



**HOMELAND SECURITY
COMMITTEE**

**Statement of Chairman Michael McCaul (R-TX)
Homeland Security Committee**

“DHS’s Progress in Securing Election Systems and Other Critical Infrastructure”

July 11, 2018

Remarks as Prepared

Our democratic system and critical infrastructure are under attack.

In 2016, Russia meddled in our Presidential election through a series of cyberattacks and information warfare. Their goals were to undermine the credibility of the outcome and sow discord among the American people.

This was a provocative attack against our country and we must not allow it to happen again.

I have stated repeatedly, and long before the last election, that foreign interference in our democracy cannot be tolerated.

I strongly believe we’ll be targeted again this November. We need to be prepared.

That is why we included \$380 million in grants to the Election Assistance Commission and \$26 million to DHS for election infrastructure in the FY18 Omnibus. These funds will enhance election technology and bolster cyber readiness.

However, malicious use of the internet and the exploitation of social media are not just aimed at our election systems.

In March, the FBI and DHS reported that Russian hackers attacked American nuclear power plants. Crippling or shutting down major parts of our energy sector would be a catastrophe.

Russia has already done this to our allies.

In 2015, a cyberattack turned off electricity for hundreds of thousands of Ukrainians.

Last year, I stood on the front lines of Russia’s cyber war in Ukraine and saw the effects firsthand.

Nation-state hacking is real and dangerous. Unfortunately, Russia is not the only villain.

Between 2011 and 2013, Iranian hackers attacked dozens of U.S. banks and tried to shut down a dam in New York.

In 2014 Chinese hackers stole 22 million security clearances from OPM, including my own.

These attacks, and others, are part of a greater onslaught being waged against the United States.

As a result, I have made strengthening our cybersecurity a top priority of this Committee.

In the past year we have passed legislation to:

- **Create the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)** – to elevate and operationalize the cybersecurity mission at DHS,
- **Authorize Cyber Incident Response Teams** – to assist local and state officials in identifying cyber risks and restoring essential services,
- **Reauthorize DHS** – to ensure DHS offers services to local and state election officials when requested (Richmond amendment).

We are proud of these accomplishments but we can always do more.

Today's hearing gives us a chance to offer new ideas and promote solutions to help protect our elections and other critical infrastructure.

I'd like to thank the witnesses for joining us today. This Committee is very grateful for your service and expertise and we look forward to working with each of you.

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