

WASHINGTON, DC – Republican members of the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate today urged President Barack Obama to refrain from issuing an executive order exerting regulatory influence over the Internet in the name of cybersecurity. The members expressed concern that using executive power to regulate the Internet would bolster the arguments being made by nations such as Russia, China, and Iran that are seeking global government control and undermine the United States' position to continue the current multistakeholder governance model which has allowed the Internet to flourish. Both the House and Senate have unanimously approved resolutions that oppose such attempts to exert regulatory control over the Internet. The bicameral leaders are also concerned that a top-down approach to cybersecurity will slow the response and impose unnecessary costs on the economy.

The members wrote, "Lawmakers in both chambers of Congress and on both sides of the aisle agree that cybersecurity is of critical importance to America's safety and prosperity in the 21st century. The House of Representatives has already passed the Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act (CISPA) to bring the nation's considerable wealth of public and private sector intelligence to bear on the challenge of securing America's vital communications networks. A number of proposals continue to be debated in the Senate. The United States has been a beacon of online freedom. Unilateral action altering oversight of the Internet in this country could be interpreted by the rest of the world as a statement of 'do as I say, not as I do.'

"While we have not seen your proposed executive order, multiple reports suggest that it would authorize the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to determine what constitutes 'critical infrastructure,' and then adopt certain standards for how such infrastructure is managed to guard against cyberthreats. This is the wrong approach..."

The members concluded, "An executive order exerting influence over critical infrastructure is not just a step in the wrong substantive direction. It will almost certainly be exploited by other nations to justify their efforts to regulate the Internet. This is a most critical time, and we cannot afford a hasty, unilateral action that will only serve to bolster the efforts of less democratic nations to stifle the very free exchange of ideas and expression that has allowed the Internet to flourish across the globe. For these reasons, we urge you to rethink the wisdom of an executive order."

Rep. Fred Upton (R-MI) sent the letter, along with Rep. Greg Walden (R-OR), Rep. Mary Bono Mack (R-CA), Rep. Lee Terry (R-NE), Rep. Bob Latta (R-OH), Rep. Adam Kinzinger, Sen. Jim DeMint (R-SC), Sen. Pat Toomey (R-PA), Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), Sen. Marco Rubio (R-FL), and Sen. Mike Lee (R-UT).

To read the letter, click [HERE](#) .