STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE EDWARD J. MARKEY (D-MA)
CO-CHAIRMAN
CONGRESSIONAL PRIVACY CAUCUS
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2001

I am pleased to join with Senator Shelby and Representative Barton in welcoming Senator Chris Dodd as the new Senate Co-Chair of the bipartisan, bicameral, Congressional Privacy Caucus.

With the retirement of Senator Richard Bryan, the Caucus' original Senate Democratic Co-Chair, we were forced to undertake a nationwide search for a Senator with the same level of commitment and dedication to the cause of protecting consumer privacy. We are very pleased announce today the results of that nationwide search: Senator Chris Dodd has graciously agreed to serve as our new Senate Co-Chair.

I am very pleased that to have Senator Dodd join us. Chris has long been a leading voice in support of stronger privacy protections. He has been active in pressing for new medical privacy protections, and during the contentious debate on the financial privacy provisions of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, he played a leading role in rallying Democratic Senators behind the amendments that Senator Shelby and I put forward to strengthen the financial privacy provisions of the bill.

While we were not successful then in putting onto the books the type of strong privacy protections the public deserves, we laid the foundations for the debate that will now unfold in this Congress on how best to assure that our constituents can preserve their right to be left alone – to be free from intrusions into their families private life by businesses or by the Government.

We plan an aggressive schedule of Caucus briefings and other events to educate House and Senate Members on these issues, to activate Members who support strong privacy protections, and to enact new laws consistent with the Caucus' guiding principles. We anticipate that we will schedule our first briefing sometime within the next month. Over the next few months, we hope to explore current developments affecting various aspects of the privacy issue, including Internet privacy, financial privacy, and medical and genetic privacy.

I look forward to working closely with Senator Dodd, Senator Shelby, and Representative Barton in the coming Congress. Thank you, Chris, for agreeing to serve. It's great to have you onboard!