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U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-6035
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December 20, 2024

The Honorable Lloyd J. Austin III
Secretary of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Austin,

I write with concern over the recent disclosures around **SALT TYPHOON**, an unprecedented cyber intrusion by People's Republic of China (PRC) state-sponsored hackers into U.S. telecommunications infrastructure. Having received my first interagency briefing last week, I am alarmed by the potential ramifications to the operations of the Department of Defense, the Defense Industrial Base, and our international partners and allies.

While Congress has provided steadfast support to the Pentagon's cyber activities, the notable increase in the capabilities of our adversaries suggests that merely sustaining our investments is not enough to match the threat. A growing, bicameral chorus is expressing dissatisfaction with ways in which our adversaries seemingly outmatch our operations, and believe that the American people deserve a better return on the investments towards our capabilities.

I am aware that a nearly two year-long process known as "CYBERCOM 2.0" is on your desk for approval, however from the limited details that have been shared with Congress and the media, it sounds as if no aspects of the CYBERCOM 2.0 proposals are focused on defensive cyber operations. The defense of critical infrastructure is paramount, and a priority of Congress as reflected in the recently passed National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2025 which requires the designation of the Joint Force Headquarters-DOD Information Network as a subordinate unified command under U.S. Cyber Command.

Moreover, in a domain where intelligence is as important as operations, I believe there is no facet of the CYBERCOM 2.0 proposal which details how the Department will

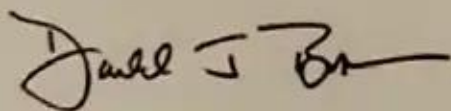
CHRISTOPHER STAN, DIRECTOR

ERIAN GARRETT, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

dedicate resources needed for foundational intelligence in cyberspace, as this too is a congressional priority.

I respectfully request representatives of the Department of Defense, to include the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Cyber Policy, the DOD Chief Information Officer, the Commander of United States Cyber Command, and the Commander of Joint Forces Headquarters-Department of Defense Information Network (JFHQ-DODIN) to brief the Cyber, Information Technology, and Innovation Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee on the SALT TYPHOON episode, an impact assessment, and a presentation on efforts presently underway in both offensive and defensive cyber operations to respond to and deter further aggression by adversaries against the American people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Don Bacon". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Don Bacon
Chairman
Cyber, Information Technology, and Innovation Subcommittee
Armed Services Committee