

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

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 cyber-attacks 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.

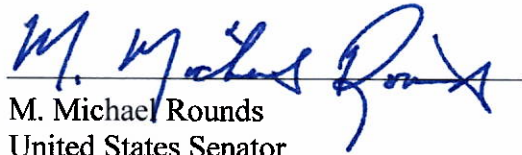
Our increased reliance on the internet has created new threats and vulnerabilities to our nation's infrastructure and our way of life. Critical infrastructure such as the electric grid, oil pipelines, air traffic control, and financial institutions all use the internet and can be manipulated, disrupted, 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.

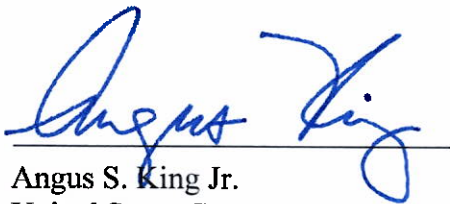
Sincerely,



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 Blumenthal
United States Senator



Tim Scott
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



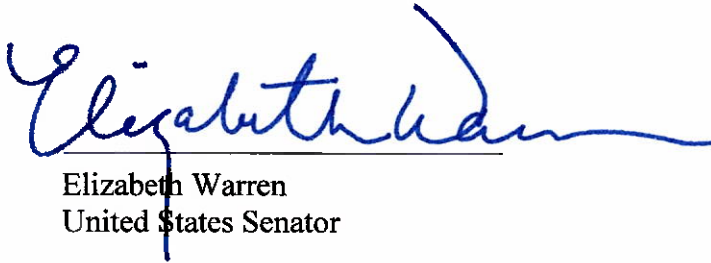
Ben Sasse
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

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