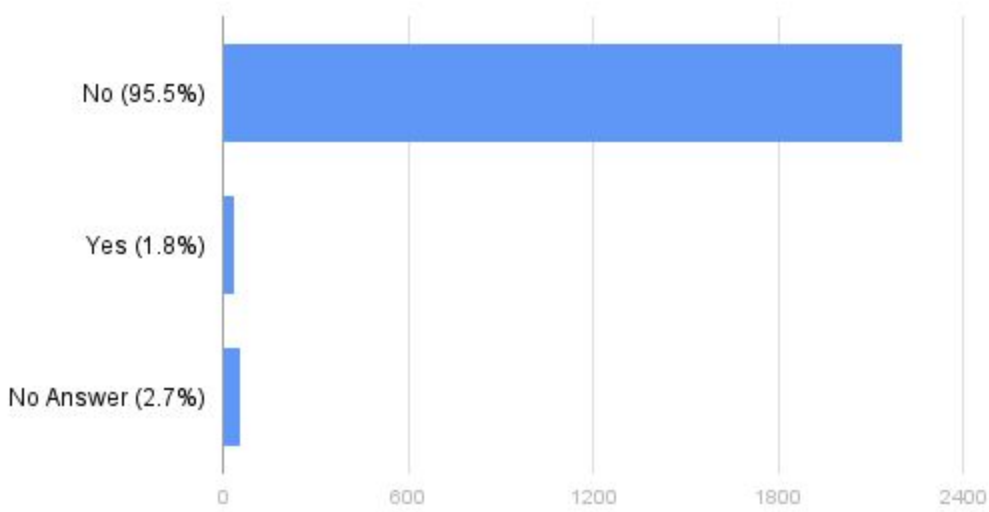


5. Should the U.S. government be able scan your username through other databases to connect it to other information the government holds on you, like your tax information or military records?

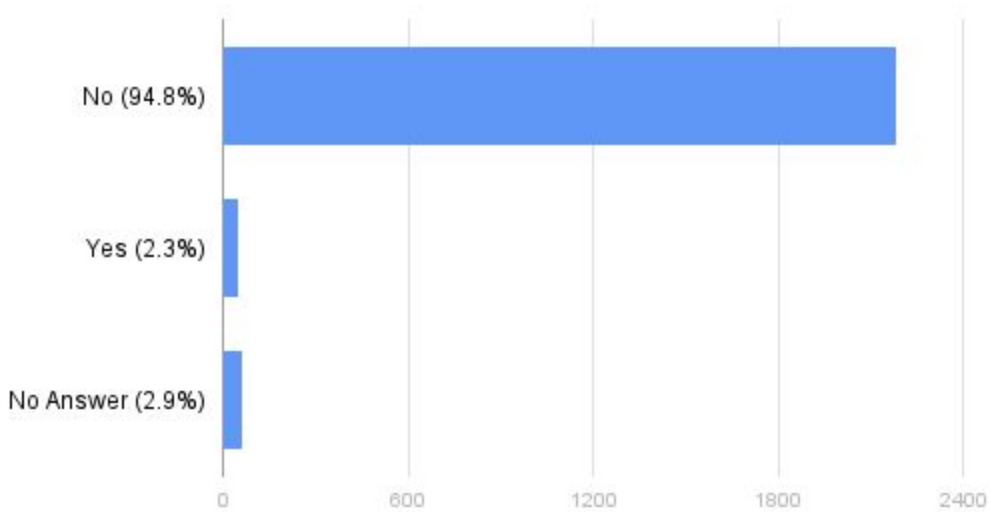


II. After you've been admitted to the United States:

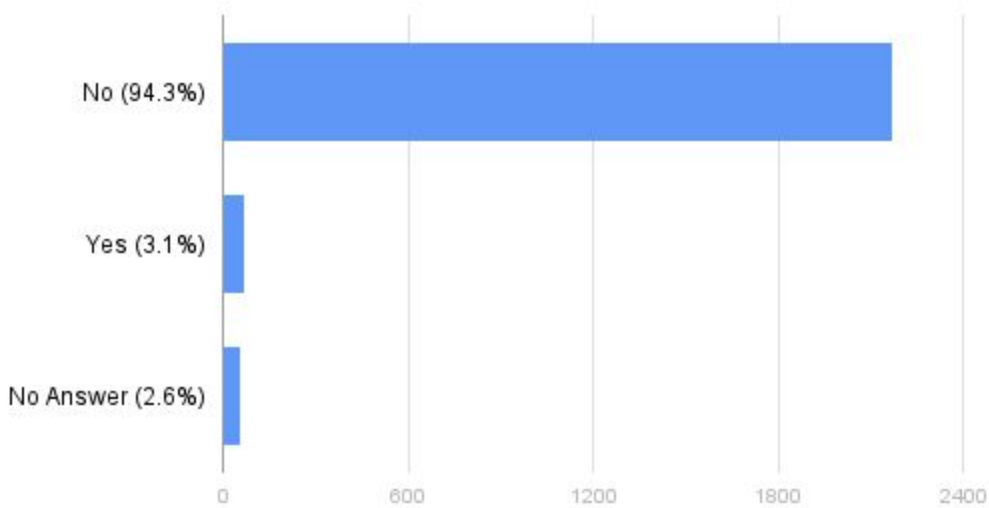
1. Should your social media accounts be connected to information in commercial databases, which can have details on your internet browsing habits, your shopping history, what you read, and potentially even your medical records?



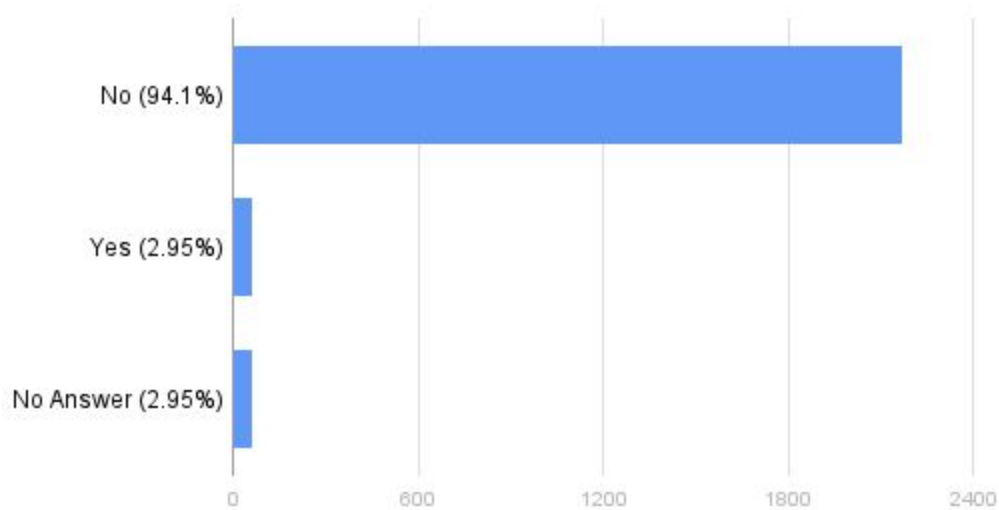
2. Should your social media information be placed into government databases for future use and analysis?



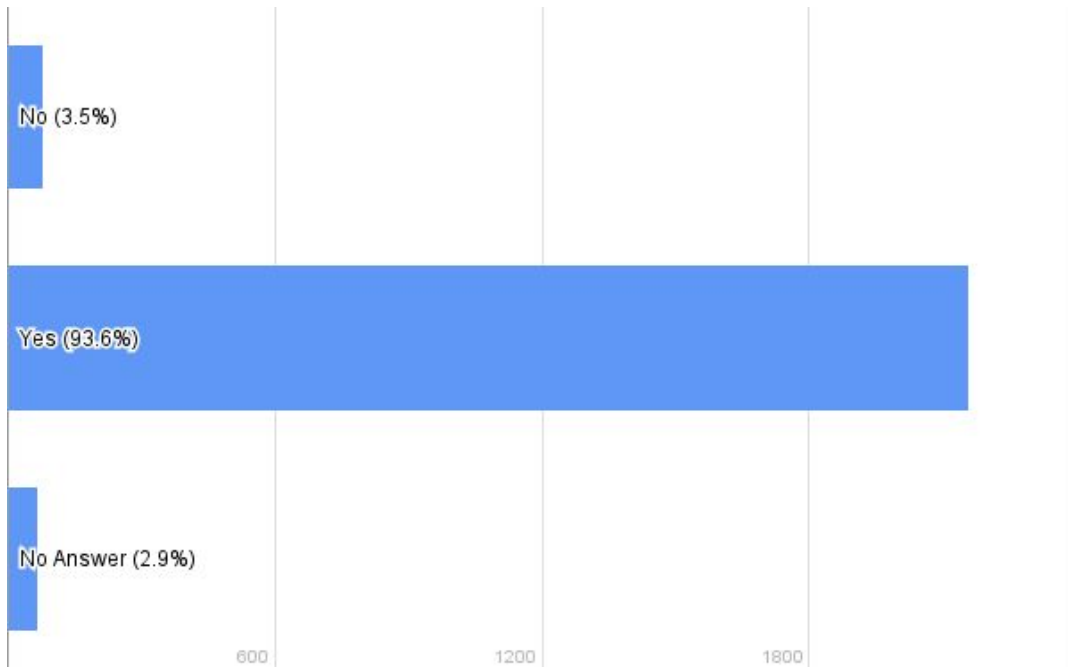
3. Should that database be accessible by other government agencies such as Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, or the NSA?



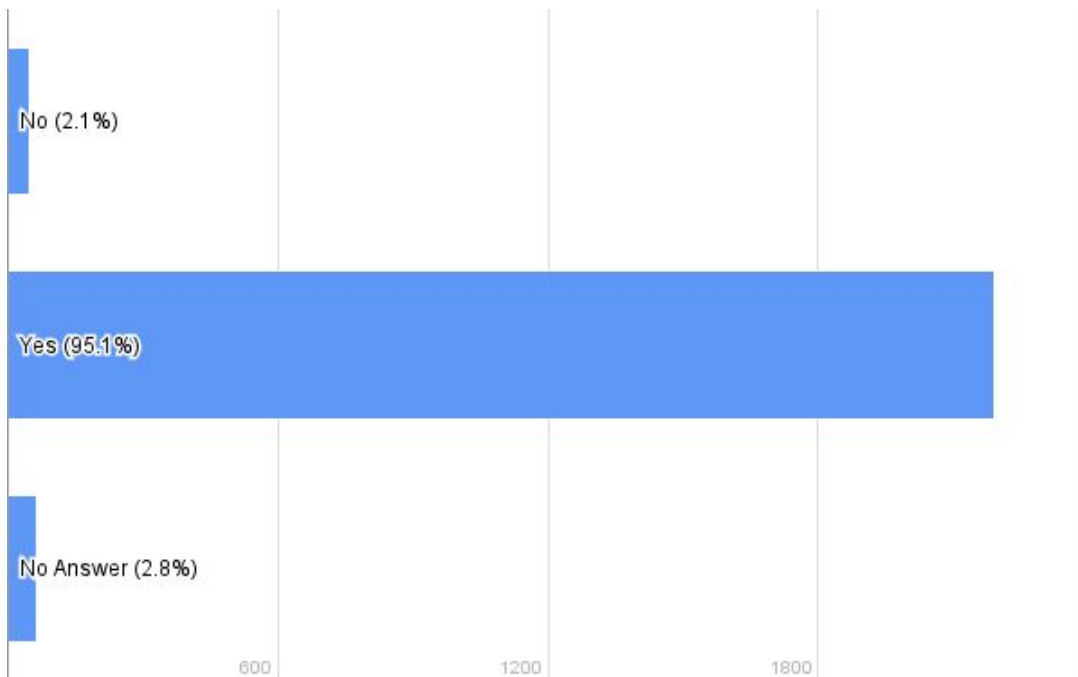
4. If you refuse to provide (or do not have) social media accounts, should that be reason to subject you to additional customs screening?



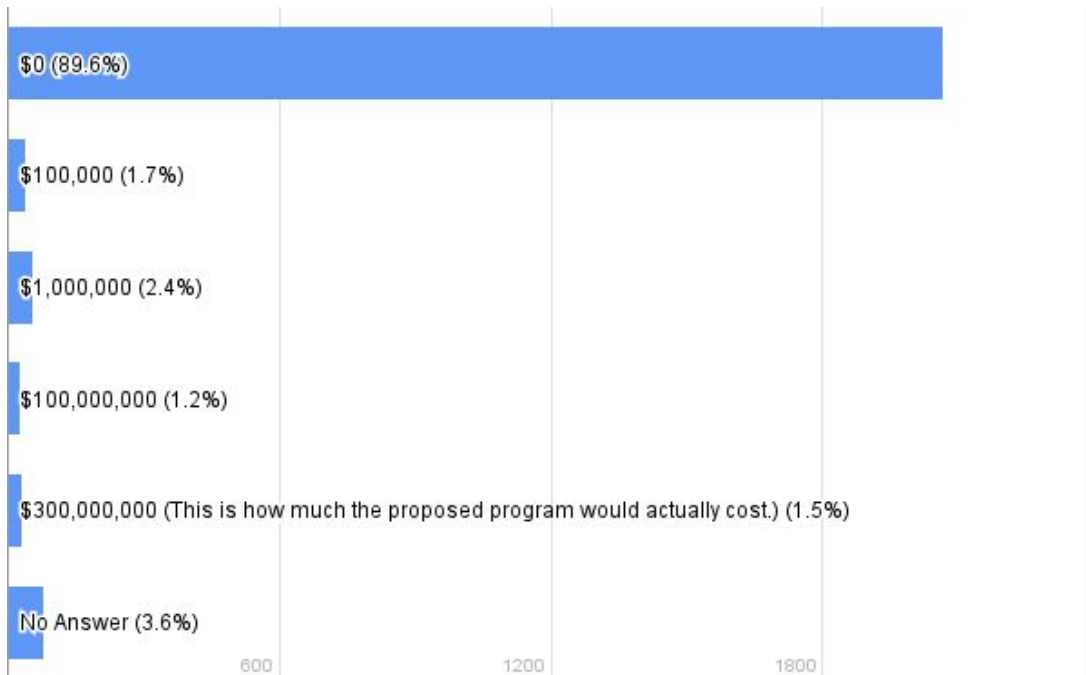
5. If you're denied entry to the United States, should you have the right to know why you were denied entry, even if based on analysis of your social media or secret databases?



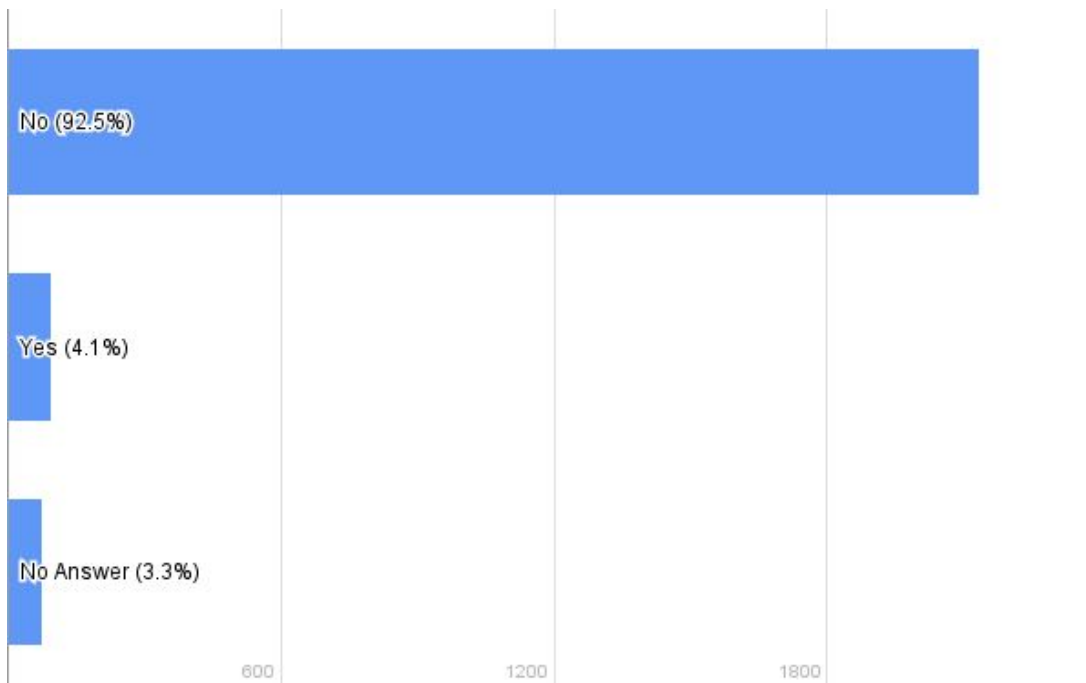
6. Should you have the right to appeal the decision if you're denied entry based on social media analysis?



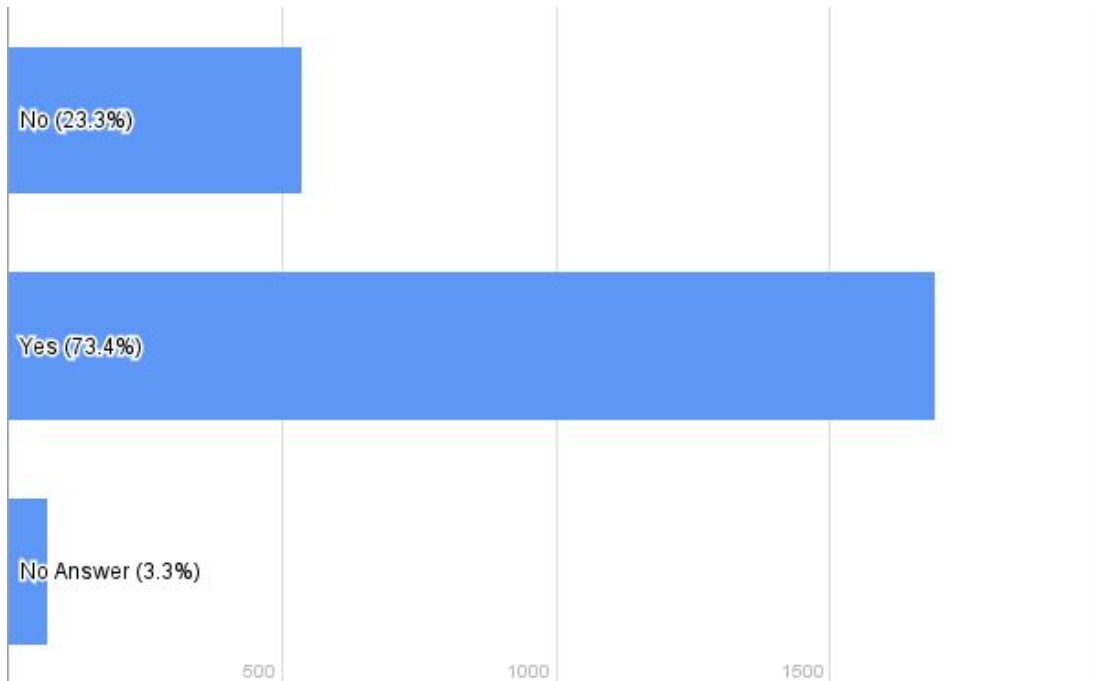
7. How much should taxpayers spend to request and analyze social media accounts of all passengers entering the United States?



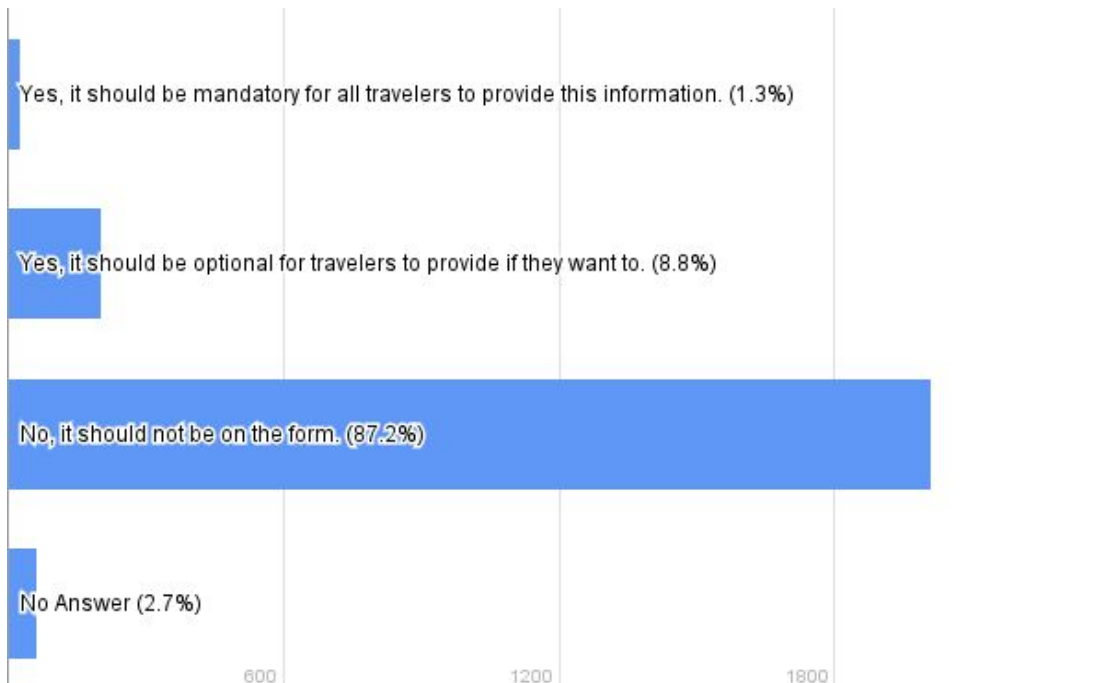
8. Should other nations that follow U.S. travel standards also request social media information in customs and immigrations processes?



