



**HOMELAND SECURITY
COMMITTEE**

**Statement of Chairman Michael McCaul (R-TX)
Subcommittee on Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Protection**

“Examining DHS’s Cybersecurity Mission”

October 3, 2017

Remarks as Prepared

Thank you, Chairman Ratcliffe. I would also like to extend my thoughts and prayers to the victims and family members of the horrifying tragedy in Las Vegas. I am hopeful that as Americans, we can come together and prevent such violence from happening again.

America’s national security is continually threatened by Islamist terrorists, tyrannical regimes building and proliferating weapons of mass destruction, and human traffickers and transnational gang members like MS-13 who stream across our border. These threats are well known, and we need do everything we can to stop them as we see them coming.

However, we also find ourselves in the crosshairs of invisible attacks in a sustained cyberwar from nation-states and other hackers. And as we become more and more reliant on computers and smartphones in both our personal and professional lives, everyone is a potential target and sadly, many of us have already been victims.

Over the past few years we have seen many successful large-scale cyber-attacks take place. In early September, hackers were able to breach Equifax, a credit reporting agency, gaining access to sensitive information on as many as 143 million people.

In 2016, we know that Russia tried to undermine our electoral system and democratic process and in 2015, we learned that China stole over 20 million security clearances including mine. These kinds of violations are simply unacceptable.

I am proud to say that over the last few years, the Committee on Homeland Security has recognized these threats and led the charge to strengthen the defense of our nation’s networks.

In 2014, we enacted several important bills that empowered DHS to bolster its workforce, codified DHS’s cyber center, and updated FISMA for the first time in 12 years. A year later, the Cybersecurity Act became law, which enhances information sharing and makes DHS the lead conduit for cyber threat indicators and defensive measures within the Federal government.

While information sharing has come a long way, the WannaCry ransomware attack recently illustrated just how important and beneficial those relationships are.

Just last week Rob Joyce, the Cybersecurity Coordinator at the White House, noted that we need to find a way to provide the private sector with more expansive access to cyber threat information in a controlled setting; something I believe we need to strengthen.

Moreover, issues relating to the sharing of classified information with the private sector, like accrediting SCIF space, granting security clearances to key personnel, and enabling consistent two-way communication, are issues we are looking at closely.

In other words, we have made progress in the way indicators are shared but I want to examine if we can do more regarding the overall sharing of classified information.

Earlier this year, I was pleased to see President Trump issue an executive order to strengthen the cybersecurity of Federal networks and critical infrastructure. Going forward, I am hopeful that the House can advance legislation that I have introduced to elevate NPPD as a standalone Agency and better support the cybersecurity mission at DHS.

This month is National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, a time to learn more about these threats and offer ideas on how we can best secure ourselves against these growing threats. While we have had some success on this issue, we must do more.

Our cyber enemies, including terrorists, are always evolving, looking for new ways to carry out their next attack. Fortunately, this is an issue that transcends party lines. Let's work together to make our cybersecurity strong and keep the American people safe.

I would like to thank today's witnesses for their time and their service. I look forward to our conversation about how Congress and the Executive branch can work together and also with leaders in the private sector to enhance our nation's cybersecurity.

I would also like to work with you, Chairman Ratcliffe, and our witnesses to bring our Members to the NCCIC before the end of the year to see the progress first hand.

Thank you.

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