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CONTACT:

Sue Walitsky 202-224-4524
or 202-320-0819

CARDIN PRAISES APPOINTMENT OF CYBERSECURITY COORDINATOR

*Cardin Chaired November Hearing on Cybersecurity to Review Agencies' Work,
Called for Appointment of Cybersecurity Coordinator*

Washington, DC – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD), chairman of the Judiciary Terrorism and Homeland Security Subcommittee**, today praised the appointment of Howard Schmidt as the new White House Cybersecurity Coordinator.

"I commend the President for appointing a cybersecurity coordinator to make sure that our agencies are all working together on this critical challenge. Our hearing in November examined how different government agencies were coordinating with each other on cybersecurity issues. It reaffirmed my belief that the Administration needed to appoint a single point person to coordinate government and private sector cybersecurity efforts. I look forward to working with the new coordinator, Howard Schmidt, who has extensive experience in the government, military, private sector, and law enforcement."

"This is a very sobering subject. The government has a responsibility to protect our government and its citizens from cyber-attacks from those who would misuse cyberspace and technology. As technology advances, we are much more vulnerable and may not even know when we've been attacked. One government witness at our hearing indicated that we can stop only about 80% of cyberattacks against the U.S. That number is unacceptable.

"Our security can be threatened by taking information that is sensitive to our national security and even altering our programs so that our transportation, energy, or financial systems could be under cyber attack. That's very concerning and requires that we take very aggressive action.

"The new coordinator should focus on implementation of the comprehensive cybersecurity strategy, and work with Congress to let us know if we need to update our laws on this subject. The nature of the changing technology also heightens the government's responsibility to balance the counter-measures that protect us with the protection of civil liberties. Overall, we need to pay much more attention to cyber security."

In November, Senator Cardin chaired a hearing entitled "*Cybersecurity: Preventing Terrorist Attacks and Protecting Privacy in Cyberspace*." The hearing included witnesses from key federal agencies responsible for cybersecurity, as well as representatives of the private sector. It reviewed governmental and private sector efforts to prevent a terrorist cyber attack that could cripple large sectors of our government, economy, and essential services.

