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CARDIN SAYS ADVANCING TECHNOLOGY INCREASES THE THREAT OF CYBER ATTACK

Washington, DC – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD)**, chairman of the Judiciary Terrorism and Homeland Security Subcommittee, today 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.

“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. 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.

“I am encouraged to see the level of attention the Obama Administration is paying to this issue at the Department of Justice, Department of Homeland Security, and the National Security Agency. I think every agency is taking this issue very serious and is working very hard. We have to make sure their efforts are coordinated, consistent with our laws, and if the laws need to be changed we should review the options. 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.”

Today the GAO issued a report on cybersecurity, at the request of the Judiciary Terrorism and Homeland Security Subcommittee, entitled *“Continued Efforts Are Needed to Protection Information Systems from Evolving Threats.”* The report found multiple weaknesses in government agencies’ information systems, and called on DHS to fulfill its substantial responsibility to protect cyber-reliant critical infrastructure. “GAO points out that while the government has made great progress in improving cybersecurity, much more needs to be done to improve the safety of government computer systems as well as protect critical information systems that are controlled by the private sector,” Senator Cardin said.

Senator Cardin’s opening statement for the hearing can be found [here](#).

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