9. Would you think twice about what you post on social media if you knew it could be used in these ways?



10. Should the U.S. government request that passengers voluntarily provide their social media accounts?



Anonymous Comments

The following 940 comments were anonymously submitted by survey participants

<p>A waste of money and resources. Unlikely to uncover reasons to question people that the government wouldn't already know to question through current procedures. Invasion of privacy of innocent people.</p>

<p>Absolutely not.would they reveiw my family's service to the U.S? would our overseas friends(Who we joke with, but don't know ellbe a reason to keep us from our Home? This is an absurd idea, some of us speak more than one language. Yes I am old enough to have had a second language as a Requirement at school. Jokes and shared experiences don't translate well, and can cause all kinds of problems. especially to the bureaucratic mind.</p>
--

<p>As long as they only search for data accessible to anyone, I don't care. Anyways, that's why I don't have any social media accounts, and I really hope me not wasting my time with the likes of Instagram won't make me appear suspicious soon</p>

<p>Cannot see the point of this 'plan'</p>
--

<p>DHS should respect the rights of everyone to privacy of personal information. It should focus instead only on the person travelling or residing as commonsense dictates. Only the subject should be scrutinized as the subject himself/herself is relevant for law enforcement purposes. Disregarding the subject and trying to focus on that subjects social connections would make sifting meaningfully , pragmatically meaningless. It's like staring at the tree, disregarding it but looking at the vast scenery which might have grave consequences. It's missing the tree itself! Wow. That would indeed be a serious lapse of risk assessment of perhaps a hazard standing right in front. Commonsense is indeed not common nowadays when it is needed more than ever in the rapidly changing challenges of a world now in chaos.</p>
<p>Grievous invasion of privacy.</p>
<p>I am appalled.</p>
<p>I can understand that some people - a very few people- should be checked. These people would be known. Most of us do not need to be checked.</p>
<p>I don't mind</p>
<p>I don't think this is something necessary for every person entering the USA, only for people who may already be under suspicion, or are on the no fly list.</p>
<p>I don't want a total government conroled sociaty. The proposed steps are not far away from restricting free expression of my opinion. Sometime the price is high that people missuse this freedom. But what about freedom to cary weapons. This is a greater danger for the US.</p>
<p>I know it is neccessary to have an idea who entres a county for more than one good reason. I am also not that greenly to think, kindness will be the answer to all qeustions. But it feels kind of strange to think of being x-rayed compeatly for only the whish of spending some time with wonderful people in a great country.</p>
<p>I think it is an invasive, expensive and impractical proposal with no promise of being beneficial. What about people who don't have social media accounts?</p>
<p>I think it presents an awfully slippery slope in terms of free speech. Also if my social media presence needs to be examined every time I enter the country then perhaps the social media presences of the ones doing the checking need to be under scrutiny as well. Fair is fair.</p>
<p>I think its invasive unnecessary and foolish.</p>
<p>I think that in one hand it is a serious violation to private life and on the other hand</p>

because I think it is totally useless.
I think that my online presence should not be subject to the purview of a government.
I think this is unnecessarily intrusive and will simply lead to people being more cautious about what they say and so make it more difficult to find material of real interest.
If a person is posting on social media, it's essentially already public knowledge; therefore govt, when admitting persons into the US in this world of de facto terrorism, should be able to protect our homeland in this way.
If it means we're safer from terror attacks and other threats by all means look at eveybodies social media accounts and texts and calls etc
I'm not convinced this is a great use of public money. It is a (large) step toward Big Brother, and away from freedom, privacy and other American values. This will damage America's image abroad. I'm aware that the security/privacy balance is a trade-off, but I think this loses too much privacy and gains too little security. Also, the US may be disappointed to discover that their visitors are not as awesome as their Facebook profiles would suggest.
In the wake of terrorism conducted by individuals who use social media to congregate and expresd/share their beliefs, it is understandable that you would believe that scanning the social media accounts of people trying to enter the country would ferret out these individuals. This line of thinking, though, is a fallacy. Terrorists will provide you with false information, and giving you this sort of power would set a dangerous precedent that would allow abusive leaders to prevent dissidents from entering the country. The current presidential race is a perfect example of just who these abusive leaders may be.
Intrusive. Also discriminatory to people not on social media who will be grilled further.
invading privacy
It is a serious breach on my right to privacy. Everyone is considered guilty untill proven innocent and that is not how a good society works.
It is none of their business
It is violation of my personal space.
it makes me strongly consider living outside the country. police state, reminiscent of communism at its worst
It seems fair, we may see all of the information, presumptions and conclusions you have

about us.
It's an attack on peoples privacy rights and the right for free speech. In addition to that it will inevitably lead to selfsensorship.
It's an invasion of privacy
It's uncalled for...Most of the security apparatus working for governments knows where to look for criminals and who are backstage actors. In the name of security harassing general travelers is like violating basic rights & freedom of a person.
My online presence is almost non-existent, however, the US Government along with any other government does not have the right to investigate my personal hard-copy mail, nor my telephone calls and under those circumstances should not have the right to investigate my internet conversations either. Obviously I'm using my in a collective manner.
No way.
One word: PRIVACY. I might not be a US citizen, but I still have the right to privacy.
Overreaching. Too expensive and time consuming for travelers. Could leave a US citizen stranded. Nothing good can come of this.
Please stop playing innocent on wanting to protect the US. You only want to gather information for some shady purposes and it will not help at all in terms of protection. You know it, and it's disgusting you act like this is for the country best interest. If someone with ill intent against the US, say a terrorist, wanted to get in, do you think they'll have a social media account? They'll never create one or will delete them. You're only wasting money in this project that could be used better in other areas. Or just come forward and reveal the truth about this ridiculous project.
Presumably well-intended, but a terrible idea nonetheless. SNS is used in a lot of different ways by different people, and I don't believe government officials should be given the power to make such heavy decisions based on something so open to misunderstanding.
Recockulous!
Sounds invasive but the world have become not so secure.
That's why I don't use any social media and pay as much as possible with cash. Just keep a low profile.

Let those in charge first read the Writ Mandamus of the National Liberty Alliance.

And let DoHS tell me why they needs 2700 rifles and 2 billion pieces of hollow point ammunition. It stinks and have nothing to do with security, but with control and suppression. And so on... and so on.

The haystack is already t big - you dont find the needle by increasing the size of the search! I dont use social media - but there is far too much profiling going on by governments wasting our money intruding on our lives.

The major problem with this is it assumes people act the same way they would in real life online and this just isn't true. Many of the sites I use people prefer ambiguity (not using any of their real information like their name or face) so just assuming that it would be easy to tell if they're in contact with some nasty people the US (or other such nation that wants to implement this) wouldn't be that simple to track, especially with how truely international internet social media really is.

It also sends up a major red flag that they'll be asking for usernames and passwords; that's usually the sign of a security threat to your account and I could see many people not wanting to go along with it just on that alone. Especially since most of the time posts on social media are PUBLIC and therefore don't requirie signing in to view. For the ones that are friends only or on some actually private board (since those do exist) maybe then request it, but as said people (or at least people on the areas of the web I've been on) don't generally conduct themselves like they would in real life because the internet gives them an area of ambigutiy. This is entirely pedicated on people's social media being a mirror of who they are, along with being able to show that they are somehow in conjunction with people they may only barely know.

I actually have many more concerns, but I fear this is turning more into a rant.

The people are already being treated as if they were crimininals and the government already has enough resources to protect its citizens from sectarian violence.

The U.S. Government already has the NSA for such surveillance activities. Kindly stop trying to turn the United States into more a surveillance state that it already is.

The US government with the help of the UK government have invaded several countries where they have no business being; for reasons that were not justifyable and now that the backlash of their idiocy is crashing down around them in the form of gihadi retaliation, they want to subject millions of innocent travelers to an invasion of privacy because of mistakes they've made... They should be sending spineless politicians like Hilary Clinton, and misogynistic, racist pigs like Donald Trump to Syria and Iraq and leave the innocent

travellers and people of the world alone. BEYOND A JOKE.
This should not be permissible without a court order following a review where the government must show cause.
This is a violation of my own privacy and must not be an argument of denying a visa or any other form of permit. The entire proposal says a lot about the US government.
This is a violation of privacy. But I suppose the US Government stopped caring about its citizens' privacy a long time ago. Nice to know I'm living in a real time dystopian society.
This is a violation of the 4th amendment (to be secure in persons, property, papers, etc.) There really is no reason why the government should be going through my social media.
This is tantamount to searching one's group of friends and the work one does in real life, which customs does not do. Therefore, this plan to search one's online presence is a terrible invasion of privacy.
This should never be done and is not any business of the USA period. This treats innocent people like criminals. This is going way to far.
This, like the very existence of a Department of Homeland Security, is just more evidence that the U.S. is turning into a paranoid police state, with more and more violations of personal privacy.
totally unacceptable
Very scary stuff from the civil liberties point of view.
What I choose to post on social media concerns only myself and those I choose to share with. I am opposed to any government coercing or even requesting knowledge of my personal accounts.
What I do online is my business, not the American government's. They have no right to stalk me.
What is wrong with you? Are you trying to destroy your citizens' peace of mind by destroying their privacy? Do you WANT to be reviled as incompetent, corrupt enforcers that just want the power to strangle people who would say no?
Where is Freedom. Home Land should have a very strict regulations about How, When, and Who; They are to screen people at any Border or Entry Point. As it is Now they are becoming a nuisance for the Travelers.

<p>While this may sound like a logical thing to do, people who want to hide their activities can do so very easily. People can have multiple accounts on any social media account, which username will they provide?</p>
<p>Yet another overreach that will punish ordinary citizens and not affect real criminals.</p>
<p>You shouldn't even consider it. That's how bad this idea is.</p>
<p>I believe that requesting this information would have a chilling effect on free and open discussion on social media - discussion that is essential to democracy.</p>
<p>Intrusive and counter-productive. Intel services already have far more data than they can analyse. They need to be more target, build up humint capabilities.</p>
<p>It is a travesty that you have to become a psychopath for a living - even if you are not a psycho. Rebel HS - join the free people.</p>
<p>It would violate the right to free speech.</p>
<p>This is going beyond protecting personal data; it feels like this is an effort to take hold of everything a person (who might be just a tourist) holds dear.</p> <p>If social media is but an vent-out to my everyday woes, what right does a country like that have to go through my accounts to judge me?? What do you care if I shout about my personal life on sns (of which I use only one platform and that is not even fb), if I write about the troubles my family members cause me or shout about the books I read. Some people have anxiety and other mental diseases that are waved off because they don't show regardless of crap like this; what would you do if someone had an attack because of being questioned about what they post on sns???</p> <p>This is a ridiculous attempt that should have been trashed the moment it was proposed and not left to come to this point. This is an outrage. And it makes me more and more unwilling to ever step foot in the US as I've always viewed it as a vile and hostile environment - _____ -</p>
<p>This is more and more what George Orwell predicted. But monitoring all citizens of all countries without other suspicion is ridiculous.</p>
<p>Some of us keep a semi-anonymous to anonymous presence online. I urge the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to respect our privacy and in some cases, our desire for a more secure online presence.</p>
<p>Act through love</p>

<p>Because of this kind of action, I am not interested to visit the US.</p>
<p>Bloody ridiculous and egregious invasion of privacy.</p>
<p>I don't like it.</p>
<p>I don't think have any to search without a warrant.</p>
<p>I think it's Orwellian</p>
<p>Intrusive, breach of privacy, unnecessary, expensive to run, does not make the country more secure</p>
<p>It is a terrible, Orwellian idea. We are not a totalitarian nation; this is just plain wrong.</p>
<p>It is an unwarranted invasion of privacy. I suspect that this is already being done anyway, possibly in contravention of the law.</p>
<p>It violates everything for which America stands.</p>
<p>Social media accounts should be private unless there is a court order or a known immediate threat to airport, bus terminal, border entry point or train terminal into the USA.</p>
<p>Stop harassing law abiding citizens just because you are completely incompetent at your jobs.</p>
<p>The department should be required to show cause and have a relevant warrant (based upon evidence that I can request sight of) before searching.</p>
<p>This is a very invasive measure and will definitely discourage me from holidaying in the USA in future. My wife and I enjoyed a recent vacation in Hawaii, but this intrusion into people's personal lives is unwarranted. We won't be coming back if this goes ahead.</p>
<p>This is just another invasion of privacy without judicial oversight. It is as if the Fourth Amendment does not exist.</p>
<p>This is not George Orwell's book 1984!</p>
<p>This seems an invasion of privacy to me, even though I don't use social media.</p>
<p>This will be a phenomenal waste of time and resources since those who will partake in criminal activity will already refrain from using social media so as to not give any indication of their intentions. You will only catch novices at best, and annoy people who will do you no real harm.</p>

Why should everyone be subjected under this kind of thing and then denied entry just because they're sharing something that is deemed as security risk by the States? Every person has a right to remain silent and to their own privacy in real life and social media accounts are the online versions of those same spaces where people can feel safe because of them being private. Trying to force them to handle you their own usernames under the threat of being denied entry to the USA if not is like trying to bust inside their own homes unwillingly and this is as appalling as it should be, especially if people are just tourists, trying to visit the States as any normal tourist would. Besides, as one popular saying goes, assuming makes an ass out of you (u) and me (because ass-u-me) and just like opinions can change, so can posts as well, thus you can never ever know for certain what is that person like, even if you would scan the entirety of their social website accounts. Assuming someone to be a security threat because of a year-old post is as wrong as assuming someone to be a terrorist just because they're wearing a specific set of clothing.

You guys ought to to get a life and fix your own incompetence, before resorting to idiotic requests and unconstitutional methods. Bottom line: Your perceived exigencies cannot, do not, and shall not create unconstitutional demands of people.

Far too invasive of my privacy

I do believe there is some kind of importance to seek incriminating information on social medias to apprehend those with malicious intentions to hurt others for ANY reason.

However, this is not the way. Doing so will most likely create enormous amounts of pressure to get the work done, will incriminate tons of innocent people (for the reason that people write whatever they want on social media and every assumption can lead those posts into the secretley malicious form) and will cost a large amount of money.

I do think the United States should do everything they can to keep itself secure and safe from terrorist and criminal acts. However, this particular move is akin to putting each person who wants to enter America into an interrogation room and torture him for half an hour to see if he's a terrorist or not. It's over exaggerated.

Please rethink your plans of implanting this security measurement carfully.

Yours sincerely,

concerned citizen

In my opinion, the department of homeland security is a bunch of despicable thugs and goons!

Inadmissible, this is privacy infringement
It is no business of the Homeland security what i do online as long as i have not done anything wrong....no government authorities incl, from my own country have the right to snoop on ordinary people.
Privacy, please!
that's another form of surveillance and it's an infringement of privacy. Put it this way, if they are in our shoes, would they allow others to infringe your privacy?
That's worst than the KGB in the former USSR
The Constitution and the Bill of Rights grant me the right to privacy, that why they also gave us the right to carry guns to deal with oppressive governments.
The USA was created with the ideal of freedom of expression and freedom of speech Thursday proposed plans go directly against that ideal. Is America becoming the old USSR?
This Orwellian crap has to stop.
This plan is not innocuous; travelers' data would be used to determine who is more likely to be a terrorist. A terrorist in this sense is anyone with opinions and/or beliefs not held by the state.
How do they interpret what they read and why should a human being be scrutinized for words written which can be said and taken so many different ways just the same way humans can miss interpret the spoken word, we humans have the right to speak and write our thoughts however we wish to do e.g. the word such in the English language written or spoken can mean many things red read read, how can anyone expect to differentiate words especially if taken out of concept, or in reference to or in relation to a mental thought written, or a cultural difference, we have to believe in our ability to be able to say what we want but I for sure know that there is only approximation of a an individual being able to say that whatever is written is what is meant
I think George Orwell was right! The last time I visited USA was in 1986. We will never see those halcyon days (easy and free movement of peoples) again if all of the spies in the world are permitted to rifle through our 'underpants'. Basically that is what the law enforcement agencies are agitating to have in place. Hate breeds hate and that's exactly where all this spying will lead. So over the 'fear mongering' by our so called 'people who

(should) know better'. :-(
I think it is intrusive and completely unnecessary.
I think no government should have the right to spy on people that never have did anything dangerous.
I think the surveillance state has gone too far towards eroding formerly democratic norms. The right to privacy from government surveillance is an important freedom worth defending.
I'm afraid my comments would cause me problems if I ever had to return to the states, which I never plan to do. OK, it sucks.
Invasion of my fucking privacy.
It's an invasion of privacy. What I & my friends do online if none of their business as long as we aren't breaking any laws.
It's none of their business.
My life is mine and what I do and say is none of the governments business. That's why there is a 1st Amendment to the Constitution.
Scanning people's online presence is a good way to suppress free speech, one of the liberties that the terrorists it would supposedly protect us from fight against.
The idea of this further invasion of people's privacy is appalling. To put it bluntly it stinks. One gets sick of the USA being Big Brother and wanting to control everyone and everything. The USA has no god-given right to do these things, but of course you can see how they so willingly invoke the lord's name in their heinous activities.
The US Department of Homeland Security has not right to my privacy.
The US government is becoming more and more invasive of citizen's private lives using the excuse of National Security. Soon, we may be required to vote publicly!
Those who would give up Essential Liberty to purchase a little Temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety
Absent a search warrant or probable cause, there should be no request, or demand for access to social media accounts. For security and privacy reasons, I do not have social media accounts.
I believe I have the right to online privacy.

I feel that this is an unwarranted breach of a person's right to privacy. Further, I fear that it is more likely to harm the innocent than to catch the guilty, or prevent the commission of crimes, as those with criminal intent are usually more skilled at concealing what they don't want known. People who are genuinely innocent of any wrong intent are often unaware of the ways in which harmless remarks and communications may be misinterpreted.

I short, I feel that this would breach an individual's right to privacy, with probably little or no gain for public safety.

I find this an invasion of privacy, and dancing on the edge of violation of the First Amendment.

it is shit

It's contrary to the 4th Amendment

stop spying

That's both a completely unnecessary invasion of privacy and a violation of individual rights. I doubt that it would make the country safer or prevent the entrance of potentially dangerous travelers.

I have 'multiple' 'lives' which I lead - some are in counseling disabled people, or people with Cancer and related issues, and sometimes my searching habits and postings are completely unrelated to me and if done through e-mail I consider that 'privileged' communication. Other times I play 'Devils Advocate' -- thus my e-mails, or postings do not represent my true personal beliefs. I am terrified that a meta-annalists of my past years search history (often helping or showing students how to search for topics due on term papers - on both the computers at my college, and my personal ones as well) would yield a very skewed view of who I am or what I believe - and in this day and age, which has more credibility, -- an ISP computer log, or MY word about what my actions were - provided I could remember it 10-20 years, and 5, 000 students ago.

There is already FAR too much meta-data on the web as it is, without allowing the government to mine it, or to allow the government to create even more intrusive ways in which to view and reconstruct my personal - let alone professional --- 'Self'.

It would be the same as phone tapping. A paranoid suggestion.

Not acceptable

Respect the Constitution.

<p>Since anyone can google someone's name (for Free), that's not a problem. But I would object to giving account info. to Anyone who doesn't have a warrant! Spying on citizens without due cause or warrants is over-stepping authority & a waste of tax-payer money.</p>
<p>The on-line presence is a form of communication, just as talking on a phone is communication. The U.S. doesn't listen to every single phone call, so why should they want to look at another means of communicating? It's almost as if a person would be strip searched every time they entered the country. Is this really necessary, and where is freedom of expression in all of this?</p>
<p>They already have our photo and fingerprints from when I transited USA from Fort Lauderdale docks to LAX airport. My family has made the conscious decision never to visit the USA ever again. It is not what Americans call the greatest country in the world! Far from it, it is a 3rd world country having no decent basic health system.</p>
<p>They should have probable cause to search, such that if here is no probable cause then no search.</p>
<p>This is a slipper slope what would only allow for further and further invasion into every person's privacy. When will it be enough? Where will it be too far?</p>
<p>I believe that to be invasion of privacy.</p>
<p>I believe this plan is intrusive and offers no additional protection to US residents</p>
<p>Nothing</p>
<p>One line..4th Amendment.</p>
<p>Online presence must remain private for visitors to the U.S.</p>
<p>Respect Privacy, the Constitution, and Due Process.</p>
<p>This is a costly and pointless affair which both can and ultimately will be abused, and it is clear that making it initially optional will eventually lead to it becoming mandatory, as the additional screening of individuals who refuse to provide such information or do not have it to provide will become. It will serve no security purposes but will inevitably be used for data mining, profiling, and other such unfortunate and ultimately unacceptable things. The very idea is ludicrous to suggest in the name of security.</p>
<p>Unacceptable</p>
<p>I am fed up with all the different governmental agencies let alone corporations that are invading my privacy and collecting information about me without my consent. The</p>

Homeland Security needs to collect less information about its citizens and be smarter about how they go about looking for so called terrorists. I think they have become information bloated resulting, unfortunately, in the inability to recognize the real terrorists and their plots.

No, I don't live in US but the but the my online presence it's active

A nightmare even George Orwell never imagined

A search of one's online presence should only be conducted by Homeland Security if the individual in question is suspected, with LEGITIMATE probable cause other than simply being a foreigner entering the country, of being a threat to national security. With the understanding that social media monitoring can be helpful to detect potential threats, the government should perhaps instead work with social media companies to develop certain red flag algorithms for suspected ties to terrorism. The social media platforms themselves could scan for flagged content, screen alerts to see which are actually potentially threatening, and then notify Homeland Security to specific accounts they deem suspicious, for further investigation into the persons connected to them if necessary. Simply enacting a blanket search of someone's online presence as a default for entry sets a dangerous precedent for first-amendment violations of the right to free speech. I think most people are aware that the government can investigate your online presence if you are suspected of a crime, but by no means should there be a database with which the government can keep track of the personal information and opinions people share with their friends by default, with the aim of using that data to root out enemies. It would be all too easy for this to turn into a witch-hunt, eerily reminiscent of the Cold War red scare, in which scores of individuals were unconstitutionally blacklisted and even arrested for espousing un-American ideas. Internet anonymity is, admittedly, a double-edged sword, but it does more good than harm with regards to creative expression and personal development. With the current political climate, the fear of this program using personal information and opinions to persecute, malign or discriminate against individuals is very real, and such a policy is unacceptable to me.

Are you trying to be like the East Germany spy agency?

Clearing U.S Customs and Immigration at point of entry is already a lengthy enough process. Adding the screening of Social Media Accounts will add further unnecessary inconvenience to travelers to the United States.

Coupled with the Pre-Departure completion of the Department of Homeland Security's ESTA Form (Electronic System for Travel Authorization), and it's associated cost to foreign travelers. The U.S Government already has the tools to detect, prevent, and remove threats with-in the U.S.A.

<p>Considering the technology and expertise Homeland security have, I believe that it will be a waste of time and money and throw out a lot 'red herrings' to search a persons 'online presence'. People with nothing to hide are the kind to unwittingly wander into an inappropriate sites or 'chat' in non PC ways as a part of in-jokes with friends. Those up to nasty business are going to know how to cover their tracks and use speech that doesn't draw attention to themselves. It may seem like an easy way to find the bad people but I don't think that's how bad people work.</p>
<p>Do not agree it's na violation of my freedom</p>
<p>Doing that is inefficient at best, can turn up a lot of false positives, and most likely won't even help a lot. In short, not worth it.</p>
<p>Don't be so bloody paranoid. It is no wonder that half the world hate America.</p>
<p>Enough is enough, stop infringing on our privacy and civil liberties!</p>
<p>Going though US immigration control is already much more stressful than in the UK or France where the terrorism risk is much greater. Why do they need to know what I or my friends post on Social media? It is too easy for an over-zealous official to misinterpret a statement. Also, how can they possibly check posts in all the world languages? Are the States going back to the McCarthy era?</p>
<p>Have your read 1984, because this is 1984.</p>
<p>horrible</p>
<p>I am a journalist and respect the Americans perspective about press freedom and individual rights and privacy. If people are eligible and have a validated visa, they should be allowed to enter the U.S. However, I also believe that there are a lot of valuable data in social media that the U.S Government should track carefully which I believe would be very helpful for preemptive efforts to combat terrorism.</p>
<p>I am planning to visit the US twice next year from Australia - if enacted it would make me reconsider these plans.</p>
<p>I dont trust the honesty with the plan, will surely just get misused, expensive and ineffective against threats to US and usual. Spend the time, effort and more money on the internal army and security force in US instead as well internet-security against hackers, industry espionage etc.</p>
<p>I only accept such searches as lawful if there should be anything to suggest that a person might in some way pose a threat to national security.</p>

I was thinking of visiting USA from Australia. If they bring this in I wont ever consider going. I understand the USA is worried about certain groups but there has to be another way except prying into social media.

If individuals who represent the U.S. government feel the need to know intimate details about individual citizens, then there must be a public data base that allows access of the same intimate details of those employees. Spies are only held accountable if they are subject to being spied upon.

In Australia, such an intrusion would be widely opposed and regarded as an extreme invasion of privacy. Our two countries must resist the reaction to panic under stress, for degrading our prized freedoms to express thoughts, discuss issues and engage without fear in casual or purposeful exchanges with friends, colleagues and others. Otherwise the enemy has won, by reducing the quality and benefits of communication in a free society.

