



June 7, 2016

The Honorable Michael McCaul (R-TX)
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
H2-176 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bennie Thompson (D-MS)
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
H2-117 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman McCaul and Ranking Member Thompson:

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 2016* and the *Leveraging Emerging Technologies Act of 2016*, both introduced by Rep. John Ratcliffe (R-TX), Chairman of the House Homeland Security Subcommittee on Cybersecurity, Infrastructure Protection, and Security Technologies.

Whether it's a private company or a federal agency, in today's interconnected world it's not a matter of if but when you will be the target of a cybersecurity attack. To meet these growing threats head on, much of the innovation being developed at the startup level, often times with the backing of venture capital investors. Since 2010, 351 cybersecurity companies received approximately \$9 billion in venture capital funding. In fact, venture capital investment in cybersecurity companies hit a six-year high in 2015 when venture investors deployed \$3 billion to 144 companies.

Working with their venture capital investors to scale and grow their businesses, these young companies are pushing the boundaries of cybersecurity innovation and introducing new products and services into the market to add to our cyber defense capabilities. We are witnessing rapid adoption of these new products and services in the private sector, but unfortunately the federal government continues to miss out on these new innovations due to the challenges and difficulties startups face as they try to navigate the federal procurement process.

The bills introduced by Mr. Ratcliffe would take much-needed strides to fixing the procurement challenges of cybersecurity startups. For example, the *Support for Rapid Innovation Act of 2016* would mandate Department of Homeland Security (DHS) support for research, development, testing, evaluation, and transition of cybersecurity technologies, as well as coordination between DHS, industry, and academia. The *Leveraging Emerging Technologies Act of 2016* would

require the DHS to engage innovative and emerging technology researchers and entities that address critical homeland security needs. In addition, NVCA is pleased to see Mr. Ratcliffe's bill establishes a strategic plan to proactively engage technology startups and address barriers to utilization of these startups in the acquisition process.

The entrepreneurial ecosystem thanks Mr. Ratcliffe for his leadership on this important issue and urges the committee membership to support passage of these two bills.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bobby Franklin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bobby Franklin
President and CEO