



One Hundred Ninth Congress  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Homeland Security  
Washington, DC 20515

October 16, 2006

The Honorable Gregory Garcia  
Assistant Secretary for Cyber Security and Telecommunications  
Department of Homeland Security  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Assistant Secretary Garcia:

On October 6, the *Washington Post* reported that the Department of Commerce was the target of a cyber attack against its Bureau of Industry and Security computers. These particular computers hold highly sensitive data for a bureau which is responsible for controlling U.S. exports of commodities, software and technology, both commercial and military in nature. It appears the attack originated from Chinese servers. As such, the danger such an attack poses to national cyber security cannot be overstated.

As you may be well aware, this attack is the latest in a wave of increased activity targeting American servers by way of Chinese IT infrastructure. In July, the State Department admitted it too had been the subject of an attack. Highly sophisticated attacks are becoming more and more the norm as groups of Chinese hackers such as Titan Rain continue to put American national and economic security at risk.

Please describe how your office has responded to these recent events, specifically the attacks on the Department of Commerce. What actions has your office taken as a result of the attack, which forced Commerce to replace hundreds of workstations? With whom specifically have you coordinated a response at Commerce, and what is the level of cooperation between the Department of Homeland Security and Commerce? What lessons have you learned from these attacks? Is your office formulating a comprehensive policy response to the recent wave of hacker activity?

I would appreciate a full response to these questions in a timely manner. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Jessica Herrera-Flanigan, Democratic Staff Director, at 202 226-2616.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bennie G. Thompson".

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Bennie G. Thompson  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Homeland Security