



SOCIETY OF FORMER SPECIAL AGENTS  
OF THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, INC.

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January 9, 2012

The Honorable Joseph I. Lieberman  
Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs  
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Lieberman:

It seems that not a week goes by that we don't read about a cyber attempt to penetrate government and private sector networks. In fact, it is not unusual for agencies and companies to report thousands of attempts each week.

The 2011 "Department of Defense Strategy for Operating in Cyberspace," states, "Every year, an amount of intellectual property larger than that contained in the Library of Congress is stolen from networks maintained by U.S. businesses, universities, and government departments and agencies. As military strength ultimately depends on economic vitality, sustained intellectual property losses erode both U.S. military effectiveness and national competitiveness in the global economy." In its October, 2011, report to the Congress, the Office of the National Counterintelligence Executive stated, "The theft of trade secrets from US companies by foreign economic rivals undermines the corporate sector's ability to create jobs, generate revenues, foster innovation, and lay the economic foundation for prosperity and national security."

If these losses resulted from physical assaults the demands for action would be instantaneous and unremitting. But the Internet makes physical presence unnecessary for accessing and stealing intellectual property and technologies that are directly linked to our economic

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vitality and national security. Despite the impact on our economy and the national security implications, however, we are responding as if somehow the losses are not real and conducting business as usual is acceptable. It is not.

It is American creativity and genius and the resiliency of our people that will to keep us strong and competitive. But in insufficiently securing our networks we have left the keys in the Corvette with the car running. We cannot be surprised competitors are acting in their own interests and stealing what we are not adequately protecting.

On behalf of nearly 8000 former Special Agents of the FBI I want you to know how grateful we are for your service. But today our appeal is for bipartisan leadership in addressing this threat. To delay action until after the election or for any other reason is to state that the risk is acceptable. My colleagues join me in emphatically stating the risk is not acceptable.

Sincerely,

Bradley B. Benson

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bradley B. Benson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "B".

President

Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI