

Opening Statement
The Honorable Vernon Ehlers (R-MI), Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Research and Science Education
Cybersecurity Research and Development Act

September 23, 2009

Today we are examining legislation to reauthorize the Cybersecurity Research and Development Act. With the rapid evolution of information technology fields, it is critical that we adopt policies that keep us ahead of impending cyber threats.

This subcommittee has held a series of hearings this year focused on the state of federal cybersecurity research and development. The testimonies we received from industry experts and federal agency officials all pointed to a serious lack of coordination in our cybersecurity strategies. Building on the information we have gleaned, I am hopeful this legislation will effectively refine our efforts by establishing a strategic research and development plan and roadmap. As an educator, I am particularly interested in how we will further support the education and training of students in this rapidly changing field. Consequently, I am pleased that the draft legislation codifies a scholarship program at the National Science Foundation to promote undergraduate and graduate degrees in cybersecurity fields.

As we become more dependent on virtual information and services, security becomes more difficult to manage. Attaining and maintaining a safe and trustworthy information technology and communications infrastructure is imperative, and we must not forget that it is an ongoing challenge. I look forward to refining and promoting this legislation as it moves through the legislative process.