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

July 22, 2024

Mr. George Kurtz
Chief Executive Officer
CrowdStrike Holdings, Inc.
206 E 9th Street, Suite 1400
Austin, Texas 78701

Dear Mr. Kurtz:

We write in response to the global information technology (IT) outage, which has been attributed to a "defect" in a CrowdStrike software update that impacted Microsoft Windows.[1] While we appreciate CrowdStrike's response and coordination with stakeholders, we cannot ignore the magnitude of this incident, which some have claimed is the largest IT outage in history.[2] In less than one day, we have seen major impacts to key functions of the global economy, including aviation, healthcare, banking, media, and emergency services.[3] Recognizing that Americans will undoubtedly feel the lasting, real-world consequences of this incident, they deserve to know in detail how this incident happened and the mitigation steps CrowdStrike is taking.

In the United States alone, over 3,000 commercial flights have been cancelled, and over 11,800 others have been delayed[4], with major airlines such as United Airlines, Inc., Delta Air Lines, and American Airlines requesting a "global ground stop" from the Federal Aviation Administration.[5] Additionally, this incident has caused surgery cancellations[6] and disruptions to

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[1] *Posts* [George_Kurtz], X. Retrieved July 19, 2024, https://twitter.com/George_Kurtz/status/1814235001745027317.

[2] Rohan Goswami et. al, "*Microsoft-CrowdStrike issue causes 'largest IT outage in history—Live updates,*" CNBC, July 19, 2024, https://www.cnbc.com/2024/07/19/latest-live-updates-on-a-major-it-outage-spreading-worldwide.html

[3] *Posts* [George_Kurtz], X. Retrieved July 19, 2024, https://twitter.com/George_Kurtz/status/1814235001745027317.

[4] Haley Ott, "*Microsoft outages caused by CrowdStrike software glitch paralyze airlines, other businesses. Here's what to know.*", CBS News, July 19, 2024, https://www.cbsnews.com/news/microsoft-internet-outages-reported-worldwide/.

[5] Marlene Lenthang and Kevin Breuninger, "*Airports fill with long lines and broken blue screens following cancellations and delays due to global IT outage*", NBC, July 19, 2024, https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/airports-fill-long-lines-broken-blue-screens-cancellations-delays-due-rcna162673.

[6] Marina Kopf, "*Hospital surgery delays add to anxiety*", NBC News, July 19, 2024, https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/live-blog/live-updates-it-outage-flights-banks-businesses-microsoft-crowdstrike-rcna162669/rcrd47234?canonicalCard=true

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911 emergency call centers, among many other impacts that could seriously affect Americans.[7] Although a solution for this faulty software update has been identified, reporting indicates that it could take days to resolve this incident and millions of manual labor hours—something that is all the more challenging to address due to our significant cyber workforce shortage.[8]

In light of these sweeping impacts, we are relieved that you confirmed that "[t]his is not a security incident or cyberattack."[9] However, this incident must serve as a broader warning about the national security risks associated with network dependency. Malicious cyber actors backed by nation-states, such as China and Russia, are watching our response to this incident closely. In fact, as CrowdStrike relayed in a recent blog post, malicious actors presumably targeting your Latin American customers have already seized the moment and sought to exploit the vulnerability.[10] Protecting our critical infrastructure requires us to learn from this incident and ensure that it does not happen again.

Given the urgency and global scale of this incident, we respectfully request that CrowdStrike schedule a hearing with the Subcommittee on Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Protection by no later than 5:00pm on Wednesday, July 24, 2024. Please contact the Committee on Homeland Security Majority staff at (202) 226-8417 with any questions about this request and to schedule the requested hearing.

Per Rule X of the U.S House of Representatives, the Committee on Homeland Security is the principal committee of jurisdiction for overall homeland security policy, and has special oversight functions of "all Government activities relating to homeland security, including the interaction of all departments and agencies with the Department of Homeland Security."

We appreciate your immediate attention to this issue and anticipate your prompt reply.

Sincerely,

MARK E. GREEN, M.D.
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security

ANDREW R. GARBARINO
Chairman
Subcommittee on Cybersecurity and
Infrastructure Protection
Committee on Homeland Security

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[7] Robert Plummer, "*Crowdstrike and Microsoft: What we know about global IT outage*", BBC News, July 19, 2024, https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cp4wnrxqlewo.

[8] Brian Fung, *"Recovering from the global tech outage could be a long, arduous process",* CNN, July 19, 2024, https://edition.cnn.com/2024/07/19/business/recovery-global-crowdstrike-outage/index.html

[9] *Posts* [George_Kurtz], X. Retrieved July 19, 2024, https://twitter.com/George_Kurtz/status/1814235001745027317.

[10] *"Likely eCrime Actor Uses Filenames Capitalizing on July 19, 2024, Falcon Sensor Content Issues in Operation Targeting LATAM-Based CrowdStrike Customers",* CrowdStrike Blog, July 20, 2024, https://www.crowdstrike.com/blog/likely-ecrime-actor-capitalizing-on-falcon-sensor-issues/

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Encl.

cc: The Honorable Bennie Thompson, Ranking Member
        Committee on Homeland Security

        The Honorable Eric Swalwell, Ranking Member
        Subcommittee on Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Protection
        Committee on Homeland Security