



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Assistant Secretary for Communications
and Information
 Washington, D.C. 20230

The Honorable Jim Nussle
 U.S. House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515

MAR 18 2005

Attention: Chris Bliley

Dear Representative Nussle:

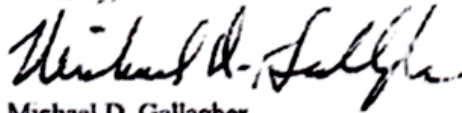
Thank you for sharing the concerns expressed by your constituents about the recent actions of the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) to enforce contract requirements related to contact information for registrants in the .us domain. The .us domain is the country code top level domain uniquely associated with the United States and is for the benefit of the American public. The contact information at issue is part of the so-called "WHOIS" database for the .us space, which is owned and maintained by the U.S. Government.

A searchable, accurate, current, and publicly accessible WHOIS database for the .us domain has been a long-held policy that came from NTIA's extensive three-year public outreach process that began in 1998. As a result, NTIA required a WHOIS database in the contract it awarded to NeuStar, Inc. in October 2001 for .us management services. The Department also required that all NeuStar subcontracts with registrars and all agreements with .us registrants made clear that the U.S. Government sets all policies for the .us domain; all registrant data is owned by the U.S. Government; and this data must be correct, current, complete, and accessible to the public. These requirements permit enforcement of the policy that all registrants in .us are U.S. citizens or reside or do business in the United States. They also assure the accuracy of this contact information for law enforcement officials, intellectual property holders, and American consumers and parents who rely on it. They protect continuity of services for .us registrants in the event of a registrar's business failure. Finally, they secure the U.S. Government's right to the data so that it can meet its obligations for competitive procurement of future .us management services.

During routine contract oversight, it came to NTIA's attention that a small number of registrars (2 registrars and their affiliates out of approximately 90 .us accredited registrars) were offering anonymous or "proxy" services, which have never been authorized or permitted in the .us domain. As a result, NTIA directed NeuStar to notify these registrars to cease offering these unauthorized services to the public no later than February 16, 2005. NTIA also directed NeuStar to notify these registrars that holders of .us domain names who had purchased this unauthorized service would have until January 26, 2006 to decide whether to provide correct and complete contact information or to let their registrations expire. NTIA believed this approach would provide .us domain name registrants the flexibility to make their own decisions about whether to release their contact information during the transition to an accurate and complete WHOIS database.

I hope this information is useful to you in addressing the concerns raised by constituent about privacy in the .us domain. I reiterate that it will be your constituent's choice as to whether to remain in the .us space and provide his or her contact information.

Sincerely,



Michael D. Gallagher