



## Driving VPNs South

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Public Safety Canada, an agency responsible for safety, security, emergency preparedness and this kind of thing, recently [urged](#) Canadians to protect themselves when using public Wi-Fi by also using a VPN.

“Using a VPN protects your data,” the agency said. True.

Unless — unless others in the government succeed in requiring VPN companies to uniformly sabotage the privacy of their customers.

The mechanism for crippling VPN’s? That would be the

pending [legislation](#) to force VPN providers to retain personal data which users expect them not to retain, in this way killing these companies’ very reason for being as well as Canadian Internet users’ reasons to employ these companies.

We netizens want some security. A VPN required to track and store information on customers seeking security is, *ipso facto*, insecure.

Bill C-22, or the Lawful Access Act, introduced by the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness in March, would require customers’ data to be retained for a year. *Everybody’s* data, mind you, not just the data of persons suspected of a crime.

“Oh this is just rich,” says Windscribe, a VPN provider based in Toronto. “Bill C-22 is driving VPN businesses like ours out of Canada because of the required user logging. And in the same breath you tell people to secure their data with VPNs.”

If things go on like this, Ottawa’s impulse to destroy or try to destroy online privacy will override any contrary impulse to help people preserve online privacy. Thereby obliging Canadians who do value it to figure out a way to override the override.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.