



CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

WASHINGTON, DC 20318-9999

1 August 2012

The Honorable John D. Rockefeller IV
Chairman
Committee on Commerce, Science,
and Transportation
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I am writing to add my voice to General Alexander's and urge immediate passage of comprehensive cyber security legislation. We must act now.

The uncomfortable reality of our world today is that bits and bytes can be as threatening as bullets and bombs. Not only will military systems be targeted by tools that can cause physical destruction, but adversaries will increasingly attempt to hold our Nation's core critical infrastructure at risk. Because the military relies on this infrastructure to defend the Nation, we cannot afford to leave our electricity grid and transportation system vulnerable to attack. Cyber intrusions into the networks of U.S. industry are also a serious concern. The systemic theft of design data and engineering information about the military's ships, aircraft, and weapons systems is today undermining the technological edge we hold over potential adversaries.

In light of these developments, I believe comprehensive cyber security legislation must embody three tenets. First, encouraging the rapid, real-time sharing of threat information between the public and private sector is essential to enable meaningful network defense. I am confident we can achieve this without compromising privacy or civil liberties. Second, we must ensure our Nation's core critical infrastructure is sufficiently hardened and resilient so that no nation or terrorist group can threaten the services we depend upon. Minimum standards will help ensure there is no weak link in our infrastructure. Third, we must ensure the Department of Defense can work closely with our industrial partners to stop the exfiltration of sensitive information.

I appreciate your leadership on this urgent issue of national security and share your view that only legislative remedy will enable our Nation to adequately address the cyber threat. The global spread of information technologies is in many respects our age's greatest opportunity. We must not allow it to become our Nation's greatest vulnerability.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Martin E. Dempsey", is written over the typed name and title.

MARTIN E. DEMPSEY
General, U.S. Army

cc:

The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchison
Ranking Member