In visiting the US, you are then subject to the laws of the US which also includes the right to free speech and freedom from illegal search and seizure which in making mandatory and not voluntary in providing this information could be deemed to be violating their own legislation and therefore unconstitutional.

Invasion of privacy. Some things could be taken out of context to detrimental effect on the individual concerned.

It is an invasive, expensive and unnecessary idea that smacks of totalitarianism in a country that claims to espouse freedom and human rights.

It is not a good decision. People who have personality and mental disorders in which paranoia is a primary symptom will go through unnecessary stress, anxiety attacks etc.

Some use their social media accounts as a personal diary, a safe place to express opinions, share interests and as a tool for growth and self-discovery. It would feel like a violation of privacy to most. Yes, it is online for everyone to see, but a user has control over who may see their content and can block other users if necessary. The government can not be blocked.

its an invasion of privacy!

It's ok to check someone social media accounts but it's not ok to sneak peek in depth.

It's totally nonsense to have the Homeland Security or anyone else to search travelers online presence.

Looks like the US cannot wait to be more like China or North Korea. Nice....

<p>Mind your own business!!! My family has been in this country since 1602 while New York was still New Amsterdam. They came here to get away from government interference! So why would I think Homeland Security butting into my business is an acceptable thing?</p>
<p>No person or government should have the right to view or electronically search my personal phone, computer or tablet</p>
<p>NO way.</p>
<p>Our founders would be outraged at these proposals... as am I.</p> <p>Giving a 'little' inch like this is allowing the government to take several yards.</p> <p>What would Jefferson or John Adams say? No way, Big Brother!</p>
<p>Please consider the United States position as a role model for othe countries on issues of democracy - i.e. What would China do?</p>
<p>Sounds like a blatant disregard of my personal information on social media sites.</p>
<p>The idea of requiring a person's social media history in order to screen them is another dangerous step in the direction of loss-of-privacy and personal freedoms.</p>
<p>The U.S. Department of Homeland Security can't even use it's massive amounts of data to stop the Mafia, gun runners or drug dealers. It's a waste of time and money. Rebuild your infrastructure!</p>
<p>The US DEPT OF homeland Securit has no right to infringe my privacy.</p>
<p>The US Dept of Homeland Security should not be able to search 'online presence' without having cause to believe someone has engaged in illegal activities.</p>
<p>Their plan is tremendously intrusive and shouldn't even be considered. Terrorists wouldn't be stupid enough to leave tracks in social media - only innocent people with opinions will suffer.</p>
<p>There is no precedent for searching the private interactions of an individual when they leave or enter the country in any medium. It is a violation of the 5th Amendment to conduct searches on personal, private communication without a warrant.</p>
<p>There's already far too much intrusive surveillance directed against the general public and we need less, not more.</p>
<p>This and other crazy stuff in the land of the brave and free and my fear of flying are the</p>

<p>reasons why I have not visited the USA and likely never will. This is sad because I have family in the USA and follow a lot interesting people online, that I would like to visit.</p>
<p>This is an invasion of privacy.</p>
<p>U.S. Department of Homeland Security should probably spend time actually getting proper intel rather than profiling people by their Social Media idiocy.</p>
<p>We all know how much they don't care about my opinion.</p>
<p>While CIA should be allowed to continue any necessary investigation, it should stay totally secret for maximum effect. The data would be too easy to misinterpret if collected openly and massively. Also, it would definitely change the way people write their social media posts, but the old posts are also in the data, and for many it would be uncomfortable to reveal those to strangers.</p>
<p>Would be outrageous if this happens for any kind of civil right</p>
<p>As I check Facebook and Linked in when assessing the application of a person I don't know for volunteering with an organisation with which am involved; I guess I can't complain if US does the same. However, I do have concerns about the amount of information they are seeking to have.</p>
<p>Big Brother</p>
<p>Censorship is unacceptable</p>
<p>Forget it!</p>
<p>fuck you</p>
<p>Horrible idea, this will likely cause a lot of false positives and negatives. Creating a lot of issues for everyone interacting with the US.</p>
<p>I am personally totally against it but understand the need for more security as social media is often used for hate speeches etc. However, how to avoid breach of privacy and spying and commercial and other abuse. I don't think that's possible. Social media should only be scanned if there is a verifiable suspicion of any kind of criminal activity or potential other threats.</p>
<p>I can't believe this is even being entertained. It's 1984.</p>
<p>I definitely would not agree to the plans to search my online presence!!</p>
<p>I feel all recent activity would show how reputable the person is, older data should not be</p>

<p>included. General access to social media accounts should not be given to the government.</p>
<p>I have nothing to hide and my social media accounts are boring, but nevertheless this would be a gross violation of my privacy for no good reason. The real bad guys would never answer truthfully, and might maintain an innocent account for authorities, and a pseudonymous one for other purposes. If the rule comes in force, I will never visit the US any more, just on principle.</p>
<p>I think this would be a serious violation of people's personal privacy and they would certainly be taking security a step to far, in my opinion.</p>
<p>It is against human rights.</p>
<p>It reminds me of practice in Nazi Germany and in communist countries like North Korea and China.</p>
<p>It should be optional but then you can add other types of screening and investigation. I understand it is useful from a security standpoint but it should only be used in this one instance (maybe for a while after entering) and not followed indefinitely nor shared with other non-security-related parties (governmental or otherwise).</p>
<p>It's a gross invasion of privacy to even ask what social media you use on a customs form. Even with people making public posts on twitter shouldn't have to worry they'll be detained or prevented from travelling to their destination just for speaking their mind. Last I checked the US was a free country with reasonable freedom of speech and questions like this on a customs form threatens freedom of speech.</p>
<p>It's very easy to misunderstand what we read or hear. Even in a marriage people misunderstand each other all the time! So why should we flood security databases with our jokes, comments, and opinions that may change next time we read an argument for a different side? And how will security officers know what they are reading means to the writer? If you are suspicious already, you are primed to think others are ill-intentioned. Online, we are transitory, spontaneous and sloppy with our language, because we're talking to friends and family. It's personal, most of the time. And the personal domain, what I say to my mother or friend, is only meaningful when it's free of scrutiny by strangers.</p>
<p>la presenza online dovrebbe essere come la presenza fisica.</p>
<p>More invasion of privacy, more data mining, more total surveillance. It doesn't work, it is wrong and contrary to any notion of human or civil rights. It should not happen.</p>

No comment.
No way
Ridiculously intrusive and completely unnecessary!
Taxpayers' money should be spent on more useful purposes.
This is a ridiculous waste of taxpayer money for very little guaranteed security gains. It's your job to do research on people, not force them to hand over every detail of their private and public lives upon pain of being denied entry to the country. This is little more than profiling thinly disguised and is an unacceptable violation of privacy. You can't subject American citizens to this, and you shouldn't use it on visitors to our country.
This is invasion of your rights
This plan is breach of the constitution and common human rights. People have the right of his private life, this policy will break that and you will be using the money of your citizen to do it without their consent, this money could be better use in social security and health.
Unconstitutional.
violation of privacy
Well, well, well, you people are really young. I'm 66, and I grew up in the Sixties and Seventies. You couldn't pay me to own/use a cell phone or use social media. Are you kidding? Only an innocent fool posts information and pictures on social media. And about those cameras a lot of stores have these days... 1984 by George Orwell is a useful guide. And as for the word Homeland, it conjures up Nazi Germany to those of us born right after WWII with parents and other family who served in WWII.
What do I think of this idea? You can get fucked.
What stops people from simply creating fake social media accounts for this purpose? Homeland Security would learn nothing through this exercise! Also people without an online presence would be treated as suspicious by default? Ridiculous.
DHS, you are not my friend, and therefore have no business accessing my friend circle on social media.
I dont do Facebook or Twitter. I never will mainly because people like you are determined to waste your time (and tax-payers money) snooping into my private correspondence. Is it because you want to sell me something? This kind of 'intelligence' has never, as far as I know, prevented a horrible shooting or stabbing.

<p>I have a democratic right to free speech that will be impaired if the government is going to potentially use my comments as a reason to impose additional screening or prevent me from entering the US.</p>
<p>I'm Canadian, a frequent past visitor, but will avoid the USA at all costs if this useless Orwellian invasion of my privacy were implemented</p>
<p>It is a violation of human rights. By applying these policies you are ultimately stating that all foreign individuals are enemies of the state. That's how you start the next world war.</p>
<p>No warrant no search</p>
<p>that is total invasion of personal information and is over stepping boundaries and is another form of control</p>
<p>While this might be a decent idea it depends on what information is taken into consideration and who it is that decides what that information means. I would not trust that a general TSA agent is able to view the information with an objective eye. I also think that passing judgement on a traveller based on who their friends are friends with is unreasonable, as most people have no control, and likely little knowledge, about their friend's friends.</p>
<p>The guidelines for analyzing the data should be clear, for instance voicing political opinions should not be considered a red flag unless there is consistent evidence of an extremist view. Someone that disagrees with Trump shouldn't be barred entry just because they don't find him reliable or his views acceptable.</p>
<p>Lastly, I believe that the money could be better spent elsewhere as in my opinion this idea had the potential to create misunderstandings and encourage hasty judgements. It might also contribute to a false sense of security in travellers, which in turn might result in less vigilance about their surroundings, which is already a suggested consequence of the TSA's presence.</p>
<p>1984 is not supposed to be a guidebook.</p>
<p>For those of us using social media to share our daily lives with our families overseas, the information there is private, is about our children who are under age. I share my feeling about the places I visit, the food I eat. I don't think any of that is information that the US government needs. If the US government has any questions, I think it will be better if they</p>

just ask during visa application forms.
It is Big Brother. It is Thought Police. I say no.
It sucks. I have a right to privacy.
Free speech would be severely inhibited by this idea. It serves no valid purpose and makes suspects out of every single person who uses the Internet personally or professionally.
It's ridiculous.
This is an outrageous violation of privacy!
This would be an infringement on personal information and freedom of speech.
You must be joking.
A violation of my constitutional rights
Brave New World and 1984 were cautionary tales, not manuals for coercive social control by the technocratic state. This is EXTREMELY harrowing to see.
can't see that it is any of their business
Freedom of speech is a principal pillar of a free government; when this support is taken away, the constitution of a free society is dissolved, and tyranny is erected on its ruins. Republics and limited monarchies derive their strength and vigor from a popular examination into the action of the magistrates. -Benjamin Franklin
Get treated like a criminal whenever you visit the states for a holiday? Doesn't sound a fun vacation to me. Not gonna happen.
I think its a waste of taxpayer money, an invasion of privacy (unless it publicly posted) and outright disgusting.
I think this is an unfair invasion of privacy, and no agency should have that sort of power over everyone's online presence.
I think this is too intrusive and offers possibilities for abuse.
If any undesirable wanted to enter the country then they would just come in from Mexico. So the surveillance would only catch regular people. Really, it's a joke.

Infringement of Civil Liberties!
It is ridiculous. If we are US citizens privacy is a right.
It's a violation of privacy.
It's actually a good idea, for security, it just makes me feel intimidated and have fear of not being able to enter the USA again.
It's ridiculous and invasive. The content of my social media says nothing about how liable I may be to commit criminal actions.
My personal life is none of your business
They can do this IF they provide me with a copy of their report immediately.
This measure will have no impact on terrorists but will severely infringe the privacy and human rights of the decent law-abiding majority of people. It is unnecessary, ineffective and invasive. What is more, it enormously increases the 'haystack' making it even more difficult for security officers to review the information they receive. Further resources will be wasted in sifting through the haystack. We will end up with half the country being employed to monitor the other half.
This proposal is crazy. Expect that the US will elect Trump as President because they are so paranoid.
<p>This proposal is dangerously Orwellian and instantly makes me think of Philip K. Dick's Minority Report; i.e. the idea of thought crime. For e.g. if Trump is elected president will all of my online criticisms of him result in me being denied entry? Clearly there is an obvious potential for abuse of such far reaching powers of surveillance. It also seems to me to constitute a breach of human rights of privacy, which both the US and my own government here in the UK seem to care little for.</p> <p>I get that the US wants to protect itself from terrorism and therefore control who comes into the country, however, the indiscriminate data mining of everyone's social media and personal information is not the answer. It will only serve to make the US look paranoid and furthermore it is clear that most violent crime/mass shootings are orchestrated from within anyway. Most of the data collected will be utterly useless and the resources necessary to achieve such scope of surveillance will actually slow down intelligence gathering on real criminal and terrorist groups/individuals.</p> <p>I would urge serious reconsideration of the efficacy of proposed data mining.</p>

Un-American. Violation of constitutional rights.
USA should be more concerned with its actions abroad than with visitors coming in.
What I post is my business. I'd rather not visit u.s. Than subject myself to this. Although I have nothing to hide, this is smacks of Orwellian intrusion.
You know there are easier ways to find new blogs to follow, hey? But seriously, if this became an actual thing and I were ever to travel to the USA, I think I'd set up a raunchy porn blog just on principle. Or one with all the cat photos I've ever taken, which is a lot, since I volunteer at a cat shelter . Or make a cat porn blog for the best (worst?) of both worlds.
AS A U.S. CITIZEN I REFUSE ANY AND ALL ACCESS TO ANY OF MY SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS. THIS IS AN INVASION OF MY PRIVACY AND SINCE I AM , AND WILL ALWAYS BE THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAS NOT RIGHT, NO BUSINESS KNOWING ANYTHING MORE. THEY HAVE TOO MUCH OVERREACH NOW!!!
It infringes people's privacy and will have a chilling effect.
This is a ridiculous, costly, discriminatory fishing expedition that will be almost completely ineffective at increasing the country's security.
I think it's a more than a little ridiculous, to tell the truth. There can be a lot of private conversations between friends on any social media account, and no one has the right to demand you show things like that. And being denied entry over a joke thoughtlessly shared for a laugh would be the worst, to be perfectly honest. You guys don't have the best track records for having any sort of sense of humor at all.
It is unnecessarily invasive for any government organization to demand travelers' social media information or use their social media accounts to screen them. It would be very easy for people to lie about or withhold their social media information, and people who legitimately do not have social media accounts may be unfairly scrutinized if it is believed they are simply hiding their accounts. If someone is suspected of crimes, that may be a reason to try to find their social media accounts, but asking all travelers to the U.S. to provide their social media information is unnecessarily invasive and will deter innocent people from traveling into our country.
Tyrants much?
While I can see the sentiment behind such plan, it would be dividing in practise.

U.S citizen returning home would be targeted by these actions, the ones pushing them would not.

This devides into a situation where party A (U.S. Department of Homeland Security) would demand party B (U.S citizen) to be subjected to these actions, while party A would not do anything in return (showing his personal information) making this one way discussion.

This also creates a security risk, where law abiding citizen will be denied of entry based on a satirical facebook post, while terrorist and organised crime element will get be allowed an entry.

These security actions create a false sense of security (those with clear facebook are belived safe) and manufactures a blindspot (as crime and terrorism do know how to create and maintain a clean facebook).

This with the cost of law abiding citizens and partiess who could allert the law enforcement of such present are denied of entry.

I do not agree with power abuse in the name of security

I understand the reasoning behind scanning social media, but it should not require invading travelling people's privacy online to do so. If there are malicious reasons that are posted online by people (as you are so concerned), it is so very easy now to scan public comments based on key words that people willingly make public. Take a note from all ad bots out there - you can find what you're looking for without taking it from people. People willingly post their thoughts and agendas out there already. I would consider the concept of checking people social media if (and only if) they seem suspicious while in border checking, and I mean that based on their ACTIONS, not their RACE.

Pure and simple: none of your business!

While I understand the advantages for national defense, I think the plan is too subject to abuse - it exposes officers to lots and lots and lots of information which is likely to trigger biases. This is not criticism of officers in particular; most humans find their opinions of other humans are strongly affected by whether the other humans have, say, said unkind things about causes important to them. If only one in two hundred officers are willing to act according to their biases in denying or discouraging permission to cross the border - say, on a bad day, or on an issue that's really important, and clearly anyone who would say that is not the kind of person who we want more of here - that is still a horrendous amount of corruption, without requiring any worse of officers than that they be human.

I understand the potential advantages for national defense, but this is designing a system that sets people - officers, applicants - up to fail. Please don't do so.

(The other option is no one posts anything political on those social media sites any more, they find somewhere else to post it, so then the government wants to see -those- accounts, so then... ... and you get a constant treadmill of shifting social media sites, which I don't think is helpful either.)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security should make a lots of Facebook friends. :-D

Analyzing social media records for security purposes would still create a panopticum and therefore severely impede anyone's freedom of speech. I also wonder if the amount of data is in any way digestible.

Voluntarily providing social media accounts would still negatively affect people who refuse to (for any reason, like the safety of their family when living under an oppressive regime) because it would falsely flag them as having something to hide.

enough is enough!

Fuck them. I won't give them any information and they can't keep me out because I'm a citizen and they have nowhere to deport me to.

Incredibly intrusive

It is one more layer of invading our information and trying to utilize it for a purpose in which it was never intended.

It's absolutely ridiculous. We have zero rights now. It's time for that to change

More surveillance does not mean less danger or prevention. Multiple occurrences have shown lately that this is not the case. A friend of a friend of mine could be a suspected terrorist or person of interest without me even knowing about it. I could be subject to an additional screening although I even don't know that person. STOP surveilling normal citizens more and more and start ACTING against the real threats! My personal social media information is not part of this.

People who want to hide things will not use social media. On the other hand if you make a bad joke on social media you will be maybe considered as a potential danger.

The online presence is like the real presence.

I doubt the idea of an, effectively, all seen/all known agency is a morally acceptable, less

alone practical, approach.

Get extra information, and use it properly, from people you really really think have something shady going on is ok, but having people deported or arrested for having a joke taken out of context, or for a irrelevant conextions is insane.

And for more context in that last one, you guys now put on people brownsing anonymously the level of radical, so technicaly ticking the box to fill this comment anonymously could qualify me as a radical in a database, so...

If my identity is leaked, it ends up in some database, and then anyone related in any way by social media with me can be marked as having conections with radical elements...

As I said, insane.

The US quickly is becoming more and more a police state. The former Stasi will be highly jealous of the US agencies.

It's why I'm most likely never will be back in the US.

They should have the ability to check those individuals from Muslim countries or those of Muslim descent.

This practice is intrusive and unacceptable, the same is the hidden surveillance programs Snowden released information about.

Within let's say 20 years, I am convinced we will be subjected to security camera footage of us using the toilet! This is no joke! This is coming - I would bet my life on it!

I have strict integrity settings on my social media accounts. That's because I don't want outsiders to get information about my private life. So why should outsiders (including various US agencies with no understanding of the langugages I use, the social/cultural contexts I use them in, or the society I live in) have access to them?

If I haven't done anything to warrant such searches, they should keep their hands off. And if I have done something that is clearly suspicious, they need to get a specific warrant to see any of that information, and I have to have the right to contest it, with a lawyer if I so choose.

none of their business

This is unreasonable search and seizure. Furthermore, it is an unacceptable waste of taxpayer money, and it won't do anyone any good. It will breed a deeper public

<p>resentment toward the government and create additional levels of worthless bureaucracy, wasting everyone's time and resources.</p>
<p>It is a huge violation of privacy. I don't think the terrorists they're looking for are going to be posting plans for next attacks on facebook. This is disgusting and would stop me from traveling.</p>
<p>It is a violation of basic US rights and practice for 240 years.</p>
<p>The Fourth Amendment was written specifically to prevent blanket searches.</p>
<p>This project is burdensome and intrusive for law-abiding citizens, and deprived of any efficiency against terrorists or drug traffickers, who know how to stay anonymous on the web....</p>
<p>This would make me boycott the U.S., both as a professional and as a potential tourist.</p>
<p>America often criticizes other governments for undermining cyber security, privacy rights, Internet freedom and freedom of speech in general. Imposing such online presence search smacks of hypocrisy, undermines our diplomatic efforts to promote online freedom globally, and has no law enforcement values. It would also drain human, technological and financial resources that could otherwise be channeled into genuinely legitimate, effective and necessary measures to protect national security.</p>
<p>As,a,US citizen aND former military I think your plan SUCKS</p>
<p>Attention: 1984 was not intended to be an instruction manual.</p>
<p>Clearly, thus far these kind of tactics have not caught criminals nor stopped mass killings.</p>
<p>Don't? It's understandable that there is the possibility of useful and relevant information being found by doing so, but just as a condition of entry I think it's too much. You should have a tangible reason to do so other than Is foreign/From a Problem Area</p>
<p>How is this any different than what the Stasi did in East Germany?</p>
<p>I am and always have been, a loyal & dedicated U. S. citizen and feel violated to have anyone question that.</p>
<p>I find it disturbing. I don't mind if they look at my posts since its public. But because I love to read diverse views , I hope they won't judge me for the people I follow</p>
<p>I let them know that i won't come anymore in US if these policies are put in place. I prefer to loose a business than provided any personal information.</p>

I never intend to do anything wrong, but I have no way of knowing if a third party looking over my social media posts would come to the same conclusion. There's been numerous cases of social media misunderstandings where law enforcement came to the wrong conclusion as to the intent of a person's social media posts and initiated enforcement actions under such misunderstandings. Cases such as <http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-16810312> and <http://siliconangle.com/blog/2013/06/28/when-culture-shock-meets-social-media-league-of-legends-player-in-jail-over-facebook-comments/> illustrate that homeland security and law enforcement make mistakes that chill online speech in a manner that chills use constitutionally protected hyperbolic speech and some constitutionally protected speech with double meanings.

Border patrol scanning social media of people travelling in and out of the country threatens freedom of speech.

I think that if the government spies what you post in social media you may post different things and by doing so our first amendment right is deprived.

I think that this plan is an outrageous violation of personal freedom and against the values that make the USA the country it is. If such a policy were to be implemented, it would make me think twice about visiting, even though I have family here.

Invasive. Disgusting. A breach and violation of constitutional rights and basic human rights. There's a fine line between keeping people safe and a citizen's right to privacy. That plan crosses it.

It's Excessive and will not result with positive outcomes. It erodes our Constitutional rights. It's a weak proposition to an advanced situation. Be smarter, do better.

It's outrageous. Period.

Keep your nose out of my business!

No additional taxpayer money should be spend on monitoring social media. The government, like any person, has the ability to search for and access publicly available information on the internet. No further burden should be placed upon the public for these purposes.

No!

None of your business, would be a breach of all international legal regulation, in particular civil and political human rights.

<p>People like Trump see enemies even in friends, so that's discrimination. So, if I'm black, or gay, or have any disability or from some unwanted country, they can argue that I have something there just to not let me in.</p>
<p>Privacy fist</p>
<p>Show cause and get a warrant.</p>
<p>Sieg Heil. Fascism is alive and well in USA</p>
<p>The American Gestapo is a blight on this country and should be disbanded post haste. It is a sink of greed and crony political maneuvering.</p>
<p>The DHS plan to scrutinize social media online presence is an unwarranted breach of the Fourth Amendment rights of American citizens, and should never be allowed, except on grounds of a warrant issued by a magistrate for sufficient cause.</p>
<p>The minimal good that might be gleaned from this plan cannot justify the complete loss of privacy and other rights that it would inflict on innocent people. It is a waste of time, resources and is immoral on top of that.</p>
<p>The U.S has not allowed the use of free speech. Social Media is another form of free speech. The U.S. Government has to find other methods to stop terrorism.</p>
<p>The US is turning into a fascist oligarchy, everything it claims to stand against. Shameful.</p>
<p>This constitutes unreasonable search and is unconstitutional. We cannot give up our freedom because of a few violent nutcases. If we do, the violent minority wins.</p>
<p>This is a fishing expedition. HS should follow leads, not spend time investigating everyone.</p>
<p>This is an invasion of my rights and therefore should never be used against citizens of the USA.</p>
<p>This should not be part of the process of entering the country.</p>
<p>Violation of constitutional rights without a specific court issued warrant</p>
<p>What happened to freedom of speech?</p>
<p>While terrorists - homegrown and not- may have online presence, if this is put into effect they will find ways to evade this requirement and innocent travelers will be subject to serious invasion of privacy and potential delays.</p>

Years in the IT industry has taught me that trawling large amounts of data for triggers is costly, unreliable and has a very high rate of failure. Those intent on causing harm to sovereign nations are for the most part well-versed in techniques to cover their tracks; they will reveal nothing in such searches and will delight in the waste of money, time and resources targeted at finding false flags when that money should and could be spent on direct action and proper ground work.

