



COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY
Lamar Smith, Chairman

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Media Contacts: Thea McDonald, Brandon VerVelde
(202) 225-6371

Statement from Lamar Smith (R-Texas)

*Bolstering the Government's Cybersecurity: A Survey of
Compliance with the DHS Directive*

Chairman Smith: The risk to U.S. security that Kaspersky Lab, a Russian company, has created is undeniable and the harm, incalculable.

The founder of Kaspersky Lab, Eugene Kaspersky, attended a KGB-funded intelligence institute and served in Russia's Ministry of Defense.

For years there has been speculation that Kaspersky's antivirus software could be used by the Russians for information gathering.

Continued investigations have disclosed more details on the extent to which Kaspersky Lab is a tool for the Russian government.

Press reports claim that Kaspersky's prior federal government customers include the departments of State, Justice, Energy, Defense, Treasury, Army, Navy and Air Force. This is of more than passing concern; it is alarming.

Last month, The New York Times reported that Russian government hackers conducted a global search of computers looking for the code names of American intelligence programs. The hackers used the antivirus software made by Kaspersky Lab.

This Russian operation stole classified documents from at least one National Security Agency employee, who had Kaspersky antivirus software installed on his home computer.

Kaspersky's antivirus software allowed Russia to have unlimited access to data stored on computers with Kaspersky products. The magnitude and widespread use of Kaspersky's software – 400 million users worldwide – gives the company unprecedented access and retrieval capabilities.

To date, it is unclear what additional American security secrets Russia may have acquired through Kaspersky's scans for classified programs. This only confirms the need for the actions this administration and this committee have taken.

The Science Committee has engaged in continued oversight of Kaspersky Lab since questions were raised by Science Committee member Congressman Higgins earlier this year.

On July 27, 2017, this committee requested that all federal departments and agencies disclose their use of Kaspersky Lab products.

On September 13, 2017, the Department of Homeland Security issued a Binding Operational Directive to all agencies and departments. This directive sought the complete removal of Kaspersky products from federal systems within 90 days.

Today, the committee is interested in whether federal agencies are complying with the directive. How common are Kaspersky products in our federal systems? What is the extent of the risk? And are the actions required in the DHS directive sufficient to protect US interests?

The committee expects to uncover all risks associated with Kaspersky Lab. This includes identifying all necessary actions needed to eliminate risks even beyond the risk to federal systems.

Based on the NSA contractor's personal computer being targeted, we are interested in what steps DHS has taken to assist civilian employees and contractors who are at risk of exposure.

We also are interested in proactive steps and coordination among our federal agencies and departments. We need to use all resources to ensure that Kaspersky products on federal systems have been completely removed.

Beyond an interest in the risks caused by Kaspersky products, the Science Committee will continue to address the federal government's cybersecurity weaknesses.

This committee, along with the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, plans to bring a revised version of H.R. 1224, the NIST Cybersecurity Framework, Assessment, and Auditing Act of 2017, to the House floor soon. NIST should welcome the opportunity to use its expertise to help protect our national security.

The bill amends the Federal Information Security Management Act to require that federal agencies' inspectors general coordinate with NIST in conducting their cybersecurity evaluations.

Anyone with knowledge of potential cybersecurity risks should contact the committee and share their information with us.

We must eliminate the threat of Kaspersky Lab to our national security systems.

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