

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 Twelfth Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554
Dear Chairman Wheeler,

Thank you for opening an investigation on April 20 into the Signaling System Number 7 (SS7) flaw. This defect allows foreign governments, criminal syndicates and sophisticated hackers--if they simply know a cell phone number--to acquire voice communications and text messages from the target cell phone. In light of the recent cyber hack at the DCCC that released cell phone numbers of all Democratic Members of Congress--reportedly conducted by the Russian Government--our foreign adversaries can now acquire cell phone voice and text data of over 180 Congress members with impunity. This problem is particularly acute given reports that Russia is trying to influence elections in America.

I write to request that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) expedite its investigation of the SS7 flaw and for the FCC to give an estimate of when the investigation will be completed. I also write to request the FCC provide me and other affected Members of Congress with what it has learned so far about the SS7 flaw so that we can respond appropriately to the recent hack.

The SS7 problem is no longer a theoretical threat. We now have a mass release of cell phone numbers of Members of Congress likely caused by a Russian government that has full access to utilize the SS7 flaw. Because we don't know how long the hackers had access to this information, it is very possible nearly half of Congress has already had voice and text data intercepted. Other enemy adversaries, such as North Korea and Iran, could also take this information and acquire the cell phone voice and text data of multiple Members of Congress. The ramifications of the SS7 flaw can be severe, both for our national security and the integrity of American elections.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress

Cc: Hon. Nancy Pelosi
Hon. Ben Ray Lujan
Mike Dabbs