



February 2, 2017

The Honorable Steve Daines  
United States Senate  
320 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Warner  
United States Senate  
475 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Daines and Senator Warner:

On behalf of our nation's venture capital investors and the entrepreneurs they support, I write to express our support for the *Support for Rapid Innovation Act of 2017*, which will help facilitate the development of emerging technology for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

An unfortunate reality of the modern world is that cybersecurity threats are always looming. Cybersecurity startups—working in partnership with their venture capital investors—are addressing these threats in new and promising ways. Over the past five years (2012-2016), 631 venture-backed cybersecurity startups have received \$12.1 billion in funding.<sup>1</sup> In just 2016, 215 cybersecurity startups received \$2.6 billion from venture firms, showing a strong commitment to keeping our nation safe and advancing needed capabilities.<sup>2</sup>

As you know, much of the innovation in the United States is developed at the startup level. These young, dynamic, and high-growth companies are pushing the boundaries of cybersecurity and introducing new products and services into the market to add to our cyber defense capabilities. As a result, we are witnessing rapid adoption of new products and services in the private sector, but unfortunately the federal government continues to miss out on many new developments due to the difficulties startups face as they try to navigate federal procurement law and policy.

To address procurement challenges for startups, the *Support for Rapid Innovation Act of 2017* would mandate DHS support for research, development, testing, evaluation, and transition of cybersecurity technologies, as well as coordination between DHS, industry, and academia. Your legislation would also require DHS to target federally funded cybersecurity research that has a high probability of transition to the commercial market within two years and have a positive impact on information systems.

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<sup>1</sup> See Pitchbook – NVCA Venture Monitor, available at <http://nvca.org/research/venture-monitor/>.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

The entrepreneurial ecosystem thanks you for your leadership on this important issue and urges the Committee membership to support passage of the *Support for Rapid Innovation Act of 2017*.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bobby Franklin". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of both words being capitalized and prominent.

Bobby Franklin  
President and CEO