

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

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May 22, 2020

The Honorable Christopher Krebs
Director
Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency
Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Christopher Wray
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Director Krebs and Director Wray:

We write regarding a recent public service announcement issued jointly by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). On May 13, 2020, the FBI and CISA published *People's Republic of China (PRC) Targeting of COVID-19 Research Organizations*. This notice informed all U.S. research institutions and the American public of the attempts to hack U.S. organizations conducting COVID-19-related research by cyber actors and non-traditional collectors supported by the Chinese government in order to obtain valuable intellectual property and public health data.

While this announcement is extremely concerning, it is not surprising. As Members of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, experts have warned us about foreign countries' efforts to steal American technological information and scientific discoveries. The National Counterintelligence and Security Center Director Bill Evanina has said China's theft of U.S. intellectual property totals as much as \$400 billion annually.

Taking into consideration the vital research these U.S. institutions are conducting in order to develop vaccines and treatments for the novel coronavirus that is devastating the entire world, such malicious targeting is reprehensible. According to the notice, "These actors have been observed attempting to identify and illicitly obtain valuable intellectual property (IP) and public health data related to vaccines, treatments, and testing from networks and personnel affiliated with COVID-19-related research. The potential theft of this information jeopardizes the delivery of secure, effective, and efficient treatment options."

We applaud your work in notifying the public to raise awareness of these threats and appreciate the resources and guidance you are providing to institutions that may be targeted. Given the critical nature of the COVID-19 research being conducted at U.S. institutions, it is imperative they take the proper steps to secure their networks and take advantage of the resources your agencies have without delay.

We want to thank the FBI and CISA, along with all of the other agencies you coordinate with, for their work to prevent such attacks. We are grateful to the agents and staff who are fighting the good fight and hope that we can do all we can in Congress to support those efforts.

Pursuant to House Rule X, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology has jurisdiction over the National Institute of Standards and Technology, which develops cybersecurity standards and guidelines for the federal government and recommendations for the private sector.

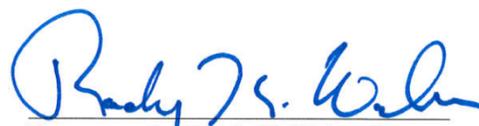
In order to further understand the challenges America's research institutions and companies are facing from these threats, and the activities the FBI and CISA are undertaking to detect and prevent such attacks, we request a briefing with Members and staff of the House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology no later than June 22, 2020, at the classified level if appropriate. Thank you for your prompt attention in this matter. For questions, please contact Cate Johnson of the Committee's Republican staff at Catherine.Johnson@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,


Representative Frank D. Lucas
Ranking Member


Representative Michael Waltz


Representative Anthony Gonzalez


Representative Randy K. Weber, Sr.
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Energy



Representative Brian Babin, D.D.S.
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics



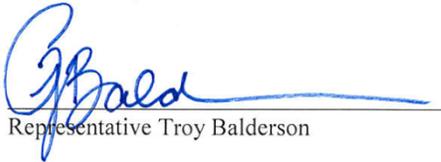
Representative Ralph Norman
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Investigations and Oversight



Representative James R. Baird
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Research and Technology



Representative Bill Posey



Representative Troy Balderson



Representative Francis Rooney

cc: Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson, Chairwoman, Committee on Science, Space, and Technology