

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

September 27, 2021

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader, United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader, United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader, House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Majority Leader Schumer, Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McConnell, and Minority Leader McCarthy:

While cyber-attacks on pipelines and meat processing plants have garnered national media attention, an equally severe threat has gone relatively unnoticed: cyber incidents targeting America's K-12 schools. Resource-constrained K-12 schools are struggling to keep up with the increasing frequency and severity of cyber threats, and our students and educators may pay the price. As students enter a new school year, we urge you to include additional K-12 cybersecurity support in legislation to execute President Biden's Build Back Better agenda.

Although it is difficult to gather accurate, up-to-date information on cybercrime, one thing is clear: cybercriminals are getting better at targeting K-12 schools. According to the K-12 Cybersecurity Resource Center, from 2016-2020 there were over 1,100 publicly disclosed cyber incidents involving 988 education organizations across all 50 states. In 2020 alone, there were more than 400 successful cyber incidents including ransomware, data breaches, and denial-of-service attacks, among others. All of this translates to more than two incidents per school day—a nearly 20 percent increase from the previous year—and a record number of cyber incidents for the second year in a row.

In the face of this well-documented threat, Congress must act by putting real resources on the table. While studies and best practices can help inform our national response, the federal government must be a meaningful partner to state and local governments as we work to remediate cyber vulnerabilities and protect America's schools. The bipartisan Enhancing K-12 Cybersecurity Act would help fulfill this responsibility by authorizing \$20 million over two years to promote a more secure digital environment for students and educators. The Enhancing K-12 Cybersecurity Act includes three provisions to promote access to information, better track cyber incidents nationally, and invest in enhanced K-12 cybersecurity capabilities.

First, the bill would create a cybersecurity information exchange to help promote new information about emerging cyber threats and grant opportunities for K-12 schools. Second, it would establish a cybersecurity incident registry to improve our ability to monitor nationwide cyber incidents and the financial impact of cyberattacks. And finally, it would create a K-12

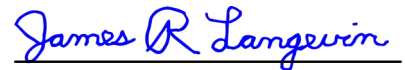
Cybersecurity Technology Improvement Program to ensure the federal government partners with organizations to provide no-cost, 24-7-365 cyber protection services and cutting-edge technology for our K-12 schools.

As families across the country begin a new school year, they will face many challenges. With an emergent Delta variant causing severe uncertainty, Congress should not let cybersecurity be a reason for further disruption. We strongly urge you to include the Enhancing K-12 Cybersecurity Act as part of Build Back Better legislation.

Sincerely,



Doris O. Matsui
Member of Congress



James R. Langevin
Member of Congress



Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



C. A. Dutch Ruppertsberger
Member of Congress