

IPA MEDIA RELEASE

Institute of Public Affairs | Australia's leading free market think tank

Wednesday, 5th September 2012

ROXON'S DATA RETENTION SCHEME WORSE THAN AUSTRALIA CARD

"Attorney-General Nicola Roxon's proposal to force internet service providers to log details of every Australian's internet usage is one of the most significant threats to individual liberty in Australian history," said Simon Breheny, director of the Rule of Law Project at the free market think tank the Institute of Public Affairs.

Mr Breheny and Chris Berg, IPA Director of Policy, appeared before the Parliamentary Inquiry into National Security Reforms in Melbourne today.

"The proposal would be a rolling, systematic and excessive invasion of the privacy of all Australians, just in case they are in the future ever suspected of committing a crime. This would be a complete reversal of the presumption of innocence, a key element of the rule of law," said Mr Breheny.

The IPA told the Inquiry that the privacy implications of the current proposals are strikingly similar to the national identity card proposal of the mid-1980s.

"The IPA was one of the most prominent opponents of the Australia card then, and we are proud to be a prominent opponent of Nicola Roxon's data retention proposal now," said Mr Breheny.

In 1986 the IPA wrote that "Australians should not allow themselves to be bullied into accepting a proposal which has ominous implications and particularly a grave temptation for abuse by government."

Today, the IPA issued the same warning in response to the proposed data retention regime.

For media and comment:

Chris Berg	Director, Policy	Institute of Public Affairs	0402 257 681
Simon Breheny	Director, Rule of Law Project	Institute of Public Affairs	0400 967 382