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CNAS Experts Comment on Senate Cyber Security Bill

Washington, July 30, 2012 - With the Cybersecurity Act of 2012 being debated on the Senate floor today, CNAS experts comment on the threat of cyber security and the impact of this critical issue on U.S. national security. Read their commentary below.

CNAS experts Dr. Kristin Lord and Travis Sharp also edited the 2011 CNAS report [America's Cyber Future: Security and Prosperity in the Information Age](#). This two-volume report features chapters on cyber security strategy, policy, and technology by some of the world's leading experts on international relations, national security, and information technology in order to help U.S. policymakers address the growing danger of cyber insecurity.

[Bob Butler](#), *CNAS Non-Resident Senior Fellow and former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Cyber Policy*

"The proposed legislation addresses the need for greater protection in light of rapidly advancing technology and threats in cyberspace, especially in the areas of enhanced information sharing between the private and public sector and greater shared critical infrastructure protection. First, the legislation encourages voluntary sharing of threat information between businesses and government. As seen in the recent Defense Industrial Base cyber pilot conducted jointly by the Department of Defense and the Department of Homeland Security last year, this type of information sharing can offer greater value for both commercial concerns and the government, which are exposed to the same threats. Trust and speed of action are keys to success. Secondly, the new legislation proposes action for greater protection of America's critical infrastructure -

such as industrial control, transportation and financial systems - without imposing new regulatory requirements. Foundational to this measure's success and optimizing infrastructure protection is the alignment of private and public sector incentives in implementation. Both the information sharing and critical infrastructure protection measures are key steps in the right direction to strengthen American government and business against a growing cyber threat to American livelihood."

Dr. Kristin Lord, *CNAS Executive Vice President and Director of Studies*

"America's critical infrastructure and intellectual property need greater protection from cyber threats, whether those threats emanate from criminals, foreign governments or hackers with nefarious motives. The cyber security legislation currently under debate on Capitol Hill will not eliminate these threats, but it is a useful step in the right direction. If signed into law, the legislation would make it easier for companies and the U.S. government to share information about cyber threats on a voluntary basis and for the government to exercise modest oversight over the cyber security of critical infrastructure that undergirds America's entire economy. Far from the heavy-handed regulation its critics claim, the legislation is a sensible and bipartisan effort to address a problem of national importance."

Travis Sharp, *CNAS Fellow*

"Passing a cyber security bill is an important test of Congress's ability to play a constructive role in U.S. national security policy. With this bill, Congress has the chance to help defend the United States against one of the most serious threats facing the nation. Failing to pass a bill will perpetuate the decades-long erosion of Congress's influence over U.S. national security policy. Failing to pass a bill also may expose lawmakers to severe criticism should a major cyber incident occur that could have been prevented if Congress had acted."

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