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## United States Senate

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SMALL BUSINESS  
AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

August 27, 2019

Honorable David L. Norquist  
Deputy Secretary of Defense  
1010 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20301-1010

Dear Deputy Secretary Norquist,

Congratulations on your confirmation as the Deputy Secretary of Defense. I appreciate your commitment to work with me to ensure every dollar that goes to the Department of Defense (DOD) is used in the most efficient way to support our men and women in uniform. I also look forward to working with you to strengthen our nation's defenses.

To that end, I am very concerned that despite repeated warning from multiple government agencies, DOD is continuing to purchase and use computers and other electronics with known cybersecurity risks. This includes equipment from a company with connections to the military and cyberespionage programs of communist China.

In 2016, DOD's own Joint Chiefs of Staff Intelligence Directorate cautioned that computers and handheld devices produced by Lenovo, the largest computer company in China, could introduce compromised hardware into the DoD supply chain, posing a cyberespionage risk to classified and unclassified DoD networks." Ten year prior in 2006, the State Department banned the use of the company's computers following reports that Lenovo computers were manufactured with hidden hardware or software used for cyberespionage. In 2015, the Department of Homeland Security issued warnings about pre-installed spyware and other vulnerabilities identified in Lenovo computers. Yet, DoD has not banned the purchase and use of Lenovo products. In fact, the Department spent more than \$2.1 million to purchase over 1,500 Lenovo products, including computers just last year.

As you probably know, a recent DOD Office of Inspector General (OIG) report, "[Audit of the DoD's Management of the Cybersecurity Risks for Government Purchase Card Purchases of Commercial Off-the-Shelf Items](#)," identified thousands of information technology items costing more than \$32 million purchased by the Army and Air Force last year that are vulnerable to hacking by our adversaries. While the Navy did not have information readily available, it does allow this equipment to be purchased and used on its network. Continuing to use this technology could compromise "missions critical to national security," the OIG warns.

If you have not already done so, I urge you to assess and mitigate the threat posed by any high-risk equipment currently in use and prohibit the purchase of any additional technology with cybersecurity vulnerabilities.

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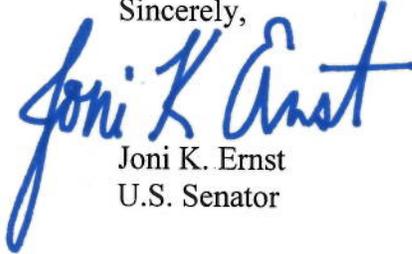
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If it is determined that legislative authority is required to fully address this issue, please let me know how I can work with you to resolve the matter as swiftly as possible.

Thank you again for your service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joni K. Ernst". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "J".

Joni K. Ernst  
U.S. Senator