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March 23, 2018

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The Honorable James N. Mattis
Secretary of Defense
U.S. Department of Defense
1300 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1300

Dear Secretary Mattis:

I am writing to request a substantive update on the steps the Department of Defense (DoD) has taken to secure senior officials' personal electronic devices and private accounts from foreign cyberattacks.

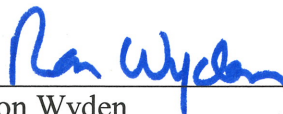
As you know, foreign intelligence services routinely target senior U.S. government officials' personal electronic devices and accounts. I need not tell you seriousness of this threat, as these devices and accounts house everything from contact lists to travel plans to sensitive personal communications. By infiltrating these devices, foreign intelligence agencies can eavesdrop on conversations and use pilfered data to gain further access through spear-phishing attacks.

This is hardly a theoretical threat: recent news reports indicate that the same Russian hackers who infiltrated the Democratic National Committee in 2016 and the German Bundestag in 2014 repeatedly targeted the personal accounts of senior U.S. government officials, defense contractors, and scientists. Despite this clear and present danger, many senior U.S. government officials have yet to properly or adequately secure their personal accounts and devices.

In an attempt to shore up this vulnerability, Congress authorized the DoD in the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act to provide personal-device cyber protection to individuals you deem to be at high risk. Congress also required the DoD to report on the methods and procedures used to protect its employees under the new authorities and to submit this report by September 30, 2017. I understand that report has not yet been written.

Addressing the real and increasing threat posed by foreign intelligence services and cyber criminals is hardly limited to the DoD and will require other federal agencies to share information, successes, and failures. Because of the DoD's central role in cybersecurity, however, it will be vital for you to lead by example. In that spirit, I urge you to fulfil the DoD's obligation and submit a completed report to Congress no later than April 30, 2018.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden
United States Senator

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