Big Brother get out of my life. You should already have enough 'Red Flags' for suspected terrorists to warrant looking at their social media. To look at everyone entering your country is the definition of 'outrageous' and 'absurd'. Not to mention a huge waste of public money.

f*&(homeland security

Hi,for whoever works for the US government, you are welcome to join the world ruled by communist, namely China, the very piece of land that is tightly controlled and heavily monitored, where basically whenever and whatever the government decides would be the De facto law, where human rights don't essentially exist at all, where its own people get abused and hurt all the time by its own government in the disguise of working for and protecting its own people. Welcome!

I am very careful about my online presence, but I am also aware that if someone is so inclined, perfectly innocent information can be interpreted wrongly and used against a person. It is particularly alarming that someone I know might be communicating with someone who is on some government naughty list, making me naughty too. There should be no warrantless snooping in anybody's private communications.

I do not agree you should search my 'online presence' every time I enter the USA.

It is a form of surveillance without a reason, which is just an other word for abuse. Terrorism is just a lame excuse, we already are super-surveilled and watched upon, but terrorist attacks like the ones from this year in Belgium, France and Germany still couldn't be avoided. So please don't use lame excuses as a reason for surveillance, because not all of us are so naive.

It is not the business of this, or any department, to demand access to this information.

It's none of their business in a free country

The strongest defence of a country is an educated, engaged and positive civil society.

Using 'terrorism' as an excuse to take away more of our privacy rights and civil rights is not the way to proceed. Decreasing inequality is a better place to start.

<p>These silly programs do not make us any safer.</p>
<p>This new policy of yet another example of the government's obsession to know everything about everyone! It's a step to far!</p>
<p>Whatever happened to our constitutional rights not to be subjected to searches and seizures? Why do we have to lose our rights and freedoms for a little bit to none of security?</p>
<p>You are doing senseless work which might bring a lot of harm when it is politically abused. And soon or later it will be abused for sure. It's senseless because on one side you want to stop terrorism and on the other you are acting as your goal was to spread the terrorism. First of all more Americans should own a gun, this will protect you because terrorists usually have illegal guns. It will also protect you against outside enemy. Second you can not support both Islam and LGBTI rights. Choose one. In almost all countries where Islam is the main religion (not just in the ones with Saria law) gay sex illegal and in many pushed by death. Don't be then surprised what they think about western society. Also do not attack countries just for oil. And never train rebels in Middle East, many times they turned to the dark side. Rather attack directly with your soldiers or drones. I'm not American, but I wish America the best.</p>
<p>An absolutely disgusting proposition. US government should in no way be involved in your social media accounts, as it's impossible to use efficiently and is not always representative of one's self, much less an extreme violation of one's privacy.</p>
<p>Social media is very personal and not intended for security screening. It is more appropriate to use police checks of criminal records for security screening rather than looking through people's family photographs and which political party they follow.</p>
<p>What I do on my phone in my private time [which is all of it] should remain private. Period.</p>
<p>i try to hide from my stalkers (who have in the past threatened me with bodily harm, economic and emotional violence, and even murder) using social media, but now i fear my own government is becoming my stalker -- one whom i cannot hide from.</p>
<p>I am against it. It is a violation of my rights as a U.S. citizen, and a violation of my privacy.</p>
<p>I feel this opens up to the possiblity to make unethical and it is a power tool that is too easily misused. It could lead to misunderstandings that would have too severe consequences. The stasi (secret police of east germany) could only dream of these types of tools.</p>
<p>pure bulls**t!</p>

<p>I am not worried about who I associate with on social media, as I know I am not an 'at risk' person, but indeed, on social media many people who you link to have NEVER been MET by you and anyone else can link to you without you necessarily knowing what their background or political views are and THAT concerns me that I may be judged poorly by someone examining my account and thinking that I agree with all the views that my acquaintances have posted on their accounts. That is a ridiculous proposition, yet eventually that is what will happen to some people whose accounts get examined!</p>
<p>Terrible idea!</p>
<p>that is an invasion of privacy and freedom. you should NOT be able to screen in any way, let alone in the ways you want to! and what you want to do has absolutely nothing to do with terrorism! it's all about giving big business information on what we do on the internet, when, where and who with! they should have even less rights to do that than the security forces of ANY country, NOT JUST THE USA!!</p>
<p>Things I post to my social media accounts are written with a general idea of a most probable audience in mind, they are posted within a certain 'context'. If I'd have have to post everything with the audience of a (conservative, easily alerted) unknown US border patrol officer or an algorithm of their creation in mind, then I would drastically have to self censor myself and would not be able to speak freely online to my friends and followers.</p>
<p>An unacceptable invasion of privacy</p>
<p>1984</p>
<p>If I want to, I can post publicly on social media " or I can choose to leave it (relatively) private. This choice would be undermined for reasons for which I do not see solid arguments. If the hope is, to identify terrorists and/or criminals easier, they will find other ways to communicate or already use them. Social media are not seen as a secure way to communicate anyway by a large audience, since NSA and other intelligence services practices were explained to the public. So, from my perspective what mainly would happen, is, that another level of distrust would be reached (If s/he has nothing to hide, then why isn't s/he telling us his/her social media accounts?) and a relative sense of privacy would be lost once more.</p>
<p>My private life is private. Customs have other screening instruments to rely on in deciding the suitability of a person to enter the US, and it is too easy for information gathered from social media to be misconstrued. This is behaviour anyone would expect from a dictatorship - why are you even asking if these things are okay?</p>
<p>My Social Media accounts are my private space - I use passwords to protect the privacy of my social relations and communications and sharing of private details. No government</p>

should have the right to invade my personal space, or the personal space of others (invading refers to entering the private space without consent). As a data scientist, I do not see the value of the U.S. government or any government in mapping networks of private citizens and judging their credibility and potential threat levels based on these networks. Predictive crime investigation has already proven itself to be flawed, unaccountable, in its base discriminatory - and does not justify the cost-benefit relation. Stop relying on black box technology that let's algorithms make judgement over people, based on highly questionable profiling methods! If you do not understand and know the technology in detail, do not use it and do not let your employees use it. It is simply too risky!

Non of your business.

Normally only the passengers with problems with the law in their home countries should be extraverified with their online presence .

Please read the 4th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution... This is beyond the Pale.

that sounds like a surveillance state to me. i will never visit the USA because i care about my privacy. kind regards from germany

The Dep. of HS should be able to detect suspicious activity on your online accounts without having to ask for your usernames. Thus said, my belief is that it is a violation of privacy the fact that you will have to give up these informations to the gov't. Anyone is able to see your public posts and public via Google search. If interested, the gov't should do the same. Best regards.

This is an invasion of privacy and should not be allowed. People crossing our borders are already being subjected to intimidation, so even giving people the choice of whether to supply access to their social media accounts is specious.

This is so wrong smacks of big brother

What about people, who have none or more than one account?

You will most probably not catch a single terrorist like that.

All this scrutiny has already prevented me to ever visit the US again.

It's not a good plan

Pathetic. Already the treatment of passengers to the US by the TSA means I will not travel to the US. Demanding access to my social media only makes a trip to the US even less likely.

ridiculous and dangerous..... if they have no idea of who they should be looking for then they aren't doing a good intelligence job. Also its pointless as if it is mandatory any dodgy people will know so prepare and give a nice clean social media account up and have no problems getting in anyway,
A despicable abuse of the privacy of the individual.
Highly problematic and seems to challenge freedom of association.
It's a violation of privacy.
No way
Simply put, U.S. government clearly wants to strip us of our privacy. This should not be allowed, we're people, not some kind of animals in ZOO.
Simple interference in private affairs and is not acceptable.
it's a stupid bad intrusive idea.
All I can say is that we are lucky there are groups like Wikileaks
I COMPLETELY OPPOSE, as an American citizen, ANY attempt by NSA, FBI, OR DHS to SNOOP IN on MY social media accounts!!! These are PRIVATE, and you DO NOT HAVE MY PERMISSION TO SNOOP IN MY THOSE ACCOUNTS...just for any willy-nilly reason!!! I have a LEGAL RIGHT to my CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS of FREEDOM OF SPEECH, FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION, AND FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION...EVEN ON THE INTERNET!!!!
It is a dreadful idea and would have a chilling effect on free speech.
It's none of their business.
Stay out of my life! You work for *ME*, not the other way around. I control my life, not some anonymous bureaucrat.
This is NOT Nazi Germany, I thought.
This reminds me of former GDR methods where nobody was sure to be spied out secretly.
It is an invasion of our privacy and more attempt at controlling us.
This is a violation of privacy and human rights. It is also a huge waste of money and time.

<p>This is an era of ruthless terrorism and religious fanaticism. Security of people is of utmost importance. Any harsh measures to ensure security of people at large from terrorism will not be out of bound.</p>
<p>Under these circumstances, I would never visit the United States</p>
<p>NO.</p>
<p>ONLY if you are NOT a Natural born Citizen of Natural Born Parents not of Middle East Decent!</p> <p>True Americans should not be subjected to this sort of Crap!</p>
<p>This is one of the most alarming invasions of privacy Iâ€™ve ever read about! I don't know why anyone would think this is a good idea!</p>
<p>This is pure intrusion of my privacy!</p>
<p>:/: no comment</p>
<p>No sweat I am not leaving the country</p>
<p>This would be an encroachment on my right to privacy.</p>
<p>I am not going to visit the US again. I do not feel welcome.</p>
<p>I'll try to be polite here....</p> <p>I think its disgusting that you use this as a security practice. The United States Government needs to remember it's citizens right to privacy and hold that FIRST and FOREMOST in accordance with the Constitution. Further, I doubt you'll spot a terrorist through social media monitoring... more than anything you'll probably pick up false indicators and further trudge on people's rights. To date, NONE of this has stopped any terrorists from entering the country... meanwhile, in Arizona.. we have relinquished an entire portion of the country to gangs and illegals crossing the border. I think you need to rethink your jobs... and your focus.</p>
<p>My online presence is none of their business and should not effect entry into the US, if I have broken no laws, have no criminal record etc then what I post should have no bearing. Look at the TSA as a good example of the US throwing money at an ineffective and pointless organisation that does nothing to improve security.</p>
<p>Never!</p>

<p>This has nothing to do with security, and everything to do about power and violation of human rights. Yet another tragic blunder from the DoHS. I sure hope it won't be implemented. Perhaps they should find a way to stop their own citizens from killing each other in mass shootings before screening any human soul coming in or out of the United States. Much like the Patriot Act, this will contribute nothing to actual security and only add more frustration for tourists and U.S. residents alike.</p>
<p>What is posted on Social Media should not be a concern unless I have already been convicted of a violent crime .</p>
<p>You are not entitled to know what my private life is about. The more info you have the more you will use it to twist the truth and make me a scapegoat for some political reason. Now can we see more about your private life?as we need to know more if you are concocting any more terrorists plots just like you did on 9/11.?</p>
<p>Social media accounts are private and should not be scanned, saved in databases our shared with government bodies without a court order.</p>
<p>No No No</p>
<p>DHS already abuses it's authority. They don't need anymore reasons to make it difficult for travellers.</p>
<p>A ridiculous idea.</p>
<p>Chilling</p>
<p>DHS shouldn't exist.</p>
<p>I believe searching social media accounts for potentially dangerous information would be an enormous waste of time and resources. Customs official are almost guaranteed to find false alarms left and right due to the nature of many people's conversations today (people discussing world events, people voicing their unfiltered opinions over social media, sharing links to videos, etc). More so, I have no problem seeing the government come across information that is NOT related to national security but will try to incriminate the speaker anyway. I think this will just serve to be a huge infringement on our First Amendment rights.</p>
<p>I do not wish to let terrorists win, by consenting to a spread of fear and suspicion. Amerika is told to be the country of free. Well, act accordingly!</p>
<p>I don't think it is correct to ask for this information as obligatory, maybe just in some especial cases. Then it would or could end in a hole large personal interview for each person that goes or crosses USA... And it seems you love having the whole world going</p>

<p>\$\$ to your country.</p>
<p>I think all of these proposed changes would greatly infringe on my basic human rights.</p>
<p>It's a gagging plan.</p>
<p>It's a joke, wind your necks in and deal with the real problems</p>
<p>Since I do not have any social media accounts it is not personally applicable at the present time. However, if I do have any SM accounts in the future that will be MY business. Not your or any other government. Whoever I friends with has NO bearing on my patriotism which is what you are proposing to do. You cannot EVER do that.</p>
<p>There is absolutely no way my private information should be subject to government scrutiny.</p> <p>This is said by a Communist.</p>
<p>This is illegal, you should be ashamed. You should do a better job of protecting your country without invading privacy of innocent people.</p>
<p>Use it only with a warrant.</p>
<p>What the heck ever happened to the rights of free speech and thought?</p>
<p>I think they shouldn't invade other peoples privacy online.</p>
<p>I explicitly do not have a regular online presence for exactly this reason (and other border guards, like corporate HR). It is unseemly that a country founded on freedom of expression and freedom for all would request such a process guaranteed to chill such freedoms outside (and eventually inside) the U.S.</p>
<p>It is profoundly inappropriate, even under the guise of security, to operate a panopticon-like surveillance system in the USA, where one is ostensibly free from unreasonable searches and seizures. Fully adequate means already exist to investigate and prevent criminal activity without continuing to erode citizens' (and even a foreign national's) Constitutional rights.</p>
<p>Homeland Security is a joke and the department needs to be abolished, along with the Patriot Act</p>
<p>Its one of the USA rights to have privacy but if its demanded to a citizen to reveal some but not all I'd agree to .</p>

Giving everybody a #basicincome is more effective to lower crime-rate than everything else.

I won't travel to the U.S. as long as those arbitrary regulations are active and I am risking to spend a lot of money to get there to just be told I won't be allowed in and have to spend even more money to go back home without any reason given and without any chance to have this decision verified by some court etc. This is ridiculous and unaccountable and arbitrary exercise of state power.

I have very little online presence but still do not want it subject to a subjective process of screening. I can't imagine what I might have posted years ago that a random individual might interpret badly. I would hate for others to go through this. It violates the first amendment.

What I think is. Suck your small dick. Fucking reptilians.

As visitors or citizens in America, we should have the full rights to privacy. Especially online. Things online can be drastically modified and taken out of context. By surveying the online presence of people, it is removing the right to privacy as defined by our Constitution. It is removing the freedom to not have government invade into every aspect of our lives. There is no evidence to suggest that this proponent will actually help anything. If there's a real terrorist wanting to enter America, they're not really going to give their real online contact information, they will lie. And the people willing to be truthful when giving online contact information will be policed by their own rights to free speech and will be denied on the basis of their free speech being manipulated out of context. This proposal will waste money, time, valuable resources, and destroy what little freedom we have left. THIS IS NOT OKAY! APPEAL THIS NOW!!

Completely unacceptable. If i wanted DHS sniffing my asshole i'd have followed them on twitter & facebook, AND I HAVE NOT DONE SO, so they can go to hell and FIND MORE PRODUCTIVE THINGS TO DO.

I believe this is a needless intrusion by Customs. Anything Customs needs to know about people coming to and leaving this country may be found in reports from Homeland Security, the FBI, and the CIA, and I'm sure notices from the NSA.

This desire by Customs to do this represents nothing actionable as the people who really are dangerous would EVER be injudicious in their use of social media. It also is more about Customs wanting to be able to play with the big boys and have a piece of the surveillance action.

The intrusion of Customs into social media monitoring when we are already heavily

monitored will create an immediate chilling effect on speech. Orwell's ideas about thought-crime and the State's uses of it are becoming reality. Customs should not take part in this as their value lies in monitoring the physical transfer of people and their possessions, not their ideas.

Customs should not be in the business of monitoring people's thoughts. Foreign visitors are coming from countries who already monitor their every move--and share information with the US government. It's abusively redundant and unneeded when the US populous are already thoroughly and intrusively monitored by it's government and it's corporations in their country.

I think it's ridiculous to expect that commercial firms can freely mine my public social media postings but the government shouldn't. Not to say I am comfortable with either - but the divide you are suggesting should exist here is highly flawed.

It is none of the government's business what we talk about socially with our friends. People have a business side and a personal side of life, and the two should remain SEPARATE! Why work so hard to try to find out secrets about people. Let whatever is going to happen, happen. Put it in God's hands. You might as well take in God we trust off of our money too...

The term authoritarian bullshit came to mind when I first read that the government wanted to use social media information to determine eligibility of entry into the United States. This isn't East Germany, and you shouldn't aspire to be a 21st century Stasi.

This is an incredibly short-sighted and troubling proposal that will put US citizens traveling abroad in unnecessary peril. If this gets enacted other countries will indubitably and rightfully so demand reciprocity. As a US citizen I do not wish to be subjected to arrest in countries that disagree with my lifestyle, professional or political opinions that are all openly displayed across my social media accounts. This would create a perilous situation for any US citizen traveling or living abroad. As a frequent int'l traveler I urge the DHS to immediately reconsider such a short-sighted, dangerous and costly proposal.

we are the cypherpunks revolutionaries

This is such an invasion of privacy

I believe it would be extra security check. For those whi have nothing to hide shouldnt fear anything..

Offensive and a violation of the Fourth and Fifth Amendments.

Such a request is an absurd, unnecessary, and worst of all MENDACIOUS fraud of

<p>security theater you all are attempting to perpetrate on citizens not for any legitimate reasons but for sheer J. Edgar Hoover wet-dream megalomania which will not make or keep us any safer whatsoever.</p>
<p>Social media and browsing history should be off limits. People share updates with selected friends on closed platforms. Those communications are private to that group and the government has no business reading them. I also don't think it's feasible for the government to scan that many accounts effectively. As with all bulk mass surveillance that presumes guilt until proven innocent - it's unconstitutional and ineffective. Such algorithms would no doubt result in biases, discrimination and wrongful denial of entry because so much content can't be understood by machines. Irony, sarcasm, jokes, etc. Security services should double down on targeted surveillance and security practices that are proven to work - not snoop on people's social media accounts in bulk. It is just stupid and will piss people off, damage the US' international reputation, hurt business and tourism as people don't want to be subjected to the Spanish inquisition just to go to Disneyland or Vegas - and they certainly don't trust the USG to keep their information safe from hackers or to use it only for good following the Snowden revelations.</p>
<p>1984, by George Orwell - the DHS appears determined to make fiction a reality.</p>
<p>Fuck you and the horse you rode in on. Maybe US should close its borders and not let any US citizen come out ever again.</p>
<p>Hey... if they were to do this, even MR Trump might get into trouble...</p>
<p>Honor the 4th amendment. Get out of my space.</p>
<p>I believe that searching for online presence of individuals is wrong. Mostly because of people posting when they are young and don't know any better.</p>
<p>I dont trust The U.S. Department of Homeland Security , so NO</p>
<p>I would not travel to the USA. I'd go travel and spend my money in Mexico or Canada or South America instead.</p>
<p>Information that is publicly on the Internet (i.e. Twitter messages, blog posts, contributions to Wikipedia etc.) may without objection also be read by government officials. However, passengers cannot be forced to divulge their user names, nor can they be forced to provide passwords to access non-public information (i.e. private Facebook posts).</p>
<p>It is wrong</p>
<p>Protecting our borders is very important and should be done. That being said, the</p>

collection of information on social media should not be used without already having additional information on an individual that would warrant further investigation. We are an open country and should not make things difficult for people who wish to visit and/or conduct business here.

In addition, the collection of this information to be saved in databases is a violation of people's privacy. There is no telling how or who will have access to this information in the future.

Seems like something that would be open to numerous legitimate legal challenges. In no particular order, this seems like a bad idea because:

The blanket-like approach of screening everyone's online activity seems like a costly AND bad (low ROI) investment with the added downside that potential for misuse of data by foreign and domestic hackers, CBP or other agencies unrelated to immigration seems extraordinarily high. Additional high non-monetary costs are quite likely in terms further erosion of much of the general public's trust in government following what has been exposed about such things as NSA snooping.

It also seems like it could open up the potential for erosion of the constitutional protection against self-incrimination and unreasonable searches and seizures if it is applied to all travelers entering the U.S. and the data then are accessible to agencies that might be inclined to go in fishing expeditions.

By applying a blanket approach, you simply negate the utility of this screening tool because potential bad actors will waste no time in sanitizing their social media activity and adopting other forms of self expression.

Any process that gets implemented with the hope of providing security services with longer-term utility should be smarter / more discriminating (in the positive sense) rather than applying to absolutely everyone. I can see using this approach in screening immigrants; applicants for asylum or visas of any sort. However, I think that it represents an invasion of privacy if it happens indiscriminately without some form of person-specific probable cause and a warrant from a judge.

This criminalizes travelers. The laws for entry should be that such investigations may only take place with a warrant issued subject to sufficient evidence of security risk being provided by the agency concerned. sufficient = a very high standard of proof by any agency (and adequate evidence that can be verified that it is not manufactured for consent).

This is a bad idea.

