

March 7, 2018

President Donald Trump The White House 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue Washington, D.C. 20500

## Dear President Trump:

We write to urge you to prioritize completion and announcement of our nation's cyber deterrence strategy as soon as possible. The lack of decisive and clearly articulated consequences to cyberattacks against our country has served as an open invitation to foreign adversaries and malicious cyber actors to continue attacking the United States.

Section 1633 of the fiscal year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (Public Law 115-91), as well as the National Defense Authorization Acts for Fiscal Years 2014, 2016, and 2017 (Public Laws 113–66, 114–92, and 114–328) all require the executive branch to develop a national policy and strategy for deterring our adversaries in cyberspace.

In congressional hearings over the course of several years, we have heard numerous government officials across party lines from the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Defense, the State Department, and the National Security Agency each point to the White House when answering which government entity is in charge of formulating our nation's cyber doctrine. To date, despite a rapid increase in cyber activity by both nation-states and non-state actors, no cyber deterrence strategy has been announced.

Notwithstanding the good intentions of Congress and the executive branch, including eight years of the Obama Administration and over a year into your Administration, the United States has failed to formulate, implement, and declare a comprehensive cyber doctrine with an appropriate sense of urgency. We urge you to end this state of inaction immediately.

Much like our nuclear deterrent, a strong cyber doctrine by the United States government would serve as a deterrent, which is not only necessary, but critical to our nation's survival in the digital age. Our adversaries need to understand the boundaries of what is acceptable in the cyber domain, as well as the circumstances under which we would utilize offensive capabilities to retaliate against cyber-attacks.

Our increased reliance on the internet has created new threats and vulnerabilities to our nation's infrastructure and our way of life. Critical infrastructure such as the electric grid, oil pipelines, air traffic control, and financial institutions all use the internet and can be manipulated, disrupted, and in some cases even destroyed. Beyond physical damage, state sponsored disinformation and data manipulation campaigns have sowed lines of division and discord within our country and have targeted the very foundation of our democracy – the electoral process.

We urge you to provide us an immediate update on the status of the United States government's cyber deterrence strategy including a timeline of its progress and an anticipated timeline for completion.

Sincerely,

Martin Heinrich

United States Senator

M. Michael Rounds

United States Senator

Angus S. King Jr.

**United States Senator** 

Lindsey O. Graham

United States Senator

Jeanne Shaheen United States Senator Dan Sullivan

United States Senator

Richard Rlumenthal

Jeanne Shakeen

Richard Blumenthal United States Senator Tim Scott

**United States Senator** 

Kirsten Kellebrand

Kirsten Gillibrand United States Senator Ser Susse

Ben Sasse

United States Senator

Tim Kaine

**United States Senator** 

Gary C. Peters

**United States Senator** 

Elizabeth Warren

United \$tates Senator

Mazie K. Hirono United States Senator

CC: Mr. Rob Joyce, Special Assistant to the President and White House Cyber Security Coordinator