



One Hundred Fifteenth Congress
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20515

May 23, 2017

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

Dear Mr. President:

Last week, reports surfaced that the White House may be planning to create a false narrative about the Department of Homeland Security's Automated Indicator Sharing (AIS) program in order to neutralize criticism over your handling of classified information with Russian officials.¹

According to a piece in *Foreign Policy* (*FP*), White House officials met last Wednesday to discuss the possibility of planting a story in the media or opening an investigation to accuse DHS of using the AIS platform to "inappropriately open up streams of sensitive data to Russia and other nonallies."² These officials hoped to create the illusion that AIS, a public-facing portal that does not deal in classified information, exhibits careless information practices by the Obama Administration roughly equivalent to your disclosure of intelligence gathered by a foreign ally. A second source confirmed that "Trump and his team have been interested in targeting the Homeland Security program for the past couple weeks. Nothing has been decided... but it's an option on the table."³

These reports, if true, are deeply troubling. The AIS program is the result of bipartisan legislation enacted in the 114th Congress, after years of negotiation between privacy, security, and industry stakeholders in an effort to speed public-private sharing of cyber threat indicators. In a press release celebrating AIS' launch last year, DHS described the capability as "the 'See Something, Say Something' of the Internet," noting that:

"When one participant detects a threat, all participants in AIS will learn about it. By broadening the depth and increasing the speed of cybersecurity information sharing, the country as a whole will be better able to manage cyber threats. The Cybersecurity Act of

¹ *Foreign Policy*, "Trump Team Planning Possible Retaliation for Classified Leak Allegation," by Jenna McLaughlin (May 18, 2017), <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/05/18/trump-team-planning-possible-retaliation-for-classified-leak-allegations/>.

² *Id.*, (quoting the article, not the source).

³ *Id.*, (quoting the article, not the source).

*2015 also provides targeted liability protection to companies that share cyber threat indicators with DHS or with each other. And like all of the department's cybersecurity programs, AIS includes rigorous privacy and civil liberties protections."*⁴

Despite holding enormous promise, AIS is still in its nascent stages. The Department should be using its limited resources to grow the capability and build trusted partnerships with its customer base, rather than fighting off baseless accusations. While we sincerely hope that the accounts in the *FP* report are not true, we nevertheless cannot stand aside and allow the White House to jeopardize this important program in a self-serving attempt to change the news cycle.

Pursuant to Rule X(3)(g) and Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, we respectfully request you provide a written response to the following information, and whatever supplementary information you deem responsive, by June 1, 2017.

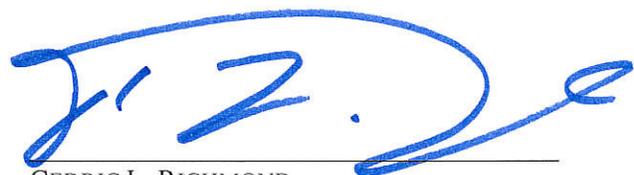
1. Please provide a detailed log of meetings held at the White House on Wednesday, May 17, 2017, accompanied by a list of attendees. If the meeting described herein, with respect to DHS' Automated Indicator Sharing program, indeed occurred, please provide any notes, discussion drafts, or other materials generated in advance of, during, or subsequent to the discussion.
2. Please provide the dates, times, and attendees of any meetings White House officials have held where DHS cybersecurity information sharing programs, including the Automated Indicator Sharing program, may have been discussed.
3. Has the White House directed an investigation into how the DHS Automated Indicator Sharing program shares cyber threat information with its partners, including international partners? If so, on what grounds?
4. If the White House is considering or considered planting a false story about the Automated Indicator Sharing program, as indicated in the *FP* piece, please provide any meeting notes, drafts, and other related materials that describe the details of such a story.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any questions, please contact Hope Goins, Minority Staff Director, at hope.goins@mail.house.gov or 202-226-2616.

Sincerely,



BENNIE G. THOMPSON
Ranking Member



CEDRIC L. RICHMOND
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Cybersecurity & Infrastructure
Protection

⁴ DHS "Open for Business to Receive Cyber Threat Indicators at Machine Speed," (March 17, 2016), <https://www.dhs.gov/blog/2016/03/17/dhs-open-business-receive-cyber-threat-indicators-machine-speed>.