

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 1, 2010

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President:

Securing the vast digital infrastructure of our nation's communications networks and information systems – our cyberspace – is essential to the future of our government, our economy, and the security of our nation. As your Cyberspace Policy Review noted, “Threats to cyberspace pose one of the most serious economic and national security challenges of the 21st Century for the United States and our allies.” While the Internet and Internet-enabled technologies have undergone exponential advances in the last two decades, the policies, laws, and processes we depend upon to keep cyberspace safe have not kept pace. As a result, the United States government, its citizens and businesses remain vulnerable to many different types of cyber threats – including loss of vital intelligence and intellectual property, identity theft and other cyber crimes, debilitation of critical infrastructure, degradation of communications, and insecure financial transactions.

We believe that there is an urgent need for action to address these vulnerabilities by the Administration, by Congress, and by the array of entities affected by cyber threats. The complexity and expansive reach of cyberspace demand a comprehensive, whole-of-government approach to its security. We must ensure that the federal government is organized and integrated to facilitate cross-government coordination, broad situational awareness, and agile, effective responses to cyber threats. We must also ensure that the government has adequate authorities to protect U.S. critical infrastructure and has the institutions in place to ensure effective cooperation and information sharing with key government and private sector actors. Finally, we must improve and expand the U.S. cyber workforce and increase cyber threat awareness throughout the country.

For these reasons, we are working to develop comprehensive cyber security legislation that will endow the federal government with the capabilities and authorities it needs to effectively meet the tremendous challenges of cyber security. We recognize that we face a critically important challenge in balancing the need for a secure, efficient, and resilient digital environment with the imperative of maintaining civil liberties, open commerce, and individual privacy. Our Committees have already developed a number of well-considered proposals to achieve this balance, and our intent is to build upon this work in our comprehensive legislation.

As we move forward on this critical task, we look forward to working in close cooperation with you, White House Cybersecurity Coordinator Howard Schmidt, and key experts across the government. Executive Branch leadership is key to the nation's cyber security

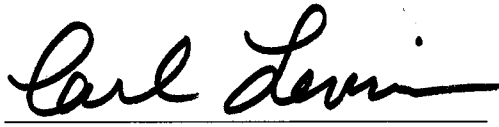
and we are eager to hear your views on the optimal organizational structure, necessary updates and reforms to legislation and regulations governing communications networks and information systems, and additional authorities needed to facilitate effective government leadership and response to cyber threats and vulnerabilities.

Each day, the threat to cyberspace – and to the American citizens, businesses, service members, critical infrastructure, and government agencies that depend on it – only increases. We appreciate that you have prioritized this issue from the beginning of your Administration. We know your Administration will make it a priority to work with us toward comprehensive cyber security legislation that will secure and sustain this backbone of 21<sup>st</sup> Century America.

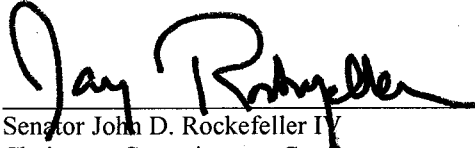
Sincerely,

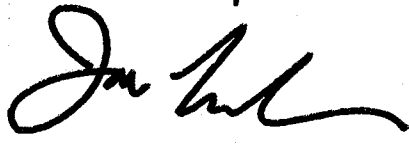
  
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Senator Harry Reid  
Majority Leader

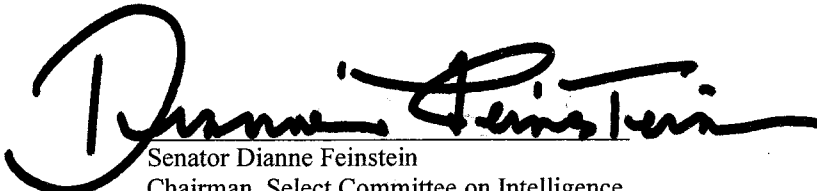
  
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Senator Patrick Leahy  
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary

  
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Senator Carl Levin  
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services

  
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Senator John Kerry  
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations

  
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Senator John D. Rockefeller IV  
Chairman, Committee on Commerce,  
Science, and Transportation

  
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Senator Joseph Lieberman  
Chairman, Committee on Homeland  
Security and Government Affairs

  
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Senator Dianne Feinstein  
Chairman, Select Committee on Intelligence