

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5074
MINORITY (202) 225-5051
<http://oversight.house.gov>

Opening Statement

Rep. Robin Kelly

Hearing on “Federal Cybersecurity Detection, Response, and Mitigation”

April 20, 2016

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing on how federal agencies detect, respond and mitigate the growing number of cyber threats they encounter each year. And thank you to our witnesses for being here.

The federal government and the private sector are facing a volume of cyberattacks that just a few years ago would have been unimaginable.

According to a new report by security firm Symantec, 54 zero-day vulnerabilities were discovered in 2015, more than twice as many as in 2014.

Compared to the previous year, in 2015 the instances of ransomware increased by 35%.

We need to ensure that the federal government has the resources necessary to respond to these vulnerabilities and threats.

Agencies are spending up to three-quarters of their information technology (IT) budgets maintaining legacy systems that were never designed to deal with today’s cybersecurity risks.

Adding to the problem is the increasing difficulty agencies are having in filling the more than 10,000 vacant cyber positions across the federal government.

As Tony Scott, the chief information officer for the federal government has said, and I quote:

“We have a broad surface area of old, outdated technology that's hard to secure, expensive to operate and, on top of all that, the skill sets needed to maintain those systems are disappearing rather rapidly.”

But we're making progress in fixing that. I, along with my colleagues on this subcommittee and Ranking Member Cummings, were original cosponsors of Congressman Steny Hoyer's "Information Technology Modernization Act (ITMA)."

The Act would authorize the creation of an Information Technology Modernization Fund to help federal agencies upgrade their aging Information Technology (IT) systems.

Over the first 10 years the fund will help facilitate upgrades to \$12 billion worth of civilian IT programs and make sure the federal government has the most effective, secure IT infrastructure possible.

Legislation like the ITMA sends a clear message that Congress understands the challenges facing our nation's federal IT systems.

But there is more to be done. I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today on their threat response processes in place. And I look forward to working with you, Mr. Chairman, to do

what's needed to ensure that we keep the federal government secure from the growing number of cyber threats.

Contact: Jennifer Werner, Communications Director, (202) 225-5051.