<p>This is an invasion of privacy and not be allowed.</p>
<p>This is outrageous, this a huge invasion of privacy and a hamper on freedom of speech. In addition, it drastically lowers my opinion of the US and my desire to visit.</p>
<p>This level of scrutiny has never been required for general travelers, in all of history. This is equivalent to demanding all written correspondence and transcriptions of all social conversations. That's absurdly invasive.</p>
<p>You just want direct access and that needs to stop. STOP collecting data on the innocent and go somewhere else with your 1984 type of surveillance.</p>
<p>The idea of the DHS using my social media data to profile me at the border is absolutely terrifying. I'd be pretty concerned about expressing myself online if I knew that my data was being used that way.</p>
<p>This is a horrible, speech-chilling proposal. Who will determine what kinds of speech are troublesome? Is advocating for the US military bombing other countries violent rhetoric, or is it just violent if someone advocates bombing the US military? How on earth could a system like this protect legitimate dissent? It will chill perfectly legal speech. This isn't the USSR. Cancel this bad plan.</p>
<p>I would never go to the US again.</p>
<p>Mind your own business. Land of the Free, indeed!!!</p>
<p>Non of your business. If I put for friends only, why should some government be able to see anything I post?</p>
<p>This is a threat to the privacy of people and a real danger for an increasing discrimination of people based on subjective views (conceptions).</p>
<p>This will simply limit what people say on the internet. It won't help, in my opinion, to find bad guys.</p>
<p>Under these circumstances, I will never visit in the United States.</p>
<p>INFRINGEMENT OF MY PRIVACY!</p>
<p>That's bullshit!</p>
<p>This is an outrageously intrusive and unacceptable policy, inconsistent with constitutional rights and interests and human rights.</p>
<p>I think this is ridiculous, and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security should not be</p>

<p>able to search for your online presence when entering the country.</p>
<p>Are you completely insane?</p>
<p>My private life is mine and none of the governments business.</p>
<p>Umm.... Fourth Amendment for US citizens. Article 12 UDHR - right to privacy - for everyone else. Not to mention Article 19 - freedom of opinion and expression.</p> <p>Even ignoring human rights for a moment... actual terrorists or others who intend to cause harm can easily create benign fake accounts to share with authorities and sail on through; meantime we can be sure non-white people, anyone with a Muslim sounding name, LGBTQ people, sex workers, political activists, environmental activists, and all the other good people of the world will have millions of dollars wasted electronically sifting through their private lives and having to put up with the chaos of being turned back at the airport.</p> <p>This is the kind of policy Donald Trump would think up -- and he's not even been elected yet.</p> <p>(And then of course there is six (or ten) (or three) degrees of separation - anybody can be linked to almost anybody these days.)</p>
<p>It's not a comfortable proposition because the potential for abuse is very high. However, it might be helpful to screen out and deny entry to people who subscribe to violent, extremist views. I'm not in favor of databasing or using algorithms to review a persons social media. I could see it being used to look for accounts the guest did not disclose, but that's not possible to write at this time due to dynamic IPs.</p> <p>but customs agents should have the power to review social media if they feel something is not right about the guest. If they see the person promoting or endorsing mass violence, they could do further research to see if entry denial makes sense. Guidelines must be very clear and focus only on mass violence - not religion or opinion that might offend some people. People can be in favor of extreme viewpoints without being in favor of killing or punishing those who disagree. That's where the distinction needs to be made.</p>
<p>This is fascistic</p>
<p>Asking people to provide their social media accounts plus to give access to them leads to self censoring and makes the right to free speech obsolete.</p>
<p>BAD idea, assuming everyone has something to hide rather than reasonable cause is Un-American.</p>

<p>I think it's a horrendous violation of privacy and the innate rights of humans to speak their minds.</p>
<p>my social media accounts enable me to share content fast with people I know, like and want to take part in my life. it's a matter of privacy. it's a question of what i do in my leisure time. customs can take a look at all my official papers but how can one get so desperate to try to invade someones privacy like that?</p> <p>considering recent political events (which are on their own mad enough) and especially if this bill is to pass I will make sure that not one dime of my money goes to this nation anymore and hope that other people will join me. i'm wondering for how much longer it can escalate like that until people learn about the full extent of this madness.</p> <p>i really, whole-heartedly hope that this is not going to become our reality.</p> <p>and for an app that secures my data from the usa..</p>
<p>This plan is a huge violation of our privacy and right to free speech. It's disgusting.</p>
<p>This program would be an outrageous invasion of privacy that would do absolutely no good for anyone. Focus your efforts and funds on something less monstrous.</p>
<p>BAD IDEA</p>
<p>Most of what people post on social media sites is various levels of ridiculousness. I don't see a justifiable reason to spend anything on analyzing Minions memes, cat photos, 'share for an amen' spam, and false alarms from jokes with poor taste.</p>
<p>Terrible idea!</p>
<p>People are likely to create dummy accounts under pseudonyms or claim they don't have social media anyways.</p>
<p>This crap is but one reason why I will probably never go to the states.</p>
<p>I will never travel to USA. It's on my no travel list, like most terrorist countries.</p>
<p>Searching an individual's private online presence, if not already public, is the equivalent of bugging a person's house. It is an infringement on human rights to access personal data without warrant or reasonable grounds, with no regard to the security of that data or the ethics of employees who will be granted access.</p>
<p>This is overly invasive, easily misinterpreted & a waste of tax payer money.</p>

<p>I have personal information on my social media websites that a personal and I am uncomfortable sharing this information with people I do not know.</p>
<p>This alone would be reason enough not to travel into the USA.</p>
<p>I think this program is an undue violation of people's privacy and will not actually serve a useful purpose. It will only catch incompetent criminals and armchair terrorists. It will also mean that government officials will spend a lot of time screening things that are completely harmless while possibly labeling many individuals as dangerous because they said or shared something harmless which happened to trigger an algorithm. Bad idea!</p>
<p>Searching people's online presence should NOT be allowed! It is abusive and harassing and won't protect against actual terrorists and others that would harm the U.S.</p>
<p>It's a stupid proposal.</p>
<p>Privacy ---both offline and online--- is part of human rights, then every government in the world has its obligation to respect, protect, and fulfill the rights to privacy.</p>
<p>I think it's a terrible idea and an invasion of people's lives to search for data on the online presence of individuals entering or existing a country. This isn't 1984.</p>
<p>This is profiling and very discriminatory, to demand a search of my "online presence", every time i enter the United States. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security already has the ability and security mechanisms in place to screen all passengers. This is an over kill, very unnecessary !</p>
<p>Seems like a pointless exercise to me. Trust me, I'll all for security, and if people are posting in the open extremist or socially harmful content they should be investigated (to some extent). However, checking people's social media runs the risk of being taken out of context and harming those who don't deserve harm while those conducting criminal behavior will find ways to continue to put harmful content online anonymously.</p>
<p>The government should not search for an individual's presence online ahead of entering the country, for the following reasons:</p> <p>Amendment I</p> <p>Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.</p>

Amendment IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

It is ridiculous. Most people post things online they really don't mean it and it will be immoral to blame or accuse them of crimes they will never commit

This is completely insane and often provides no context to recent posts. It is worthless and a waste of time and money.

blanket government surveillance is an affront to democracy and civil rights. Any investigation of people's private thoughts, even if published on social media, without a warrant not only violates our right to privacy it also will have a direct correlation with free speech and will open the door even more wide-open to preemptive justice. Long gone will be the days of being innocent until proven otherwise. Instead we are heralding an era where simply reading a particular article or following a particular person on social media will suffice to make one look suspicious or worse. Security need not come at the expense of privacy.

Does this not impinge on freedom of speech? Additionally, people change, and an online presence that may have one time raised red flags or seemed suspicious may easily be a vestige of the past. People don't walk around telling everyone what they used to think about something, it's what's going on in the present that is relevant. I don't want the government going through my online presences!!

I just wouldn't travel there.

If it's posted publicly, I don't think it's necessarily a big deal, so long as it isn't MANDATORY to hand over that information. On the other hand, for example, my Twitter is a locked account - not because I have any links to organized crime or anything, but because I post a lot of personal stuff, with only a select few friends who I know in person being able to read it. None of that has anything to do with the government, nor should it. There's no reason why the government should care about which fictional character I find most attractive during any given week.

The right to privacy is a human right, and nobody should be forced to allow random strangers who they don't know (and, frankly, who have PROVEN themselves irresponsible with similar data in the past, while also being in positions of power) to see intimate details of their lives. This sort of thing would also open the way for more racial profiling, let us not

<p>pretend otherwise.</p>
<p>I DO understand the methodology behind this idea, as oftentimes social media is used to organize groups/protests/etc., but just because you MIGHT catch a few people this way doesn't mean you should have unfiltered access to the personal data of millions of completely innocent people. The idea is disgusting.</p>
<p>Its a terrible idea, not only is it violating peoples privacy it will be costly and ineffective.</p>
<p>That kind of illegal scrutiny is not what our country is about.</p>
<p>Absolutely not</p>
<p>Unless you have sufficient cause to get a judicial warrant, you're basically asking for permission to draw uninformed opinions based on questionable comments which might include satire, exaggeration, snark & momentary anger and doing it by an unknown algorithm in an unknown program with unspecified (for the public & foreign tourists) criteria which may or may not be relevant to all personal situations. Given the already healthy distrust of commercial data privacy & uses, problems with Government data security, etc +the many possible electrical & electronic glitches that are possible, you're asking to build a haystack & you can't even be sure that you've gathered the right haystack(s). Without a court warrant, that's dangerously inexact data gathering that you propose.</p>
<p>Use it as a fast lane. You can provide your social media to get quick access. If you don't provide or don't have social media, the regular screening should be done.</p>
<p>This is not acceptable</p>
<p>This is a very bad idea that will discourage free speech. Many social media accounts have been hacked and travelers could be denied based on someone else's malicious postings.</p>
<p>Without a warrant and a reason, access to my on-line presence should not be available to the U.S government in any of its various forms.</p>
<p>I think it's a waste of money and an invasion of the privacy of 99.99% of the people that just want to visit your beautiful country and/or friends.</p>
<p>The majority of the people is not a terrorist and the chance of catching one because of the use of social media is very slim.</p>
<p>Simply because we live in a digital era where more information about us is available online than ever before, it does not mean that the government, and a foreign government at that</p>

(I am Canadian) should be able to access that information and use it. Content posted on social media is highly contextual, and intended for an audience of friends. It is not acceptable that something I posted on social media for my friends would determine whether I am permitted to enter the United States, and henceforth kept in a searchable database for who knows what purpose. This program would be a grave miscarriage of justice, and would increase the threat of an ever-present chill on our freedom of expression.

I think this proposal represents one of the most flagrant attempts of the government to curtail civil liberties.

The focus on social media without suspicion will mean suppression of dissent, it will do nothing to improve security.

Democracy is a respect and dignity

The government should have a warrant if it wishes to see content that is private or restricted only to friends, and they are already more than welcome to search for public content. That said, I don't think Twitter is the same as Facebook, and the government should be allowed to know who is behind the Twitter handle. It's public speech, after all. That's more a Twitter policy issue than a government access issue, though, in my opinion.

Fuck off!

It's too intrusive.

Social media content is in no way a reliable source of information. People will post anything online. Most postings of opinion are very easy to misread, sometimes just hard to make sense of. Anyone is free to misrepresent themselves, and cases of framing, identity theft, wrong accusations etc. abound. To base decisions about entry to the country on information drawn from social media would be just nonsensical, if not outright irresponsible.

Stop wasting tax money on some schemes that invades people's privacy!

This idea is as un-American as Joseph McCarthy.

what you say on a social media should be treated like what you say on the street.

I find it simply outrageous, social media are used for several purposes from pure entertainment to professional and very intimate purposes. This profiling would introduce a conformance to behavioral normative standard that will simply kill freedom of expression. Where is the boundaries between being eccentric and be suspicious? We know we are all scanned and all our data are anyway accumulated by corporation still having it as a norm

<p>that define freedom of movement is deeply scary and against basic human rights. It's fascist purely</p>
<p>They should only look for terrorist and criminal activities already on record and past visit details. NOTHING else.</p>
<p>this is a violations of thr right to privacy and we know just too many cases of discrimination against people of certain religion, origin, etc and we dont want to be accomplice in adding more to it.</p>
<p>This ridiculous and terrible proposal would gravely impact freedom of expression, the right to privacy, and lead to increased intimidation, harassment and violations by US border controls on individuals entering the US. As it is, with the greatest state surveillance system in place with the NSA, the US is still incapable of connecting the dots, and this proposed program will not improve that capacity in any way.</p>
<p>Who do you think you are, Vladimir Putin?</p>
<p>They should not interfere with people's privacy an their right to express themselves in the way they find more suitable.</p>
<p>It is my right to publish my opinions and points of view on social media without any fear ob been prosecuted because of them. Personal information when is not linked to obvious criminal activities should be keep under the privacy it requires.</p>
<p>Not a good idea for the land of the free. No good.</p>
<p>Social media is used for freedom of expression. Govt will be curtailing this basic freedom if it plans to monitor and judge one person based on the social media.</p>
<p>This is a disgusting violation of privacy and freedom of expression. How can the US even consider this? I'm appalled and saddened.</p>
<p>I believe this is an oppressive step for the government to take in our Land of the Free.</p>
<p>This is an awful plan. I think that a social media search is perfectly acceptable for people that have already committed a crime, but do not treat the population at large as though we are all criminals.</p>
<p>What's the difference between this proposal and seeking to read every piece of personal correspondence I receive in the post or conversation I have on my phones? How can it be considered appropriate and measured response to a largely undefined problem?</p>
<p>I hope you eat your own shit and choke on it, you worthless fascist motherfuckers.</p>

<p>These actions would be intrusive and would very likely result in a chilling effect of free/protected speech.</p>
<p>It's anti American.</p>
<p>This would be a massive invasion of privacy and an incredible waste of money. Once the program is known, nobody will post anything that might be incriminating anyway.</p>
<p>U.S. have already assumed an unhealthy amount of access to the world's population's data. Information by Manning and Snowden provide proof. U.S. should instead reduce invasive data gathering to saner levels, to re-build trust.</p>
<p>This is ridiculous. My online presence is none of your business. You already intrude in our lives without making yhis country any safer (hello TSA). This is yet another erosion of the liberties that our founders died for and I am tired of it. Since when is surveillance of ordinary people ok? It never is. We are not your enemy and we do not need you invading our privacy. Some people choose not to have social media accounts...what are you going to do? Punish them for that? I will never consent to giving you my social media information. Leave the American people alone!!!</p>
<p>4th Amendment violation -unreasonable search and seizure. Just because electronic media is easy to search dies not mean you should have it. Only in an active investigation or with court order</p>
<p>A flaming violation of privacy. I do not trust the government with more information than I have to thanks to various agencies' long histpry of abusing access to such information.</p>
<p>Although I am very careful about what I post on social media, and have my privacy settings set to the highest possible restrictions, it's not because I'm hiding anything, but because I'm picky about who I choose to share information with.</p>
<p>Although I have nothing to hide in my browsing history, I find that giving up my history to the government is a violation of my privacy, my thoughts and ideas. Also, I don't use social media and I've never created an account. If this law passes, how do I know that the federal government will believe me? Will I be forced to create a dummy account to satisfy DHS?</p>
<p>are you really trying to make 1984 a manual of action and not a critique of power gone wrong?</p>
<p>As a U.S. citizen I find this proposed program to be intrusive and fundamentally un-American.</p>
<p>As a U.S. citizen who is required to travel abroad for business, I think this idea stinks. A</p>

<p>lot of countries do to us what we do to them, and there is absolutely no reason that any government, least of all a democratic government, should butt its nose into the intimate conversations of friends and families. This is violating the 99.9% of good people in the hopes that maybe possibly (probably not) catching that 0.1% of bad guys who might possibly have been dumb enough to post something incriminating on a social media account that they are dumb enough to reveal on their entry form.</p>
<p>As an American I would view this as unreasonable search and seizure, clear violation of the fourth amendment.</p>
<p>As I'm a US citizen this is clearly illegal search and seizure. Arguing that US customs agents do not need to obey the US constitution as they are technically not on US soil opens up legal issues that would best be avoided, such does assaulting a customs agent not subject to US law constitute a felony? Clearly, customs agents are subject to US law and any attempt to search social media is precisely a violation of the 4th amendment.</p>
<p>Bullshit</p>
<p>Complete invasion of privacy, if they don't want even more people to hate it here than we already do doing this would be suicide for our collective view of how this country values it's citizens. Which let's be honest is already pretty damn low.</p>
<p>degrading, subversive, overreaching, militant, depressing</p>
<p>DHS is following in the footsteps of KGB, Stazi and other totalitarian regimes in their assault on American citizens' human rights and guaranteed(?) constitutional limits on government. Stop this stuff, DHS, if you must spy, spy on foreign citizens only and not Americans!</p>
<p>Disgusting invasion of privacy and one step closer to an actual, factual thought police</p>
<p>Do not let the US DHS search our online presence. Our government should not be in the business of reading our personal protected speech. Such a policy would be a flagrant violation of privacy, and a suppression of our freedom.</p>
<p>Doing so is a massive privacy breach, and even suggesting it should be a criminal offense. The dept is overstepping their boundaries.</p>
<p>Don't be evil.</p>
<p>Don't do this. It's not the government's place to mass-scrutinize social media to further its own goals.</p>
<p>Eat a dick you useless idiots.</p>

<p>Filthy pirates are stealing an entire country.</p>
<p>For several years I have become increasingly afraid of entering the United States, due to the irrational focuses, secrecy, and unpredictable behaviour of the TSA and/or DHS. The fact that these bands of lunatics now want to basically spy on everyone makes me absolutely certain that I will never, ever, set foot in that godforsaken, senile, froth-jawed Third World cesspit as long as I am alive.</p>
<p>Fuck you. Fuck you very much. Will I get to browse your social media? Will I get to appeal anything? Will I get to know what you found distasteful? How much is personal morality going to factor into this. What about people who have nude photos on a locked down profile. Again, fuck you stay the fuck out of my private data. Scrape whatever public shit you can but the inside of my phone is like the inside of my brain and the inside of my house. Not for you.</p>
<p>George Orwell was correct in his fears. We see what your doing and we won't let it stand. Don't think you'll get away with this forever. The fall of the current American government of coming, just like Rome.</p>
<p>Hell no. I've given up enough of my privacy in the service of homeland security.</p>
<p>Horrified. This is akin to the Nazis insisting you show your papers.</p>
<p>I am at a loss for words, this plan seems not only dystopian but also reflective of the fear mongering currently happening in the US. How is this plan not a breach of the fundamental ideas of the US?</p>
<p>I am disappointed but not surprised that this is being considered. What an appalling proposal.</p>
<p>I believe such a database would have a chilling effect on free speech, which should be valued for everyone regardless of nationality or status.</p>
<p>I believe this to be a violation of my rights under the 1st, 4th and 5th Amendments of the Constitution of the United States of America. It is invasive, creepy, disturbing, and smacks of an Orwellian level of disregard for individual rights. I would never provide this information, and if that opened me up to harsher scrutiny, I would seriously consider filing suit against CBP and the US Government for violation of my civil rights.</p>
<p>I can hardly think of a tool more likely to be used either incorrectly, inappropriately or abusively than this idea. Not to mention the chilling effect it would certainly have on public discourse.</p>
<p>I can't see this working at all, since you'll need people to understand years of context</p>

<p>around each individual post.</p>
<p>I don't think you should look at my Facebook unless you're my friend or relative.</p>
<p>I doubt that this plan, if implemented as is, will yield valuable results, nor do I believe that any positive impact will be worth the expenditure. I feel that this plan would violate people's privacy, liberty, and respect; it should not be incorporated into law.</p>
<p>I find this proposal an intolerable invasion of privacy. It is most likely to have a chilling effect on the most vulnerable citizens as well.</p>
<p>I remember when my country wasn't the next big thing in Fascism. Those were the days.</p>
<p>I simply won't travel to the US. I won't spend any money on US products/services out of principle. I will boycott all local US-owned shops such as Amazon, Starbucks, Subway, etc.</p>
<p>I think DHS should think long and hard about what unwarranted search and seizure mean, not just in the context of one's physical home & belongings, or one's car parked on a public street, but also in the context of the contents of one's online life. No warrant, no search.</p>
<p>I think if I were asked, I would lie.</p>
<p>I think it is dangerous, unacceptable and over reach of power and based on faulty premises.</p>
<p>I think it is disgusting that the government wants to step individual rights in this way. The plan to search people's online presence is one step close to destroying freedom of speech and expression, a core American value.</p>
<p>i think its a bad idea and could infringe on freedon of speech, if it doesn't (i don't know im not a lawyer) it is atleast morally ambiguous.</p>
<p>I think it's a boondoggle, an obscene waste of time and resources, and an egregious violation of travellers' rights. It will also have the side-effect of chilling the right to freedom of speech in this country.</p>
<p>I think it's a giant invasion of privacy and a violation of my constitutional rights to that privacy.</p>
<p>I think it's a terrible, invasive idea.</p>
<p>I think it's ridiculous. I'd just give them a fake account anyway.</p>

I think that an online presence is not always reflective of a person's actual beliefs. There are numerous examples of people enacting an identity online that doesn't mesh with theach identity presented in the physical world. Also, people have social media contacts of all kinds for any number of reasons - economic, obligation, or other - and people should not be judged for what their social media connections believe. I am unsure what this invasion of privacy hopes to gain with the collection of all this data, especially without an outline of how it would be analyzed. Please don't collect all this information on entrants into the US.

I think that if they went through with their plan to search my 'online presence' every time I entered the country, I would travel there as little as possible. And would recommend against travelling to the US, as it is a giant privacy breech

I think that it's an invasive step that further violates our fourth amendment rights and should not be allwed to happen.

I think the idea's ridiculous, and information that's stored like this is information that can be abused, lost, or stolen.

I think the plan is a waste of taxpayer money that could be better spent on infrastructure, education, science, and health, and is also a huge invasion of privacy if done without a person's consent.

I think the plan is just another pathway for our freedom of expression to be silenced by fear of our own government. Also, the money could be better spent elsewhere. Fear mongering has led to the notion that doomsday may be around every corner but it's not. We're safer than ever. Don't sacrifice the quality of American lives because people don't like us. Spending that money frivolously won't change how they feel. And it will have little to no effect in the end.

I understand the need for security. There are other ways that are less invasive of my rights. I wholeheartedly disagree that my online presence be searched at any time I enter the US. Thank you.

