

My name is Philip Horger.

This is responsive to the expiration of jailbreaking protections regarding smartphones. The number for this class is 5.

As my work and hobby I am a programmer with years of experience dating back all the way to 7th grade. But I'm not making this appeal as a programmer, I'm making it as a user. Smartphone OEMs are notorious about untrustworthiness and skeezy deals (see: Carrier IQ). The idea of running software of indeterminate motivation on a device that is capable of tracking my every move and many of my thoughts (at least, the ones that turn into phone calls or search engine queries) is unacceptable. "Rooting" a phone allows me to load my device with software I trust.

Even without the practical reasons to do so, being legally able to modify the state of an object you own is important. I understand the precedent set by building permits and the like, but a microcomputer is not a matter of health and safety. When I own it, it's mine, and there is no valid excuse to restrict what I can do with it, provided I'm not using it to break other laws.

I know a lot of people who have already, or intend to, root their phones. The peace of mind and security are immense. None of those people uses their unlocked capabilities for illegal downloading, or any of the things that big media thinks the kids do these days to hurt them. There is a vocal minority of pirates who just might ruin things for the rest of us too, but they are still a minority. The majority root for fun, for security, and for safety. If I cannot legally root my smartphone I will not purchase one. That's not an empty threat, I'm planning to buy one in two months, and if I can't legally root my phone I won't buy it.