

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 18, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

As the four legislators who serve on the Cyberspace Solarium Commission, we write to you to discuss our advocacy for, and concern about, the National Cyber Director (NCD), a Senate-confirmed White House position created in the FY2021 National Defense Authorization Act.

After careful review of the past 20 years of executive branch leadership regarding cybersecurity challenges, our bipartisan, bicameral Commission concluded that we need a strong, empowered cyber leader within the White House that also allows for Congressional oversight and support. In our March 2020 report, we envisioned the NCD as the senior government official who will implement the national cyber strategy across more than 100 federal departments and agencies and build the public-private collaboration that is key to protecting our national critical infrastructure. The Commissioners expected that the NCD would work closely with the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and the Director of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) at the Department of Homeland Security to repair our nation's degraded cyber readiness in the face of growing threats from China, Russia, Iran, North Korea, criminals and non-state actors. Through legislative hearings and negotiations around the annual defense bill, we passed the *National Cyber Director Act* that affirms this vision in statute.

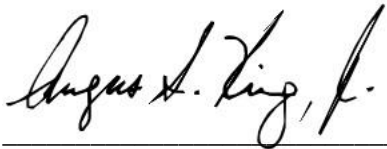
We are, therefore, concerned with the delay in nominating a candidate to serve as the NCD (which will itself take weeks for the Senate to consider) while your team conducts a study of the new position. While it is certainly your prerogative to review how the NCD will integrate with the National Security Council, the Office of Management and Budget, CISA, and other agencies with cybersecurity missions, we believe that this can be done in parallel with, and take no longer than, the nomination and confirmation of the NCD. The NCD could, and should, be a critical part of building your response to the Sunburst/SolarWinds incident, and delays in establishing the Office of the NCD, including associated staff, risk weakening the administration's ability to address this wide-ranging breach.

Finally, we pass on our bipartisan recommendation that our fellow Commissioner, Mr. Chris Inglis, be considered as the nominee to be the first National Cyber Director. Chris is one of the most highly regarded cybersecurity experts in the United States. A career National Security Agency (NSA) official, he spent seven years as the Deputy Director of NSA, and recently served on the Defense Science Board. Chris also serves on the technical working groups of the boards of several U.S. companies and has a

strong understanding of the way forward on building public-private partnerships. Finally, he is a retired Brigadier General in the U.S. Air Force Reserve. The NCD will need many diverse skill sets – she or he will need to be technically gifted and managerially sound, have a deep understanding of the National Security Council and the interagency process, and have strong ties to the private sector. Chris Inglis is uniquely well-qualified across all of these criteria.

By nominating a strong NCD and empowering the position, your administration can break important new ground in executive branch oversight of this vital national security function. Thank you for your leadership on this issue, and we look forward to continuing to work with you to protect our country in the cyber domain.

Sincerely,



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The Honorable Angus King Jr. (I-ME)  
Co-Chairman  
Cyberspace Solarium Commission



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The Honorable Mike Gallagher (WI-08)  
Co-Chairman  
Cyberspace Solarium Commission



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The Honorable Ben Sasse (R-NE)  
Commissioner  
Cyberspace Solarium Commission



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The Honorable Jim Langevin (RI-02)  
Commissioner  
Cyberspace Solarium Commission

Cc:

Office of the Vice President

Mr. Ron Klain, White House Chief of Staff

Mr. Jake Sullivan, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs

Ms. Catherine Russell, Director of Presidential Personnel

Ms. Louisa Terrell, Assistant to the President and Director for Legislative Affairs