I understand why DHS would want to screen travelers and immigrants for clearance through their posts on social media, but instituting this policy will open up a slippery slope of privacy invasion. Many social media posts are meant only for specific groups to read and the threatening posts that DHS are supposed to look for that sets off alarms are likely never posted on any social media unless the poster does this for attention. If the writer posts a threatening message, it is likely the FBI already knows about them. Perhaps it would be more advantageous to improve on policies that already exist (improving accuracy on the Terror Watchlist, etc) rather than further invade the privacy of US citizens. The 4th amendment allows U.S. citizens to keep information safe and away from

<p>unnecessary seizure. This hospitality should be granted and upheld to travelers.</p>
<p>I understand your department has to look like it's busy in order to get commensurate funding for next year, but this is the most fascist idea yet, will be a pain to maintain and analyze, is too open-ended and vague as far as oversight to avoid human rights violations goes, and is too costly for too little benefit, unless the government is getting into the sale of customer name and demographic info lists to corporations to make some under-the-table money to fund other disreputable programs and politicians.</p>
<p>I view this as a tremendous violation of privacy and I am absolutely opposed the very idea.</p>
<p>I will no longer travel to the USA if the Department of Homeland Security searches my online presence anytime I enter the country.</p>
<p>If I wanted to live in a Police State I would move to one.</p>
<p>If my social media accounts were searched upon entering the USA, it would be a waste of time and money. Furthermore, I would seriously consider taking my vacation in another country instead.</p>
<p>If posts are public, Homeland can find the information whether we want them to or not. But a lot of people's online presence is locked down for safety reasons. Collecting all this information on everyone entering the US (whether citizen or not), is a huge safety concern. How about they worry about gun control before worrying about what I had for lunch or who I play facebook games with?</p>
<p>If someone wants to give that information, fine. It should not be mandatory.</p>
<p>If you start trying to pin down everybody who has strong opinions or political objections or iffy friends (followed I'm sure by bad debts, drug problems, and torrent users) you will soon find that you have pinned down nearly everybody, and our pretense to freedom will be a joke.</p>
<p>I'll simply cancel my social media accounts. My privacy is more important to me than any social media presence that I might have. I'm particularly appalled that I might be profiled simply because of some distant acquaintance on Facebook, for example, of whom I know very little about. Currently, I already avoid the U.S. for vacations and travel. I even avoid flights with stop-overs in the U.S. I do not believe I'd be safe in a possible interaction with authorities and I am NOT a person of colour.</p>
<p>I'm fed up with security theater where ill conceived tax payer funded job creation schemes (e.g. TSA that regularly fails to stop anything in a meaningful manner and is of</p>

<p>negative benefit) that the government *keeps* pushing down our throats. What happened to accountability? I'm seriously considering renouncing citizenship and moving to another country.</p>
<p>I'm not a fan. This is an unreasonable search.</p>
<p>Innocent until proven guilty. If there isn't reasonable suspicion I've committed a crime and a judge hasn't signed off on a search warrant, the 4th amendment protects me from unreasonable search and seizure. If I don't want to disclose information in my private social media accounts, I shouldn't have to, and the government shouldn't ask me to.</p>
<p>Invasion of the right to privacy.</p>
<p>It is a breach of my privacy. DHS needs to get a grip and stop this intrusion into people's private lives.</p>
<p>It is a complete and utter waste of time, money and resources not to mention an infringement of personal rights.</p>
<p>It is a complete invasion of privacy. Yes, social media is public, but it is a form of expression, not something by which the government should be judging people.</p>
<p>It is a gross overreach that undermines the first amendment</p>
<p>It is an insane violation of privacy and flies in the face of the Constitution. It will easily be abused and used to go after anyone who dares to criticize the U.S Government.</p>
<p>It is an unreasonable search that violates people's civil rights. If it is a public profile then the public information would not reasonably be considered private but if they have privacy settings enacted or have accounts under a pseudonym then there is a reasonable expectation of privacy.</p>
<p>It is social media. I bet statistically most of what is posted is embellished or a straight out lie</p>
<p>It seems very Orwellian of the government to utilize social media to determine entry into the U.S. I frequently post political ideas and articles using social media, and it seems that those types of posts could be held against me despite my U.S. citizenship.</p>
<p>It would be a chilling effect on free speech to leave it to a possibly disgruntled worker, programmer with a hidden agenda (do -you- know what a program does by looking at it?), or glitchy code, to choose who enters the country.</p>
<p>Particularly when foreigners are not a major source of crime in this country. It's Americans</p>

<p>on American violence that kills so many people, ruins so many lives, destroys families. If we're to spend \$300,000,000 to make America safer, let's spend it on something that might actually do so, not this phanom solution.</p>
<p>It's a bad, bad plan.</p>
<p>It's a gross invasion of privacy, and entirely irrelevant to a person's entry status.</p>
<p>It's a hyper-aggressive attempt at overreach which will result in even more information overload and mis-analysis than IND/CBP/DHS et al already engage it. I come to the USA for work several times a year; if this policy is implemented I would refuse to travel to the US for work, and ABSOLUTELY NEVER consider the USA as a holiday destination in future.</p>
<p>It's a terrible breach of privacy.</p>
<p>It's an intrusion of privacy under the guise of keeping people safe. It would also be a waste of taxpayers money.</p>
<p>Its an invasion of my privacy. What I choose to write about/post, people I connect with as well as my social circle have nothing to do with my desire (whatever the reason) to go to US. The government cannot and should not be allowed to look through my personal life for any reason.</p>
<p>It's both an invasion of privacy and a needless, wasteful expense of funds.</p>
<p>It's invasive, insulting, degrading, and most likely ineffective.</p>
<p>Knock off the crap.</p>
<p>Knock yourselves out: I use social media little, and post nothing. I've nothing to fear. Still, this plan is invasive to the point of being un-American. Don't do it.</p>
<p>Like much of what DHS does, this is patently idiotic security theater. It is an expensive, abusive hassle to the 99.999% of people who are not a threat, and will catch 0% of those who are a threat. If this policy is enacted, all a criminal has to do to dodge it is either not post their plans on social media (which few are stupid enough to do now), or set up a fake social media presence to disclose as a decoy. Meanwhile, millions of people who cross the border every year will have their personal information scraped and logged, to be abused by some other agency at some indefinite point in the future. Thousands will suffer further delays, hassle, and intimidation thanks to false-positive results. Whatever jackass thought this up should be ashamed of themselves.</p>
<p>Mind your own damn business</p>

<p>My family vacations in the US almost every year (and we love to visit!). On principle, I'm afraid we would take our travel dollars elsewhere should the US require that we turn over our online information. Even on a voluntary basis, this would be a bad direction for the 'land of the free'.</p>
<p>My online presence is a private communication. The government doesn't have the right to read my physical mail and certainly does not have the right to read my digital mail either. This is an overstepping of my, and other citizens' rights, and I feel violated even thinking that somebody high up the decision-making chain wants to make this a reality. This is a shameful encroachment on the freedom of speech and reasonable expectation of privacy in our country.</p>
<p>My online presence is none of the business of Homeland Security</p>
<p>my personal life is not yours to rifle through.</p>
<p>My social media and online presence is a part of my use of the right to free speech in this country. Keeping me from travel by threatening to screen that presence and violate my privacy is illegal and unconstitutional-- and should stay that way.</p>
<p>No.</p>
<p>No. Just no. If you need information, get a warrant.</p>
<p>None of your business</p>
<p>One word: Bullshit</p>
<p>Online spaces are where people's intensely personal lives takes place and where they can express their opinions. If the government were allowed complete access to a person's posts, this would be a severe privacy violation.</p>
<p>Our freedom of speech shields us against government condemnation based on what we say. Allowing or not allowing us through customs based on a tweet that can be taken out of context or misconstrued would be against our rights.</p>
<p>over-reach and over-spending, which will end up as another under-achieving act in the tragedy that is security theater.</p>
<p>Please do not do this.</p>
<p>Please do not go on fishing expeditions on every person. It does not increase security but instead undermines it.</p>

<p>Please, do not. Often times bad jokes are made, and frankly, those stupid enough to post 'threats' will be caught by other means.</p>
<p>Privacy is not a right I'm willing to waive for the sake of security.</p>
<p>Quite simply, none of their business. This does not make us safer, this does not help. This does waste additional taxpayer money, this does waste additional time for citizens legally traveling between countries.</p>
<p>Search success is predicated upon truthful responses. Simple misdirection or outright lies will effectively negate any substantial detection; therefore, those who are honest will be subjected to the greatest -- and least warranted -- scrutiny.</p>
<p>Searching through and determining one's eligibility to enter the U.S. based on one's social media posts is a violation of 1st amendment rights and a waste of taxpayer money.</p>
<p>seems super oppressive!</p>
<p>Since we often have a different name that someone else might have registered on another service it's easy to get two completely different people mixed together. Also accounts can and regularly get hacked or spammed which makes it impossible for a non-savvy agent to take what they see for face value. Overall it's a bad plan.</p>
<p>So did the Home Sec do 15 years ago? How does Social Media enhance their ability to identify those who may be up to no good. If someone is out to cause harm, they will always find away to commit those acts - social media or not. So where is the line drawn?</p>
<p>Social media information is public, but exists in context which a scanner cannot discern. This will not bring safety to U.S. citizens, but threaten any and all people entering the country.</p>
<p>Spending billions of dollars to invade the privacy and deny freedoms to hundreds of millions of people is NOT an efficient, ethical, or American way to stop crime or terrorism. This is one step closer to a surveillance state and there aren't many steps left.</p>
<p>stay of of my business. without a warrant you have no right to look through my online interactions.</p>
<p>Stop</p>
<p>Stop turning the U.S. into a police state. You work for the people and should fear them, not the other way around.</p>
<p>Stupidity.</p>

Suck a dick
Terrible idea. This is private info in many cases that should only be shared with relevant authorities with clear & just cause & warrant.
terrible idea....the cost verses benefit doesn't even come close.
That should be considered a violation of the first amendment.
That sounds completely insane and a violation of my rights as a human.
<p>The advantage of social media is that it allows dissemination of ideas and allows you to interact with a wide range of people. Knowing your ideas could potentially be used against you would have a chilling effect on this.</p> <p>Malicious actors that are smart enough would avoid using accounts that could be connected to their personal identities, making this futile, and those that are not that smart surely made other mistakes that would cause their social media to already be monitored.</p> <p>I see little to no benefit, and plenty of detriment in a program like this.</p>
The constant harvesting of data from American citizens has not won your War On Terror. Processing even more data will bring your already overburdened inefficient system to a grinding halt, contributing nothing to the well being of Humans everywhere.
The government does not have the right to search any part of my life without a proper warrant. What I post online, what I email, my texts, any communications I have are private and the government has no right to access any of this information.
The government should investigate people's social media accounts no more than it should open everyone's mail.
The intrusion into people's lives needs to stop somewhere. The never-ending fear of terrorism should not be replaced by the never-ending fear of our own government pulling our lives apart. When our side becomes as invasive as their side I think they have won.
The power to let an individual into the country - or not - amounts to intimidation in any voluntary request to turn over social media. To inspect comments or photos on social media at all would chill free speech. It would be an especial hardship to those young enough or incautious enough to post silly, easily misunderstood things. Studying a person's social network would chill free association and might even endanger friends or family in other countries or in delicate situations, for instance those fleeing domestic abuse. A very BAD idea!

The US Dept. of Homeland security is a bloated parasite of the government budget and should never have been created. It's entire purpose is security theater designed to reassure a timorous and easily misled public.

This is a colossal waste of taxpayer money, time, and an unacceptable invasion of whatever privacy we have left. People who actually want to harm the United States will simply stop using public, popular social media sites if a policy like this exists, and nothing regarding security will be improved. No, no, no, no.

This is a direct breach of individual privacy and its disgusting and abhorrent to think our government would use our money to invade the private lives of ANY individual.

This is a dystopian and freedom-stifling initiative which should either never be applied or simply only be applied in cases of extreme warranted suspicion. Rubber stamping this type of surveillance en masse is pure Stasi-style rule, contrary to America's founding principles.

This is a gross invasion of privacy, akin to searching the phone records of everyone at customs. These things require warrants for a reason. I'm appalled at the suggestion.

This is a problem for many reasons. First, there is the issue of assuming that just because someone follows an account, likes a post, or shares information, that they necessarily 'like' that person, agree with what they are saying, or support that information. For example, many academics do these things for research and archival purposes. Digital ethnography and media analysis requires embeddedness, and many academics do this research to understand, for example, online hate groups. Second, even if a person does engage in the aforementioned activities for personal reasons, a person could be persecuted for having the 'wrong' political beliefs. Furthermore, places like Facebook are an issue for things like that, as many people are 'friends' with people and do not actually 'follow' them. Out of online social norms you might be friends with someone from high school or work and not really be privy to who they 'really' are or what they are 'really' doing online. I do not condone such behavior, but these are norms which could harm someone who in no way is doing harm. Third, context is key here. Many behaviors online, when taken out of context, can be misinterpreted. In fact, many things are misconstrued on these platforms in real time and within the social networks they occur. Social media is fraught with different people interpreting the same exact words or messages in different ways. As a researcher, it is amazing how the same exact recruitment letter illicit such different responses by people, just based on how they 'read' it. Even if a person was not intending to be, for example, 'sexist', I've witnessed individuals 'attacking' them for making sexist comments. People place their own meanings onto images and words, and people generating or sharing them cannot control for the types of interpretations that people will place on them. This is well known and documented in sociology,

communication studies, cultural studies, philosophy and art/museum studies. A...
This is a terrible idea and chills free speech.
This is a terrible plan, and fails for the same reasons other bulk collection programs have failed in the past. It is also a gross invasion of privacy and freedom of speech and association. These types of policies to me seem extremely unamerican, and unpatriotic due to their ineffectiveness. There are serious problems that we face in the world, but policies such as these are a joke.
this is a violation of the first amendment right to free speech. the government should use standard intelligence methods to determine who is not admissible.
This is absolutely none of its business, the US government would violate my privacy by looking up my online presence. It is not far fetched to imagine that the US government would use what they learned using the social media accounts to prevent their detractors from entering US soil.
This is an astounding invasion of privacy coupled with the unnecessary access that government and commercial agencies already have. We are not North Korea. Nor would it make a difference, as people with true connections to terrorism aren't going to post these things on social media if they even have such accounts. Stop wasting our money!
This is an egregious invasion of the privacy of any citizen or person entering the country, and of all of that person's online friends acquaintances, or associates. If someone is arrested on suspicion of being involved in planning terroristic activities, a warrant should be obtained to allow search of that person's social media.
This is an infringement of privacy, but more than anything it's a horribly unreliable metric that doesn't actually prove anything.
This is an invasion of privacy.
This is an outrageous invasion of privacy and completely unacceptable.
This is an outrageous, costly, and time-consuming invasion of privacy.
This is another fake way for the government to continue fear mongering for the purpose of keeping their own jobs while providing zero benefit to US citizens. Defund Homeland Security.
This is basically the most horrifying thing I have ever heard.
This is completely unacceptable.

<p>This is costly, invasive, and unnecessary. Don't waste our time and money on invading our privacy.</p>
<p>This is hugely invasive and a threat to free speech. I am absolutely appalled this is even something being considered.</p>
<p>this is private and not for collection to used as a profile of anyone</p>
<p>This is security theater at its highest. I resent this waste of my valuable taxpayer dollars.</p>
<p>This is simply a means of misinterpreting data and wasting taxpayer dollars.</p>
<p>This is stupid and everyone going in and out of the country has the right to privacy.</p>
<p>This is terrifyingly intrusive and sends a terrible message to visitors that is not in line with American principles.</p>
<p>This is unreasonable search and seizure; you're looking for incriminating evidence without cause.</p>
<p>This plan is a blatant invasion of privacy. My conversations and interactions with my friends on social media are private, and searching through them and compiling a database of them as if we all have something to hide presumes that we are guilty until proven innocent, which goes against everything that our system of justice is supposed to stand for. Presumably, this database could be used as evidence against a person in the event that they are a suspect for a crime, in which case they are forced to be a witness against themselves, and, in a way, even robbed of their right to remain silent. A person's personal accounts, tax history, anything relating to their private life should not be examined unless they are suspected of a crime. Entering the US legally is not a crime, and so subjecting an individual to such a search is an overreach of power comparable to that of fascist dictators and military states like the Soviet Union.</p>
<p>This plan is wasteful foolishness and should be abandoned.</p>
<p>This plan would be unethical and a major privacy violation.</p>
<p>This program is an enormous breach of privacy and trust.</p>
<p>This proposal is both abusive, disrespectful of people's standards, and wildly ineffective. No government should have the legal right or obligation to sift through people's social media accounts and make judgements upon the people they belong to, much less decisions that can lead to them being denied entry or visas to any country. Not only that but the system will most probably won't work. It will just ruin social media for people and make border patrol agents sift through information that will almost certainly be useless.</p>

Furthermore there are little to no cases where an officer could justifiably find information linking to criminal or dangerous activities without making serious judgements calls. And besides all that, the legal precedent it sets is abhorrent; not only will officers and authorities be making assumptions about the people that wish to enter the country but they will also be given the power to act upon those assumptions which will most certainly be affected by their personal biases, opinions, and standards. Which are not, and should never be, basis for legal actions simply because of how subjective they are. Plus, the question to ask is now what will qualify as suspicious online activity today but rather what will qualify as such tomorrow, or in a couple of years. There is no limit or proper manner of control that can stop this measure from spiraling out of control and causing more damage than it's worth. In short, it's insulting and ineffective and showcases some of the greatest problems with what the U.S. Govt deems to be correct and justifiable when dealing with both it's citizens and those of other soveirgn nations.

This proposal violates my expectation if privacy and is unreasonably intrusive, amounted to an unwarranted search.

This sort of intrusion needs to be done only with a warrant unless it's public and provided voluntarily. Otherwise, it violates at least two amendments and doesn't guarantee safety in any way shape or form.

This sort of thing is why the TSA (Theatrical Shenanigans Assembly) is so disliked. It does not provide any additional safety or security it simply embarrasses people or has a chilling effect on speech. The government has already admitted it cannot examine all of the information it already collects, adding this material to the pile will simply add more noise and mask any real useful information.

Additionally the screening is unlikely to produce information. While Ima Madkiller may post on the 24th I'm going to the corner of 1st and Main it East Mudhole, NE and kill everyone I see it isn't likely and will be lost in the cat videos on social medial

This violates the privacy of people who have not been accused of a crime and treats all people as criminals. We do not live in a police state and should not be treated as if we did.

This waste of money and effort cannot possibly result in anything other than the violation of rights for those who have done no wrong.

This will have a chilling effect on free speech, and also constitutes an unreasonable search, because the people whose very personal data you are requesting are not suspected of or accused of committing any crime. This is unconstitutional, invasive, and immoral.

<p>This wouldn't affect what I post. It would affect my willingness to travel to the United States or to make purchases from US companies.</p>
<p>Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety. - Benjamin Franklin</p>
<p>Violation of free speech, right to assemble, ...</p>
<p>We should be moving towards more privacy and away from surveillance.</p>
<p>What a perfect example of overreach and the chilling effects it causes! This is the creepiest, most ill-advised, and brittle plan I have heard of in some time. I can think of so many ways this could go wrong from a technical standpoint, but the glaring and authoritarian overreach is the most disturbing part.</p>
<p>What if you don't *have* any online presence? Who you be barred because of that?</p>
<p>You should not give up your privacy to travel.</p>
<p>Your other screening methods have been effective and this is a great overreach of your powers.</p>
<p>I no lawyer but It seem to me that the 4 admenment of the Bill of Rights would prohibit government searching Social Media accounts with out a warrant .</p>
<p>This is an overreach, do better.</p>
<p>Profiling on the basis of normal human interactions on social media will chill speech and undermine the democracy and freedom you claim to protect.</p>
<p>Only if the DHS director gives me his personal fb account. Liberty is a toy now it is in the hands of racists</p>
<p><insert middle finger ascii art here></p>
<p>1. too expensive to be worth what information it could possibly glean (which will be nothing since anyone using this for terroristic activity will hide anything. 2. it's a blatant and inexcusable violation of privacy</p>
<p>A pointless expenditure of tax dollars which would be defeated by the most cursory of malign intents. Strangely enough, terrorists and smugglers are unlikely to post about to break US and international law, lol on their facebook account, nor tweet where my boarder cell buddies at??.</p>
<p>A very poor idea that violates people's right to privacy in order to provide data of little</p>

value or utility.
A waste of time. more biraucracy creating another IRS. if the US does this ecery country gets to recirprocate. what happens to all our cia consulrants, peace corps, and ngos ties to black ops? far easier to spot.
Absolutely no! That is my personal business and should be allowed and covered under the First Amendment.
Bad idea.
Bullshit
F u
First Amendment. The Constitution of the United States of America -- a document you find -- inconvenient, like the Americans with Disabilities Act. As a veteran with spinal cord damage, I know too well how insulting and insensitive all your pimply-faced losers at TSA can be.
Forfeiting privacy and personal documents such as medical records as well as being intimately aware of your social media presence is straight up spying on one's own citizens. This would fall under violation of Fourth Amendment rights as well.
Fuke you.
Giving people the power to collect this data with no oversight or purpose is a stepping stone to a police state that oppresses and manipulates it's people for the benefit of a few. Not only is it un-American but a clear violation of the Fourth Ammendment, set to protect the privacy of U.S. citizens from unwarranted search and seizure. Because these methods of communication are new does not mean they should be unprotected as our forefathers recognized the value in citizens being allowed free discourse which resulted in the greatness we have achieved in the past.
Governments that have these powers in the past use them to forge and incriminate good citizens who disagree with the powers that be. We are not Nazi Germany, we are not the USSR, we are not controlled by a military regime. Americans will struggle to remain free.
Gross invasion of privacy. Just gross. How and what I post is not up for the approval or scrutiny of the US government and has terrifying implications.
gross violation of privacy, inevitably to be misused and abused by DHS and other organizations.

Having such a procedure would make me think twice about bringing my tourist money to the US! It is a massive invasion of privacy, totally disproportionate to the possible crime/terrorism prevention. Use the money to use data smartly rather than increasing the size of the ocean!

Horribly unamerican

I am against a blanket search provision that targets everyone. If there is some suspicion of actual, unlawful/undesirable activity then ONLY those individuals should have that search performed on their social media.

I am not a criminal. My friends are not datafodder, nor are my conversations with them. If you do this, I will never enter the United States again; I will bring my son back from his research studies at MIT, and I will encourage everyone I know to boycott US travel -- for business, for scientific research, and for pleasure.

The United States has no call to criticise human rights and free speech abuses in China, North Korea and Russia if it behaves like this.

Such a measure should ensure global isolation, and many will work to see to it that it does.

Do this, and you're on your own America.

I am not fond of the idea of DHS housing my online data for future or present use.

I appreciate that Homeland Security, CIA, FBI, etc., want to examine social media accounts, and I absolutely think they should use that information to track and follow potentially dangerous individuals - especially those likely to attempt terrorist attacks, hate crimes, or other violent attacks (especially large scale). However, this should not be used against political enemies (e.g. people who simply criticize the US, or Israel, or anyone else - that's free speech), and it should not be used against the general public - US citizens or not - who are totally innocent of any wrongdoing.

I appreciate this is difficult, maybe even impossible, to snoop around only in terrorists' accounts and not anyone else's, but, sorry, I have rights to privacy, to free speech, to protection from search & seizure, and I am not giving those up.

I believe that SOCIAL media should fall under freedom of association, and not be subject to government scrutiny.

I believe this is a horrible invasion of privacy, tantamount to placing recording bugs in my house to spy on my every move. I am aware that is every security agency's wet dream,

<p>but we also have a reasonable expectation of privacy which this idea flies in the face of.</p>
<p>I do not think the privacy invasion is justified by the potential to gather security insights</p>
<p>I don't see how it is necessary, and it is also a violation of my privacy</p>
<p>I don't want to live under an authoritarian regime and these attacks on our civil liberties for authoritarian concerns are bringing us ever closer. We refuse and resist this.</p>
<p>I feel that this is an invasion of privacy and that it is unnecessary to be scanning, checking, or analyzing any social media. Social media is filled with numerous references, satire, or information that are, in no way, related to any kind of malicious intent. The proposed use of online accounts/social media only prolong the mistrust in the government with personal information and accounts.</p>
<p>I have a right to privacy. My personal social media (if I have any) should never be accessible by anyone or any organization I don't choose to share with, especially at a public cost of hundreds of millions of dollars.</p>
<p>I really don't want to participate in a government fishing expedition.</p>
<p>I specifically limited what I've post on social media for fear of it someday being used against me. No matter the good intentions, the power of personal information in the hands of government will always be abused at some point. The only solution is to never allow the creation of a system that monitors the personal affairs of every citizen.</p> <p>This is not to say that social media presence should never be searched in general, but a blanket policy would be too great of an infringement against the privacy of US citizens, citizens of our allies and neutral third parties.</p>
<p>I support this</p>
<p>I think the EFF would make a pretty compelling argument on this one.</p>
<p>I use Facebook solely for private posts to my friends. Any search of my private posts is a serious violation of my privacy rights and the 4th amendment.</p>
<p>I will stop my business travel to U.S. if this happens</p>
<p>I would either deny having an online presence or - if forced to - give a fake one.</p>
<p>I'd make sure they find it extra-insulting. There's no point in trying not to be offensive, they'll accuse you even if you do absolutely nothing. Might as well just get the point across by giving them a bad time.</p>

If it becomes mandatory, i'll never visit the US, and i'd love to do that some day.

Passengers should have the option to opt in and get express entrance. The problem isn't a lack of information, the problem is good intelligence and that means more people creating good intelligence out of the information they already have and acting on it.

Most terrorists (France/Belgium and even the group behind 9/11) we're already known, but authorities did NOTHING. Poor leadership and stupid laws preventing agencies to share information was the problem.

Anonymous government security analyst

Europe

If people post incriminating evidence online, then they clearly are not being very careful about what they do, so there should be other, less invasive ways of stopping them. Secondly your friends do not determine who you are, and that you could be denied entrance into the country because you follow someone's instagram, or liked someone's post is not only terrifying but it also seems like something that should be illegal.

