



COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY & COMMERCE
DEMOCRATS
RANKING MEMBER FRANK PALLONE, JR.

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Pallone: Congress Needs to Get Serious on Cybersecurity

Washington, D.C. – *Energy and Commerce Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) delivered the following opening remarks at a Communications and Technology Subcommittee hearing on “Promoting Security in Wireless Technology:”*

Thank you, Madam Chairman. Cyberattacks are one of the most serious threats to our national security today. Every day new information comes out about how the Russians and other foreign actors are hacking our institutions and our democracy. Just last week former FBI Director Comey testified, and I’m quoting: “The Russians interfered in our election during the 2016 cycle. They did with purpose. They did it with sophistication. They did it with overwhelming technical efforts. It was an active measures campaign driven from the top of that government. There is no fuzz on that.”

This Committee has primary jurisdiction over the communications networks that were used by the Russians to commit these attacks. We should be focused like a laser on how to stop them from happening again, but this Committee has yet to hold a single hearing on these Russian hacks.

Worse still, the only legislation House Republicans have pushed and supported within this subcommittee’s jurisdiction actually makes us less safe. With no hearings or advance notice, the leadership of this Committee led the charge to strip away Americans’ privacy rights and throw out some of the only protections on the books to secure our data.

Those safeguards simply said that broadband providers needed to take “reasonable measures” to secure Americans’ data. But despite the Russian hacks, Congressional Republicans eliminated those protections under the absurd pretext that asking companies to act reasonably was government overreach.

This hearing today is another example of Committee Republicans simply not taking these issues seriously. Democrats tried to invite another cybersecurity expert to testify here today who could have helped us better understand the threats to our country, like the Russian hacks. But the majority made up arbitrary and partisan reasons to effectively block us. This decision shortchanges our members’ ability to hear from the experts in this area. These

games have to stop because these issues are just too serious to keep playing politics with our national security.

Democrats are trying to address these issues head on in a nonpartisan way. We have put forward three bills—from Mr. Engel, Mr. McNerney, and Ms. Clarke—to help fix some of these problems.

These are good bills that were introduced more than three months ago. Every day that goes by with no action is another day that the American people are at risk. Republicans must stop playing political games with national security. The risks are just too great.

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