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CONSUMERS TO GET THE RIGHT TO ACCESS THEIR DATA

CHOICE says data access reform will promote competition and better deals for consumers

Consumer group CHOICE welcomes the Federal Government's announcement today that it will introduce a new legal right for consumers to access data about how they use their energy, banking, internet and phone services.

"This major reform, which will be introduced in 2018, should make it easier for consumers to find the best price in the market based on what they really need," says CHOICE Director of Campaigns and Communications, Erin Turner.

"Switching telecommunications, banking and energy providers is a confusing, time consuming, overly manual process, but it can provide you with real savings.

"Right now, companies make it incredibly difficult to put similar services side by side. It's far too hard to find the best deal for you. This new right to data should make the switching process much easier and less painful.

"CHOICE has been calling for consumers to be given access to their own data for years now, because we believe it will make it easier for people to drop bad deals and find the best price.

"This is a massive reform opportunity, and we are glad to see that the Government is seizing it.

"Consumers have been fighting an uphill battle in telecommunications, energy and banking for far too long.

"Switching doesn't have to be an arduous, difficult process – we are looking forward to the day when it is as easy as tapping one button," Ms Turner says.

The Federal Government announcement follows a recommendation made by the Productivity Commission in May 2017. CHOICE supported this recommendation, and has made several submissions in previous years calling for consumers to be given access to their own data to help compare and switch to better deals.

For further information on CHOICE's position on open data, visit: choice.com.au.

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