If the DHS was performing its function correctly this survey would not be necessary

If the US government wants to kill international business and leisure travel to and from the US, they can be my guests. I know which country I will *not* be visiting nor doing business with in the future.

If these changes to require me to provide details of my social media accounts are made it will definitely make me reconsider any plans I have to visit the US.

Maybe the proposed \$300 million budget would be better spent on stopping the rampant gun violence and institutionalised racism in the US instead. Both of these make visitors to the US feel like they are taking their lives in their hands when walking down US streets.

If you have a warrant or a specific warning from someone's country of origin or law enforcement in the place they are coming from - then you presumably have cause to search them and ask more specific questions. If you've received a tip that someone has been bragging about committing violent or terrorist acts on social media and you're already watching them - then you have cause to try and verify the information you've received. Searching everyone is a massive privacy and human rights violation, with be ridiculously expensive and so time consuming that it would most likely just distract from real offenders. The dragnet approach will never work for gathering real relevant intelligence, it's only point is to frighten people.

<p>if you implement it, could you pay me all 300 mil to do it because it is literally not as hard as you're making it out to be tbh</p>
<p>I'm sure the DHS is already searching through posts on social media to asses potential threats to the United States. If action should be taken then it should be taken well before someone is trying to get into the country.</p>
<p>In the United States there should be a presumption of innocence. To ask people to give the government access to their social media to PROVE that they are not criminals flies in the face of our beliefs and U.S. law.</p> <p>Also people should have the right to privacy. Under the 4th Amendment, the United States government shouldn't be demanding people's passwords and rooting through their personal accounts without a court order.</p>
<p>Insane</p>
<p>Invasive. I do not support this plan regardless of the cost.</p>
<p>It doesn't take a ridiculously expensive and invasive program to track most people's social media presence. It takes about ten minutes on Google. This is just fear mongering and the greed of private security corporations.</p>
<p>It is an awful invasion of privacy. It makes me feel less safe, deeply unhappy. It would affect my decision to visit the USA.</p>
<p>It will stop me visiting the US for holidays.</p>
<p>It would be a complete waste of time, resources & (taxpayer's) money, likely resulting in human rights violations- wrongful, baseless accusations and travel restrictions imposed on innocent people.</p>
<p>It would be an unnecessary burden on individual liberties that would also create an ineffecient mountain of data. There would be too many false positives, and the entire program would be a complete waste of money.</p>
<p>It's a disgusting dictator practice straight out of an Orwellian novel. Snooping online does NOT improve security, as clearly indicated by countless attacks happening on US soil.</p>
<p>It's a disgusting violation of everyone's privacy.</p>
<p>It's a terrible idea that will suppress free speech and lead to invasive 'witch hunts'.</p>
<p>It's a terrible idea. Don't do this stupid thing.</p>

<p>It's a violation of privacy. Also, the federal government has been known to jump to conclusions based on this kind of data.</p>
<p>It's a waste of time and money and will only affect ordinary people with nothing to hide. Many travelers won't even have a social media account and will then be deemed suspicious for no reason whatsoever.</p>
<p>It's absolutely ridiculous, intrusive, ineffective and Orwellian.</p>
<p>It's an intrusive search and violates the Bill of Rights.</p>
<p>Its an invasion of my privacy. The Fourth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States ensures insures this.</p>
<p>It's draconian and useless. People do not necessarily tell the truth on social media and often follow other parties ironically. I refuse to accept people being punished for what and who they read.</p>
<p>It's invasive.</p>
<p>It's overly invasive, reprehensible and impractical.</p>
<p>It's really lame and a waste of resources if a person's social media is scanned. Furthermore most people use social media for fun and there will be objectionable posts. Or people me be denied because they said something against the state. It's utterly meaningless to check social media.</p>
<p>Its unconstitutional and stupid. Anyone up to something will just maintain separate accounts.</p>
<p>I've traveled abroad and been in countries where the police carried machine guns, where there were military stationed in the country as a matter of course. Every time I came back home to the US I though how lucky I am to live in this country. I love to travel, and I love to share the US with other world travelers. It breaks my heart to come through LAX because it is so unfriendly. This will make traveling to the US even less welcoming. I suppose that's the least horrendous part of this plan. It's expensive, will give a ton of data that can't be accurately vetted and will be filled with wrong information. There is no upside to this policy. There is only expensive inconvenience in the best case.</p>
<p>Kiss my tourism dollars good-bye.</p>
<p>Knowing my social media presence may affect my admittance to the US would limit by social interaction, would inhibit my willingness to speak freely and would affect my life outside the US, 24/7.</p>

<p>Massive invasion of privacy, ineffective waste of time as these accounts can be manipulated, opens the door to information security breaches. I do not approve of spending my hard earned tax dollars in this way.</p>
<p>Massively Orwellian. You should be ashamed of yourselves for even considering such a plan. True freedom is worth protecting, not throwing away like this for magical wishful thinking that if only we also give up this little thing, suddenly all the bad people will go away.</p>
<p>might as well be nazi fucking germany</p>
<p>No fucking way</p>
<p>no, stop it</p>
<p>No.</p>
<p>No.</p>
<p>No. Just no. The government already knows everything about us. Scanning social media to see if people deserve to enter the country is wrong. You don't need to scan Thierry personal lives too.</p>
<p>Not every criminal is going to be stupid enough to advertise their illegal activities online or through social media. Searching through my or other's online presence means you are assuming that we are all criminals engaged in illegal activities and thus are all guilty. The law is Presumed innocent UNTIL proven guilty not the other way around. And doing these searches is a waste of money for what little benefit it may potentially bring. Not to mention slowing down already sluggish customs proceedings.</p>
<p>Online presence is also an avatar for people. It may not actually be the real them. Just a character they are playing. This can be taken out of context.</p> <p>Also, if I am someone who hates social media and do not have an account, the government may automatically believe I am lying when I do not provide the asked for information. Guilty until proven innocent, which is the opposite of our vaunted Constitution.</p>
<p>People who are not my friends are not given access to my personal life. Stop being creepy.</p>
<p>Please don't do this. I'm Canadian. I know my country isn't perfect, but I have faith that my government would not approve of this. I'm not comfortable at the border as is, given the awful stories I've heard of abuse suffered by people like Peter Watts over minor</p>

<p>misunderstandings or even outright communication breakdowns. Please don't do this.</p>
<p>Privacy is one of the key tenets of our great nation.</p>
<p>Ridiculous and a waste of money</p>
<p>Social media is an inaccurate and inconsistent representation of peoples lives and intentions. This wouldnt be as fruitful as desired. It also would automatically be abused because interpreters of any data would be bias. There is no perfect objective way to do this. Bias people could misjudge information based on their prejudices, own educational background. And the information isn't reliable to judge in the first place. This would violate the last safe corners of expression online. It would be inaccurate. It shows zero trust to outsiders and perpetuates what is already wrong and hurting people in our system now. It should not be paid for with taxes as it is a prejudice and inaccurate waste of time and any resources. There is no way to realistically do this properly. Any way of doing this doesn't make things better it reinforces what we aren't doing right already. Most deadly terror killings that have impacted on American soils have been done by Americans not someone who went through customs. There is no accurate way without discrimination racism sexism heteronormative xenophobia to get use out of social media. It also doesn't fix or address and thus doesn't take or seek accountability for the roots of the problem, our role in it, and any proactive new approaches for a better world. Doing this would perpetuate a status quo of a dangerous and hateful rhetoric that literally kills innocent people, creates innocent criminals, and watches people suffer without a second glance if they don't match the mold you deem superior. This would be cowardly, illogical, inaccurate, and wrong.</p>
<p>Social media should be subject to the same protections as any other personal, private information and not be breached without probably cause and a proper and specific warrant.</p>
<p>Such a plan would be a threat to the freedoms essential for a functioning democratic society.</p>
<p>Such a search would be an invasion of privacy.</p>
<p>The American public has already and is already heavily surveilled by their government, much of it without warrant, and illegal. In every facet of life, time and time again, our government has sought fit to pry its cameras, data loggers, and every other technology to record its citizens actions in perpetuity, without just cause, without motive, without reason or discretion. This government has created a deeply rooted culture of surveillance. Even my comments being written here, I cannot feel but as though they single me out to be watched by some ABC acronymn agency, though I have and do nothing wrong. Too much of America is run through manufactured fear, either of terrorists- or of its citizens</p>

trying to stay the undying Orwellian watch against themselves. I am sick of living in a world where my every move seems recorded and watched. It's created a personal hell for me and others I know that care about this, and we're afraid to even exercise our rights to free speech, lest we be put on a secret watchlist for something the government perceives. The very freedom you seek to defend you are destroying at an insurmountable pace if you continue with policies like this. I am one of the people who aren't vocal enough- I don't want to be protected and surveilled. I want to be and feel free! Enough with the warrantless searches, the questioning of innocent people as matter of course, the unending surveillance databases. You have no right to see every facet of my life or anyone elses unless you have justifiable cause FIRST.

The government has proven that more data on citizens does nothing to further the goals of national security and does everything to put the security of citizens at risk.

The only way to usefully do anything is to automate it, and that would all too easily result in a huge number of false positives, wasting even more money. All it does is create another bureaucracy to send money down the rabbit hole.

The US government already has fingerprints, address, phone numbers, of every traveler. I think they should stop harassing the innocent and do a better job at tracking down the people that want to hurt us.

The US have no right whatsoever to any other information about anyone from anywhere than name, address, nationality and passport number!

There are greater threats than my shitty memes

There has got to be a better way to analyze threats than reading my Twitter accounting of my life an an impatient mom. There is NO WAY the government will be able to actually make sense of all the data they are proposing to require--much like they have no adequate way to sort through all the dick pics being stored by the NSA. MORE IS NOT BETTER. More information on everyone will not help. What we need is BETTER information about terrorist, not invasive amounts of information about everyone.

These plans are intrusive and invasive. If they're that that keen on finding my social media presence, they can use Google like anyone else.

This absurd plan represents the worst kind of Orwellian big government overreach and would be an outrageous misuse of tax payers' money. Everyone involved in the plan's conception should be doxed.

This Big Brother nonsense is totally unnecessary, and I doubt any of it would make us safer anyway.

<p>This comes across as a gross invasion of privacy, and also a waste of resources likely to create false hits rather than useful information.</p>
<p>This is a complete and unnecessary violation of privacy and freedom. We are a free nation not a police state</p>
<p>This is a huge threat to my privacy.</p>
<p>This is a poor use of valuable time and resources. It is also unethical, and un-American.</p>
<p>This is a REALLY bad idea.</p>
<p>This is a remarkable waste of resources.</p>
<p>This is a ridiculous idea.</p>
<p>This is a ridiculous proposal. And, the NSA probably does it anyway.</p>
<p>This is a ridiculous waste of money & extreme intrusion on people's privacy. I may vent online but that doesn't represent my full persona or intentions. I may be friends with someone who has been unfairly or inaccurately put on a no-fly list, or whose opinions are vastly different from my own. This is a ridiculous suggestion.</p>
<p>This is a terrifying Orwellian proposal and a waste of taxpayers money!</p>
<p>This is an egregious violation of personal privacy and something that would have incredibly far-reaching and impossibly negative ramifications for everyone. This should NOT be allowed to happen.</p>
<p>This is an invasion of privacy, and one of the poorest uses of money I've seen in a while.</p>
<p>This is an invasion of privacy. Similar to monitoring telephone calls, there should be a legal process in place to ensure people's rights are not being infringed.</p>
<p>This is appalling and absolutely none of the government's business. A shocking invasion of privacy. The US government is entitled to see exactly as much of my online presence as any other stranger: nothing!</p>
<p>This is both illegal and immoral.</p>
<p>This is creepy, and clearly shows a lack of understanding of the variety of ways people use social media.</p>
<p>This is directly against Article I in the constitution. Free speech is a protected right in the United States. This kind of information could be used to put people on watch lists for no</p>

<p>reason. And this is a gross invasion of privacy.</p>
<p>This is in violation of the Fourth Amendment. It's a severe breach in citizens' privacy and should not be allowed.</p>
<p>This is the stupidest idea I've ever heard.</p>
<p>This is unjustified and a total demolition of our constitutional rights. Our personal information will be obviously used to oppress free speech and the right to protest. It is a Nazi invasion of our privacy which will lead to more police violence, abuse of power, maltreatment of American Citizens as well as foreigners, and tyranny and despotism by the controlling 2%.</p>
<p>This plan is a completely unacceptable intrusion into our private lives.</p>
<p>This plan is a flagrant violation of US Constitutional rights. Support for this plan is indefensible and antithetical--perhaps treasonous--to core, basic American values of privacy and speech.</p>
<p>This plan is a giant stride towards reshaping our national security apparatus into Oceania's Ministry of Truth. Terrifying.</p>
<p>This policy would ensure I never visited the US again. It is a massive invasion of my privacy, especially as I am not a citizen of the US. I'm already nervous about the US and visiting there, scared for my safety. This would essentially tip me over into never going there again. There are other countries I could visit that are safer and more likely to respect my privacy.</p>
<p>This program would be another waste of time and energy and millions of dollars. It will result in a lot of false positives and false negatives, and disrupt trade and tourism.</p>
<p>This proposed plan is a blatant violation of the fourth amendment.</p> <p>Besides, do you really think terrorists are going to openly discuss their plans on social media?</p>
<p>This seems to be a large waste of time and money. Keeping separate social media accounts would neither be difficult or unlikely if this is implemented. All this would accomplish is wasting money that is sourly needed elsewhere, and decrease trust of the USA more.</p>
<p>This suggestion is an invasion of my privacy. I am an American citizen. My government has no reason or need to search my online presence merely because I travel.</p>

<p>This would be a violation of freedom of speech.</p>
<p>This would be the equivalent of eavesdropping on conversations in a bar with you friends. It is unacceptable to have one's private life invaded in this way.</p>
<p>To do such Online presence searches would be a breach of the fourth amendment's right to protection from unreasonable search and seizure. This plan should not be implemented.</p>
<p>Too intrusive.</p>
<p>Too invasive, and unnecessary.</p>
<p>Unless the government has a specific need to know any of this information, in which case it should obtain a court warrant, I do not see how a person's use of social media is the business of any government.</p>
<p>Viewing social media posts of an individual wanting to travel internationally is something I would consider a surveillance-driven abuse of power. Why would there be a necessity for the government to view and sift through posts and musings that are most of the time completely irrelevant to international travel? The government should not interfere with the public expressions of the individual or group, unless if the individual or group is a credible, realistic, and proven threat or menace to society. This is exactly why I personally do not have accounts on Twitter, Facebook, or most of the other social media websites. These websites are already inherently a form of surveillance, and the government trying to peek into these accounts would be a manipulation and control tactic that goes against the best interests of society. If the government decides to survey social media even more than they already are, that would be an abuse of power. Unlocking access to the daily lives of private citizens is, in this regard, fully corrupt.</p>
<p>What a ridiculous proposal. Is the US gov that afraid of foreigners?</p>
<p>What, the screening process isn't slow enough already?</p>
<p>Whatever happened to land of the free and home of the brave?? This is an obscene invasion of privacy, and the data collected could end up being abused by people with access to it, whether legally or illegally (hackers). Completely ridiculous plan.</p>
<p>What's the point of security, when the government will take your information and disperse it to unknown reaches. After all, Google, Facebook, Microsoft, and other IT shops tells everyone not to give their passwords out.</p>
<p>When the hell did my country become a cross of Cold War Russia, Nazi Germany, and every dystopian Sci Fi novel? Who the hell thought this was a good idea?</p>

You are always free to search for things that public, but it will rarely be a good use of resources. You should not be able to require access or identity information beyond relevant citizenship paperwork.

You have no right to infringe up on my privacy.

I would cease to use social media altogether. Who knows what this secret algorithm would consider a threat? Dog videos? Recipes? Political commentary? Disagreeing with elected officials? If clicking like on a post the program finds disagreeable would bar me from coming and going, even though I am not a criminal, then I wouldn't use any form of social media at all.

You do not need to pry. NSA already knows what is on my website, and some officious grunt at the border should not decide my fate by looking at my Facebook page.

As a US citizen, I would not under any circumstances provide my social media information voluntarily, and if forced to do so at the border I would consider deleting them prior to travel. My social media use would become non-existent if this were to take place. This would create a chilling effect on my First Amendment right of freedom of speech and my Fourth Amendment right to Due Process, and I would be willing to join a class action lawsuit to have the program curtailed.

DHS should not be able to collect or search a person's social media posting without prior justification. Despite that social media is often considered a public forum, searching said forum without due cause would appear to be a violation of the 4th amendment of the Constitution. Just Cause must be established via other methods, and a warrant issued by a judge should be procured prior to any social media search. Furthermore, the warrant should be available to the subject of the search without fee through a public records search.

Fuck. You.

Hell NO!

I have nothing to hide, nothing to be ashamed about, but my facebook/social media accounts are as private as personal letters. I would not want my mail scrutinised. I value my privacy.

I think that the whole idea would be a ridiculous waste of resources. Even if it were to be done in a way where there was little economic or time impact, I don't think that there is a proverbial snowballs chance that it will do anything to make anyone safer. The most likely outcome is chilling speech, and collating even more data into a system that already has too much about citizens; which I expect to be compromised at least to other state actors

if it isn't already.
I thought you couldn't search without a warrant. This is a terrible idea and in flagrant disregard of basic privacy.
It is a terribly invasive proposal, with seemingly unlimited potential for abuse.
It's a violation of privacy, and an unnecessary cost that will have little real effect.
It's an unreasonable search
Merely requesting access to such information can have be a subtle form of intimidation. The accumulation of social media data and the direct request for that data is not government's business. Expecting to catch terrorists in such a manner is ridiculous since, once known, those actors need only present a sanitized version.
My reply is simple: get a warrant. If information from intelligence agencies tags me specifically as a threat, then investigate me appropriately. Gill-netting of all technologically-available computer resources without cause is, by definition, a totalitarian approach that is wholly contrary to the spirit of freedom we should feel in the United States of America.
MYOB Mind Your Own Business
Never. Are you going to next search libraries for what books I read?
Overall, a giant waste of time and really bad from a PR point of view
Overreach. Unacceptable.
Police state, here we come, if this goes through. This must not happen. Won't do any good anyway.
Taxpayers should not be paying to have the department of Homeland Security violate everyone's privacy in this way. Investigations should be based on specific evidence, not bulk collection on everyone.
The right to a citizens privacy needs to be an amendment.
The US Government has shown that it cannot be trusted to fairly use personal information

gathered on its citizens. This is another example of dangerous overreach by the government and it should be shut down immediately.
This is a hideous overreach. I pay taxes for infrastructure, not for soviet-style secret police and evaluations of my allegiance to the party. Everyone involved in this proposal does not belong in the land of the free.
This is a violation of privacy. A person's online presence should only be searched under a court order, just like a person's home.
This is going too far. Soon then, are we to be afraid to speak our minds on matters, that we might be denied access to our own country? What is next? What will be asked to give up next? What rights, and privileges?
This plan breaches the spirit if not the letter of the Fourth Amendment of the US Constitution. Social media accounts are private and should stay that way. Searching them or reviewing them without probable cause or a warrant just in case is like having your home and personal effects searched and is quite simply unAmerican. Whoever thought this up should be ashamed of themselves.
U.S. government casting a wide net of social media monitoring has a chilling effect on the free expression of ideas.
You are setting a very bad precedent for countries such as China's border customs. In fact, it may already be too late. You just gave them this great idea. You've also given numerous business ideas for other Chinese brokers that will give you fresh, believable clean social media accounts, all for 10,000 Yuan.
Wrong
1984
All modern democratic nations provide freedom of association and freedom of speech. Insofar as I have those rights, my speech and my social media connections should not be scrutinized unless I have been indicted. It is an unreasonable search. Even for people who have done nothing wrong, there is plenty to fear from unreasonable searches.
Breach of my privacy, no added value to national security, just don't
I am eagerly awaiting a clear business case, a document to explain exactly why this information needs to be solicited, collected, and retained. I must see the business plan for how having this information will be beneficial and to what ends. I require knowledge as to what encryption is being used for the systems that collect or store this data. I need to know who has access to the information once it is collected, and I require confirmation

that this information will never be shared with other governments or bodies, details on what protections are in place to protect individuals from retaliation from individuals and governments.

Without clear proof that my freedom of speech and liberty of expression are not being unnecessarily infringed upon; that my privacy will be protected, from others on the Internet as much as from the government; that none of the information collected on my social media accounts and use will be stockpiled or shared for any purpose, with anyone, individual, government, organization, or agency; that the system on which this information is collected is impossible to hack and has a clear set of guidelines on protecting privacy and supporting encryption; this is an unacceptable attempt to scare, intimidate, and generate fear and mistrust and use entry into a country as a means to require information that individuals should not be expected to divulge.

I am eagerly awaiting a clear business case, a document to explain exactly why this information needs to be solicited, collected, and retained. I must see the business plan for how having this information will be beneficial and to what ends. I require knowledge as to what encryption is being used for the systems that collect or store this data. I need to know who has access to the information once it is collected, and I require confirmation that this information will never be shared with other governments or bodies, details on what protections are in place to protect individuals from retaliation from individuals and governments.

Without clear proof that my freedom of speech and liberty of expression are not being unnecessarily infringed upon; that my privacy will be protected, from others on the Internet as much as from the government; that none of the information collected on my social media accounts and use will be stockpiled or shared for any purpose, with anyone, individual, government, organization, or agency; that the system on which this information is collected is impossible to hack and has a clear set of guidelines on protecting privacy and supporting encryption; this is an unacceptable attempt to scare, intimidate, and generate fear and mistrust and use entry into a country as a means to require information that individuals should not be expected to divulge.

I strongly, vehemently oppose this plan.

