

August 11, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
H-232 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
H-204 U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leaders Schumer, McConnell, and McCarthy:

As Congress negotiates and drafts the next relief package to help our country recover from the economic impacts of COVID-19, we respectfully request that you include robust funding to increase cybersecurity capabilities for state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, school districts, libraries, small businesses, hospitals, and other essential services and institutions.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we as a nation have increased our reliance on technology. In everything from our healthcare systems to government, educational services to small business, we have come to depend on the reliability of our networks to send information safely and securely. This pandemic also has shined a light on the vulnerabilities of our networks and the challenges those on the ground are facing every day. According to the FBI, elementary and secondary schools, in addition to higher education institutions, can expect a spike in cyberattacks such as ransomware, phishing emails, and other cyber-related risks in the coming year. Hospitals and research facilities also have been warned of nations targeting their systems for patient and health data.

Overall, there has been a sharp increase in the number of reported cyberattacks around the country, and we must act in order to protect our small businesses and critical institutions during the pandemic. Organizations in both the public and private sectors are struggling to adapt to the new normal and need the necessary tools and resources in order to do so. As more Americans take part in teleworking, distance learning, and telemedicine, Congress must act quickly and ensure that the next COVID-19 relief bill includes funding to help employ robust cybersecurity systems across the board. Better preparation will enhance the ability of small businesses, governments, schools, and other institutions to respond more quickly to cyberattacks, protect critical data and personal information, and recover quickly.

Sincerely,



Senator Jacky Rosen



Senator Sheldon Whitehouse



Senator Richard Blumenthal



Senator Margaret Wood Hassan



Senator Gary C. Peters



Senator Jack Reed



Senator Chris Van Hollen



Senator Cory A. Booker

/s/

Senator Thomas R. Carper