I'm a U.S. citizen and I travel to Asia (Taiwan, Japan, China) for work in the tech industry. Given the difficulty of the process to get a China Visa I believe with certainty that if the U.S. starts asking for social media information China will follow suit. I already avoid commenting on social media threads related to the Dalai Lama or Tibet for fear that China would block my entry on my next visit. If I was forced to turn over access to my social

<p>media to any country I would probably further curtail my online activity. It represents both a curtailing of my public free speech but also to some degree a hit to the commercial activity of those companies which derive income from my social media activity (FaceBook, LinkedIn, and their advertisers).</p>
<p>It's a gross violation of privacy.</p>
<p>It's a violation of the human right to privacy.</p>
<p>It's none of your business. Please let private stuff be private.</p>
<p>No government or government agency needs to know these things. At best it would infer that I truly know and fully agree with everything said by the people I follow on social media, at worst it would put vulnerable people and minorities at risk of being targeted by these agencies (and organisations with legal or illicit access to these databases), with no recourse for justice when their rejection or imprisonment is later proven to have been done in error based on prejudice or incorrectly interpreted information.</p> <p>Should we record every personal conversation and thought and submit those too? That seems just as ridiculous and heavy-handed as these measures do to me.</p>
<p>NOPE</p>
<p>Stupid</p>
<p>The mere idea that this is being seriously considered is absolutely horrifying.</p>
<p>the US department of Homeland Security is a waste of taxpayer money. They can barely run the TSA, which is incredibly inept and can barely do the job of pretending to make airports safer. Giving them more access and power over people makes no sense.</p>
<p>The whole project is nonsense. If I had anything serious / important to hide, I would provide false accounts instead of any proper ones. I wouldn't trust anything to the TSA and my social life is not any government's business.</p>
<p>This is highly intrusive and, in fact, a massive violation of Freedom of Speech. Totally unacceptable.</p>
<p>This is ridiculously invasive, unlikely to be effective in identifying threats, and a misuse of American dollars and the American people.</p>
<p>This is the very definition of a chill on free speech.</p>
<p>This proposal is both ineffective, as people will just give false information if made to</p>

<p>provide anything, and an unconscionable violation of privacy that will have no tangible benefit. Preposterous that it is even being considered.</p>
<p>Unconscionable and ultimately useless.</p>
<p>While I am not 100% opposed to law enforcement agencies being able to request my social media activity, I think that this information should only be provided with a warrant and not a National Security Letter, a FISA court order, or other mechanism. I also think that if social media data is used to deny someone entry into the US, they should be able to know, at the time of the decision, the specific reason or reasons. I also think that the person should be able to appeal the decision and that the decision and the appeal process should not be subject to Secret or State Secrets or otherwise hidden from public view.</p>
<p>While social media history can be illuminating for those who work the security beat, the civil rights aspect trumps their request for this information. Government scrutiny, by its very presence, is an impediment to free speech, and un-American to the core. At some point, you have to draw the line, and say that there are some risks we are willing to accept, in order to preserve the fundamental nature of our free and open society.</p>
<p>At the very least, this is an INSANE waste of time and resources. If you want to look at pictures of lattes get your own Instagram, and leave mine out of it!</p>
<p>I think it is a ridiculous waste of money</p>
<p>I think the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has many resources from which to draw information and should not resort to these intrusive violations of privacy.</p>
<p>If this is passed/made a thing then I will cross the US off of the places I would visit(- and the same goes for any other country that tried to do the same). Which is a shame considering I have made many friends there. It just seems like there are better things that money can be spent on. (For example the water crisis in Flint, providing education materials to teachers, perhaps even reducing the amount it costs for a higher education).</p>
<p>It's an invasion of privacy, and just a creepy thing to do. We shouldn't be spending tax-payer money on this kind of thing.</p>
<p>This is a horrible wasteful idea that would spend too much of taxpayers money to invade law-abiding citizens lives.</p>
<p>Unless you have actual proof that I did something wrong - stay out of my accounts.</p>
<p>It will not make your country any safer!</p>

Just no!
I do not think there should be a general control of the online presence of all visitors. Online screenings should be only reserved in case of suspects.
I want to keep my privacy
This is an incredibly bad idea, and bordering on unconstitutional. Unreasonable search and seizure clause I believe. Tax payer money can be much better spent on many other programs besides this needle in a haystack search program, which essentially is a fishing expedition, and seems to imply potential guilt by association, even if the association is unknown. Horrible idea and a waste of taxpayer money
US Customs has no business reading my or anyone else's social media accounts.
I think that it is okay to collect personal information that is public because everybody can see it. However, it is difficult to predict actions based on such data as Big Data Analysis always comes with an error rate. Even if this rate is very low, e.g. 0,01%, a lot of citizens may be judged wrongly, e.g. 3,000,000 of 300,000,000 Americans would be affected!
Honestly if I post something publicly, it's public. I'd be against them wanting my credentials to look at private messages and usage.
It is intrusive and a bad idea! Find other ways of protecting borders other than using security threats as a reason to infringe on people's privacy.
It shouldn't be done until how it is done and what is made of the information becomes a matter of public knowledge and record. This survey should also have informed such things. Asking if I agree or not without knowing how only makes me want to repel it.
Stay out of my business.
Everyone has a right to privacy, especially from the government. Put yourselves and your employees in the shoes of someone coming into this country, do you want all of that information on you in the public's hands?
It's fucking outrageous! What I do online it's none of your fucking business!
it's really not ok and it's look like a threat to the right of free speech.
It's useless.
Get a warrant.
If it is illegal to ask religious, political, sexual preference based questions it is illegal to

search social media accounts. PERIOD. My social media account usage is limited as it is and thinking twice is always something anyone should do when posting anyway. If the question is, will I still stand up for what I believe? Everyone's answer should be a resounding of course. Any SM account I have is largely used for news and information gathering of religious, political, secular purposes (LGBTQ2AI). These accounts are not one sided and in searching out as diverse perspectives as possible to understand whats going on they often do not espouse my personal beliefs, motivations, etc. Any personal events are attempted over encrypted (when possible) text and chat and should be encouraged down this road - because it keeps you safe from unscrupulous sources (I'm thinking here of bad ex-partners or malevolent folks /corps in general). Access to these services is a BREACH of basic human rights and opens the door to MASSIVE potential discrimination and false-positives.

It is a violation of my privacy.

It is an absolutely unnecessary invasion of the privacy of the nation's citizens. We should not be subject to arbitrary investigation because we MIGHT do something wrong. Policies such ad these that are made with good intentions are invariably abused and used to put innocent people in prison.

This is intrusive and unnecessary, AND UNACCEPTABLE. I don't want to be analyzed based on a computer program or an agent's opinion as to my mood on any given day. People say a lot of things. Most things can be taken many ways.

Appendix II

Visa Office
Bureau of Consular Affairs
2201 C St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

May 18, 2017

Via Electronic Filing

Re: Notice of Collection Under OMB Emergency Review: Supplemental Questions for Visa Applicants, Docket No. DOS-2017-0019

To Whom It May Concern,

We write to submit comments on the U.S. Department of State's (State) request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to instate supplemental questions on certain immigrant and nonimmigrant visa applications. Proposed questions would include "social media platforms and identifiers, also known as handles, used during the last five years." By asking travelers to provide the government with social media identifiers that could then be used to monitor online activity, the proposal risks undermining the rights to freedom of expression, freedom of association, and privacy. State should withdraw the proposed rule change.

Access Now defends and extends the digital rights of users at risk around the world. By combining innovative policy, user engagement, and direct technical support, we fight for open and secure communications for all. As part of this mission, we fight for the right to speak freely, which is critical for demonstrating dissent, guaranteeing a free press, and defending human rights.

In 2016, when the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) published a request for comment on similar rule changes, Access Now issued a survey requesting public responses to the proposed changes. More than 2,300 individuals responded to our survey. The overwhelming majority of respondents saw the proposal as negative. One respondent explained, "I believe that requesting this information would have a chilling effect on free and open discussion on social media -- discussion that is essential to democracy." Another worried, "I am terrified that a meta-analysts [sic] of my past years search history (often helping or showing students how to search for topics due on term papers -- on both the computers at my college, and my personal ones as well) would yield a very skewed view of who I am or what I believe." Several respondents called CBP's proposal an invasion of privacy.

U.S. law guarantees the rights to freedom of expression, freedom of association, and privacy as provided for in the U.S. Constitution as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Efforts to monitor social media

activity have been shown to have a chilling effect on speech.¹ Government monitoring and analysis of social media content, even public content, can reveal a significant amount of non-public, protected information about a user and thus interfere with the right to privacy.

In addition to this comment, Access Now has joined nearly 50 other organizations in a separate joint comment responding to this proposal. As that comment explains,

...the request for social media data – “platforms and identifiers” – is fatally ambiguous and will have a deleterious impact on the speech and privacy of the applicants as well as the Americans with whom they communicate.

Surveillance of this sort has a disparate impact on users at risk, including communities of color, religious groups, LGBTQI communities, and other marginalized communities. The internet has become a space for vulnerable communities to connect with one another. Social media surveillance is especially harmful to individuals living under repressive regimes where such expressions may be unlawful and subject to harsh penalties.

In addition, there is a high likelihood of confusion as to the purpose of State’s collection and how the agency will use the data. For example, it is not immediately clear to what extent providing identifiers will impact decisions to grant immigration status to individuals entering the U.S. It is also unclear whether, how, or to what extent user data will be used by other government offices and agencies.

The stated goals of the proposed rule changes are to “more rigorously evaluate applicants for terrorism or other national security-related visa ineligibilities.”² Yet, the activity and communications of people willing to provide social media identifiers to State are least likely to be of interest because individuals whose data State and intelligence agencies seek would be unlikely to provide identifiers. We do commend the exclusion of a requirement for visa applicants to provide social media passwords, due in part to the calls that have been made to omit said requirement.³ However, requesting social media handles will have a chilling effect on free expression and is likely inefficient. Complicating matters further, large-scale analysis of social media implicit in the proposal is of questionable value due to the highly-contextual nature of expression on social media. As such, the proposal does not meet international human rights standards as articulated by the United Nations Human Rights Committee.

For more information, please contact us at the addresses below.

¹ <https://www.accessnow.org/13503-2/>

² <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2017-05-04/pdf/2017-08975.pdf>

³ <https://www.accessnow.org/give-us-twitter-facebook-passwords-guarding-free-expression/>

Drew Mitnick
Policy Counsel
drew@accessnow.org

Amie Stepanovich
U.S. Policy Manager
Amie@accessnow.org

Nathan White
Senior Legislative Manager
nathan@accessnow.org

Appendix III

Department of State
Bureau of Consular Affairs
2201 C St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

September 20, 2017

Via Electronic Filing

Re: 60-Day Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Supplemental Questions for Visa Applicants, Docket Number: DOS-2017-0032

To Whom It May Concern,

We write to submit comments on the U.S. Department of State's (State) request to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to instate supplemental questions on certain immigrant and nonimmigrant visa applications.¹ Proposed information to be collected would include, "[s]ocial media platforms and identifiers, also known as handles, used during the last five years." By requiring travelers to provide social media identifiers without suspicion, the proposal risks undermining the rights to freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and privacy. The request for social media identifiers is does not adequately consider the status of marginalized populations seeking entry to the United States, nor does it accurately estimate the cost that such a collection would require. Thus its implementation could be used to harm the rights to freedom of expression and digital privacy of travelers and the Americans that they connect with. State should withdraw the proposed rule change.

In 2016, when the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) published a request for comment on similar rule changes, Access Now issued a survey requesting public responses to the proposed changes. More than 2,300 individuals responded with the overwhelming majority of respondents saw the proposal as negative.² One respondent explained, "I believe that requesting this information would have a chilling effect on free and open discussion on social media -- discussion that is essential to democracy." Another worried, "I am terrified that a meta-analists [sic] of my past years search history (often helping or showing students how to search for topics due on term papers -- on both the computers at my college, and my personal ones as well) would yield a very skewed view of who I am or what I believe." Several respondents called the proposal an invasion of privacy.

¹ United States Department of State, "60-Day Notice of Proposed Information Collection: Supplemental Questions for Visa Applicants"

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/08/03/2017-16343/60-day-notice-of-proposed-information-collection-supplemental-questions-for-visa-applicants>

² Access Now, "Thousands object to U.S. plan to collect social media info at border"

<https://www.accessnow.org/thousands-object-u-s-government-plan-collect-social-media-information-border/>

Access Now filed comments in reply to the DHS request and State's previous request for emergency OMB approval to request social media identifiers.³ We also joined nearly 50 other organizations in filing a separate joint comment demanding that the April 2017 State proposal not go into effect. As that comment explains,

...the request for social media data – “platforms and identifiers” – is fatally ambiguous and will have a deleterious impact on the speech and privacy of the applicants as well as the Americans with whom they communicate.⁴

Surveillance of this sort has a disparate impact on users at risk, including communities of color, religious groups, LGBTQI communities, and other communities at risk. The internet has become a space for vulnerable communities to connect with one another. Social media surveillance is especially harmful to individuals living under repressive regimes where such expressions may be unlawful and subject to harsh penalties.

The current proposal stipulates, “collection of social media platforms and identifiers will not be used to deny visas based on race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, political views, gender, or sexual orientation.” However, there already exists evidence DHS has specifically targeted the social media information of Muslim travelers.⁵ This proposal does not adequately prevent discrimination in travelers targeted for additional scrutiny, nor does it include the proper protections for travelers that may belong to a vulnerable population.

The stated goals of the proposed rule changes are to, “more rigorously evaluate applicants for terrorism, national security-related, or other visa ineligibilities...” While this proposal does not indicate providing social media identifiers would be voluntary, as it is under the collection of social media identifiers by DHS, there is no effective method to enforce mandatory collection. Travelers can simply not have social media accounts or disregard the suggestion to provide identifiers and the proposal does not make clear the consequences for failing to provide information. Yet individuals of interest are the least likely to provide identifiers.

The proposed limitations on requesting travelers' passwords and violating individual privacy settings or controls is a welcome change. In fact, State should clarify that it will not seek

³ Access Now, “Re: Notice of Collection Under OMB Emergency Review: Supplemental Questions for Visa Applicants” & “Re: Agency Information Collection Activities: Arrival and Departure Record (Forms I-94 and I-94W) and Electronic System for Travel Authorization”

https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2017/07/CommentstoStateDept_AccessNow.pdf

<https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2016/08/Access-Now-Submission-to-CBP-Proposal.pdf>

⁴ Multiple organizations, “JointLetterUSBorderSearches”

<https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2017/02/JointLetterUSBorderSearches-final.pdf>

⁵ CAIR Florida, “CAIR-FL Files 10 Complaints with CBP After the Agency Targeted and Questioned American-Muslims About Religious and Political Views”

<https://www.cairflorida.org/newsroom/press-releases/720-cair-fl-files-10-complaints-with-cbp-after-the-agency-targeted-and-questioned-american-muslims-about-religious-and-political-views.html>

passwords or defeat privacy controls without individualized suspicion in other contexts as well. However, even the collection of social media identifiers and examination of publically presented information can be highly revealing and provide intimate details about the individual's' life and their connections.

"To monitor social media en masse is to treat all users like suspects, which has a chilling effect on human rights such as the rights to privacy, free speech, and access to information. It also discourages trust in the internet economy."⁶

Complicating matters further, large-scale analysis of social media implicit in the proposal is of questionable value due to the highly-contextual nature of expression on social media. Thus, we believe that State's, "estimate of the time and cost burden for this proposed collection," greatly undervalues the resources that it would require to perform the collection with proper considerations for human rights. As such, the proposal does not meet international human rights standards as articulated in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by the United Nations Human Rights Committee.⁷

SIGNED

Cole Potter
Policy Intern
cole@accessnow.org

Drew Mitnick
Policy Counsel
drew@accessnow.org

Peter Micek
General Counsel
peter@accessnow.org

Access Now defends and extends the digital rights of users at risk around the world. By combining innovative policy, user engagement, and direct technical support, we fight for open and secure communications for all. As part of this mission, we fight for the right to speak freely, which is critical for demonstrating dissent, guaranteeing a free press, and defending human rights

⁶ Access Now, "A Digital Rights Approach to Proposals for Preventing or Countering Violent Extremism Online" <https://www.accessnow.org/cms/assets/uploads/2016/10/CVE-online-10.27.pdf>

⁷ UNHRC, "International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights" <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx>

Appendix IV

Mr. Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein
High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais Wilson
52 rue des Pâquis
CH-1201 Geneva, Switzerland

Mr. Filippo Grandi
High Commissioner for Refugees
Case Postale 2500
CH-1211 Genève 2 Dépôt
Suisse

Ambassador William Lacy Swing
Director General
International Organization for Migration
17, Route des Morillons
CH-1211 Geneva 19
Switzerland

Cc:

Mr. David Kaye
Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression

Mr Maina Kiai
Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association

Mr. Michel Forst
Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders

Mr. Mutuma Ruteere
Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

Mr. Ben Emmerson
Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism

Ms. Rita Izsák-Ndiaye
Special Rapporteur on minority issues

Mr. François Crépeau
Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants

Mr. Ahmed Shaheed
Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief

Mr. Joseph Cannataci
Special Rapporteur on the right to privacy

Ms. Karima Bennoune
Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights

Mr. Michael Addo
Mr. Surya Deva
Mr. Dante Pesce
Ms. Anita Ramasastry
Mr. Pavel Sulyandziga
Working Group on the issue of human rights and transnational corporations and other business enterprises

Mr. Sètondji Roland Jean-Baptiste Adjovi, *Chair-Rapporteur*
Mr. José Guevara, *Vice-Chair on individual complaints*
Ms. Leigh Toomey, *Vice-Chair on follow-up*
Mr. Seong-Phil Hong
Ms. Elina Steinerte
Working Group on arbitrary detention

Ms. Alda Facio, *Chair*
Ms. Kamala Chandrakirana, *Vice-Chair*
Ms. Emna Aouij
Ms. Frances Raday
Ms. Eleonora Zielinska
Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and practice

Snow White Smelser
Programme Officer, Border Management
Office on Drugs and Crime

Dear Commissioner Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, Commissioner Filippo Grandi, Director General
Amb. William Lacy Swing, and UN Experts,

We write to urge you to investigate reports that the United States is demanding visitors provide access to their electronic devices as well as passcodes to those devices and online accounts. These practices persist in violation of the United States human rights treaty obligations and your action is needed to hold the government accountable for the protection of human rights at U.S. borders, which are not zones of exclusion or exception.

The digital devices most people carry in their pockets or bags grant access to our social media accounts and contain a dizzying array of personal information. Today, these devices multi-task as our primary means of voice and text communication, our cameras, fitness trackers, sleep monitors, banking portals, home shopping networks, and the source of the answers for any questions that may come up in casual conversation.

Despite, or possibly because of this, recent reports from media and civil society organizations detail incidents of U.S. border agents demanding access to devices and social media accounts, harassing, or even denying entrance to individuals based, presumably, on the content found on those devices. [1][2] The Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) Florida filed 10 complaints with the U.S. Customs & Border Protection Agency (CBP), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the Department of Justice (DOJ), "reporting the systematic targeting of American-Muslim citizens for enhanced screening by CBP," including through "increased scrutiny of American-Muslim's social media accounts and contents of their mobile phones along with invasive questions regarding their religious beliefs and political opinions about American Citizens." [3] Authorities also have the capacity to install malware or other remote access software that would allow the continual monitoring of personal content. They should provide assurances that they are not doing so without explicit and individualized judicial authorization and close oversight.

Rather than an anomaly, these reports exemplify a trend toward U.S. border enforcement without regard for human rights. In 2016, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) within the Department of Homeland Security added a field for "social media identifiers" to certain immigration documents. The field was presumptively voluntary, but there was no indication that it would be marked as such. Thousands wrote to CBP to explain that the broad collection of travelers' so-called public information, including social media posts, interferes with the human right to privacy and chills the freedoms of opinion, expression, and association. The collection went into effect despite the considerable opposition. [4]

The actions at the border and beyond under the current administration have become only more heavy handed. The Trump Administration has, in three weeks, targeted persons based on their national origin, religion, and ethnicity. For example, an Executive Order issued on January 27 and criticized by several Special Rapporteurs infamously prohibited the entry by residents of seven Muslim-majority countries and allowed for the prioritization of refugees on the basis of religion. [5] Numerous reports indicated CBP agents were demanding access to travelers' social media and electronic devices in enforcing the Executive Order. [6]

Now the threat is that these more invasive practices will be institutionalized and expanded. On Tuesday February 7, 2017, the Secretary for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, General John Kelly, said of people seeking visas to travel to the US, "[w]e want to get on their social media, with passwords: What do you do, what do you say? If they don't want to cooperate then you don't come in." [7]

It is a violation of human rights to obtain at the border or elsewhere, by force or coercion, suspicionless access to a person's digital life, including the fundamental rights to privacy, the freedom of opinion, expression, religion, belief, movement, and association, and the right to freedom of the press. Moreover, the selective enforcement of data collection requirements to target journalists, Muslims, and migrants at the border is particularly offensive, and violates the principle of non-discrimination and right to equal protection found in many international instruments, including the 1951 Refugee Convention. [8]

States have the obligation to respect, promote and fulfill human rights wherever they exercise jurisdiction or effective control, including where they exercise authority or control extraterritorially. The UN has stated that human rights apply online as they do offline, which

holds true at borders as elsewhere. The U.S. has signed and ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which protects free flow of “information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers.” As the OHCHR Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights at International Borders outline, border policies should be guided by the primacy of human rights, non-discrimination, and assistance and protection from harm. Specifically, the right to privacy must be protected in border screening processes, and personal property, including mobile phones, “should only be confiscated by border authorities when duly authorized by law and in accordance with international human rights standards in clearly defined, limited circumstances.” [9] The incidents outlined in this letter indicate consistent and flagrant disregard for international norms.

Border controls unleashed without adherence to the rule of law restrict freedom of movement and further imperil marginalized and vulnerable communities seeking safety, family reunification, and economic opportunity. Exposing individuals’ electronic devices and online accounts -- containing their contact lists, sensitive communications, financial and health data, location histories, photos, prayers, and more -- threatens not only individuals and families but entire communities, and deters travelers and migrants from enjoying the benefits of science and technology.

We ask that you raise the issues communicated in this letter with the U.S. government, in particular that it is failing to conform with its commitments to protect human rights by demanding access to electronic devices and social media accounts as a prerequisite to entry into the country. We also request that you conduct an inquiry to more comprehensively investigate these alarming incidents and policies. Finally we urge you to request a country visit to the U.S. to observe and monitor the procedures at the border controls to serve as the basis for the inquiry. These outrageous and invasive controls must not become the norm.

Yours sincerely,

Access Now

Advocacy for Principled Action in Government

American Civil Liberties Union

The American Society of Journalists and Authors

Asian Americans Advancing Justice | AAJC

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - Asian Law Caucus

Asian Americans Advancing Justice - LA

Association for Progressive Communications

Bill of Rights Defense Committee/ Defending Dissent Foundation

Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law

CAIR-MN

Center for Constitutional Rights

The Constitution Project

Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)

Cyber Privacy Project

Free Speech Coalition

Muslim Justice League
National Hispanic Media Coalition
National Coalition to Protect Civil Freedoms
National Immigration Law Center
National Immigration Project of the NLG
National Iranian American Council
National Network for Arab American Communities
PEN America
Restore The Fourth
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights

Endnotes

[1] Canadian woman turned away from U.S. border after questions about religion, Trump (CBC News, 8 February 2017)
<<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/canadian-woman-turned-away-from-u-s-border-after-questions-about-religion-trump-1.3972019>> accessed 15 February 2017.

[2] Trump's executive order spurs Facebook and Twitter checks at the border (The Verge, 30 January 2017)
<<http://www.theverge.com/2017/1/30/14438280/trump-border-agents-search-social-media-instagram>> accessed 15 February 2017.

[3] CAIR-FL Files 10 complaints with CBP after the agency targeted and questioned American-Muslims about religious and political views (CAIR-FL, 1 January 2017)
<<https://www.cairflorida.org/newsroom/press-releases/720-cair-fl-files-10-complaints-with-cbp-after-the-agency-targeted-and-questioned-american-muslims-about-religious-and-political-views.html>> accessed 15 February 2017.

[4] Thousands object to U.S. plan to collect social media info at border (Access Now, 22 August 2016)
<<https://www.accessnow.org/thousands-object-u-s-government-plan-collect-social-media-information-border/>> accessed 15 February 2017.

[5] US travel ban: "New policy breaches washington's human rights obligations" – UN experts (OHCHR, 1 February 2017)
<http://ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21136&LangID=E>
accessed 15 February 2017.

[6] See e.g. Trump's executive order spurs Facebook and Twitter checks at the border (The Verge, 30 January 2017)
<<http://www.theverge.com/2017/1/30/14438280/trump-border-agents-search-social-media-instagram>> accessed 15 February 2017.

[7] U.S. visitors may have to hand over social media passwords: DHS (NBC News, 8 February 2017)
<<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/us-visitors-may-have-hand-over-social-media-passwords-kelly-n718216>> accessed 15 February 2017.

[8] Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees

<<http://www.unhcr.org/en-us/1951-refugee-convention.html>> accessed 15 February 2017.

[9] Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights at International Borders

<http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/OHCHR_Recommended_Principles_Guidelines.pdf> accessed 15 February 2017.