

# DC Wrap: Gallagher-led panel calls for overhaul of US cyber policy

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Welcome to our weekly DC Wrap, where we write about Wisconsin's congressional delegation. Sign up here to receive the newsletter directly:

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## **Quotes of the week**

"This is all hands on deck, this is not being ignored. You can see the \$8 billion response as opposed to the \$2.5 billion funding request – funds are not going to be an issue."

*-U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson at a Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee hearing over coronavirus funding and response.*

"If there wasn't a political establishment — or a top political class — we could have cheaper drug prices in this country."

*-U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan on CNN discussing the impact pharmaceutical lobbyists have on long-serving legislators.*

## **This week's news**

**— A federal commission led by U.S. Rep. Mike Gallagher unveiled a sweeping set of proposals to overhaul the way the federal government manages cybersecurity.**

In its final report, the US Cyberspace Solarium Commission on Wednesday rolled out more than 75 recommendations. They range from upping the number of military personnel trained for cyber operations to using government resources to protect "systemically important" critical infrastructure owned by the private sector to promoting the use of paper-based voting systems as widely as possible.

But while the 122-page report is broad in scope, the conclusions drawn by Gallagher, R-Green Bay, and Co-Chair U.S. Sen. Angus King, I-Maine, are narrow: the United States is ill-prepared to deter cyberattacks from the likes of Russia, China,

North Korea or Iran.

“This is like the 9/11 commission, but hopefully without 9/11,” Gallagher said on a conference call with reporters. “We want to, if nothing else, convince our colleagues that we have an urgent problem here. And we can’t afford to wait until we’re on the wrong side of a catastrophic cyber incident to modernize and reform the federal government.”

To address the issue, the commission is proposing a framework of “layered deterrence” that incorporates recommendations to promote “responsible” nation-state behavior in cyberspace, harden the country’s cyber defenses and retaliate against attackers.

While a bulk of the recommendations fall within those three categories, the commission is also recommending a restructuring of the federal government to increase focus on cybersecurity. The report calls for new House and Senate cyber committees, cyber-specific positions at the White House and State Department, strengthening and elevating the importance of the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and boosting the recruitment and retention of cyber talent.

“We need CISA to become, for lack of a better term, cool,” Gallagher said. “We want it to be able to compete not only with the FBI and the NSA for top-level talent but also with Google and Microsoft, and for it to win.”

Gallagher acknowledged a number of hurdles standing in the way of moving the recommendations from the pages of the commission’s report into law. Those included a stark partisan divide in Congress, lawmakers’ focus on dealing with the coronavirus and an election right around the corner.

Still, the Green Bay Republican said he saw opportunities to outdo “by a lot” the 10 percent to 20 percent rate at which commission recommendations are historically enacted.

“We want this to be a blueprint for action, not just a report that collects dust on a shelf somewhere,” he said.

For one, the recommendations that call for congressional action include pre-drafted legislative language in an online appendix that lawmakers can “almost copy and paste.”

Gallagher also noted that many of the recommendations “will fall neatly” into this year’s National Defense Authorization Act, the critical package that sets policy and budget for the Department of Defense, among other things.

Both Gallagher and fellow commission member U.S. Rep. Jim Langevin, D-R.I., sit on the House Armed Services Committee, which helps draft the NDAA. Langevin also serves as chair of the Armed Services subcommittee with jurisdiction over cyber policy.

As for the recommendations that fall outside of the Armed Services Committee’s purview, Gallagher said he and King have begun the process of lobbying influential committee chairs. The Green Bay Republican said Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Chair Ron Johnson, R-Oshkosh, has been “very supportive” and “wants to move as quickly as possible.”

While some of the recommendations called for in the report can be enacted legislatively, others will require executive action.

Gallagher said personal conversations with Deputy National Security Advisor Matthew Pottinger — with whom he served in the Marine Corps — had been productive. But he acknowledged there would likely be pushback from the White House on aspects of the plan, including creating a National Cyber Director who would be confirmed by the Senate.

Still, he said the commission strongly backed having a single focal point for coordinating cyber activity across a variety of different agencies.

“That’s going to be something where we’re going to have to convince our colleagues in the executive branch that we’re right,” he said.

See the report [here](#).

### **— President Trump has declared a disaster in three Wisconsin counties hit hard by a severe winter storm and flooding Jan. 10-12.**

The designation makes federal funding available to state and eligible local governments, as well as some nonprofit organizations, for emergency and repair work in Kenosha, Milwaukee and Racine counties.

Gov. Tony Evers said the designation also will help cover the costs of repairing infrastructure and removing debris.

See White House announcement [here](#).

See the Evers release [here](#).

**— Trump’s campaign has postponed a rally it planned next week in Milwaukee to unveil its “Catholics for Trump” effort, citing the coronavirus outbreak.**

Campaign spokesman Tim Murtaugh tweeted last night the decision was made out “of an abundance of caution because of the coronavirus outbreak” and the event will be rescheduled.

Vice President Mike Pence was scheduled to be in Wisconsin March 19 as well for an event with state Rep. Tom Tiffany to boost the Minocqua Republican’s campaign for the 7th CD.

See the [tweet](#).

**— As concerns over the coronavirus grow, U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin is probing Trump administration officials on plans to prevent further spread of the virus.**

The Madison Dem joined Senate colleagues in penning letters to Education Secretary Betsy DeVos and Labor Secretary Eugene Scalia following a CDC recommendation that both businesses and schools across the country should prepare for the spread of the virus.

“We write to understand how the Department of Education is preparing for the possible spread of the virus,” the lawmakers wrote to DeVos. “It is essential that experts across the federal government work together to disseminate science and fact-based information to the public as decisions are made.”

To Scalia, the senators wrote to ensure businesses are “taking the best interests of workers into account.”

Baldwin on Monday also helped introduce a new emergency paid sick leave bill that would require employers to provide 14 days of paid sick leave in a public health emergency. The bill would also require all employers to allow workers to gradually acquire seven days of paid sick leave.

Twenty-seven percent of private sector workers don't have any paid sick leave — with many in industries like food service or retail, where transmission of a virus can be rapid.

“We should help ensure workers can take paid sick leave to protect themselves, their co-workers and their families,” Baldwin said in a press release. “No worker should have to choose between protecting their health, or paying their bills.”

See the letter to DeVos [here](#).

See the letter to Scalia [here](#).

See the sick leave release [here](#).

**— U.S. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Town of Vermont, announced he's canceling his four town hall meetings that were scheduled for next week due to concerns about the coronavirus outbreak.**

Instead, he will do a Facebook Live Town Hall on Tuesday.

**— U.S. Rep. Gwen Moore announced the Muskego Yard Improvement Project in Milwaukee received \$26.6 million in funding from a federal grant.**

The funding will allow freight trains to bypass Milwaukee's main central train station, which should improve freight flow through Milwaukee.

“The swift and efficient movement of people and cargo is key to any functioning

transportation system,” Moore said. “It brings me great excitement to see federal transportation dollars flowing that will directly benefit the city of Milwaukee and the region while improving transportation options.”

See the release [here](#).

### ***Posts of the week***

Women have the resilience and the power to change the world.

Today, and every day, may we celebrate the wonder of women and commit to making the world more peaceful, just, and humane for girls and women everywhere. [#InternationalWomensDay](#)  
[pic.twitter.com/IDuxs4M9le](https://pic.twitter.com/IDuxs4M9le)

— Gwen S. Moore (@Gwen4Congress) [March 8, 2020](#)

From counted out to Big 10 coach of the year... congratulations, Greg Gard! [#OnWisconsin](#) <https://t.co/0Qr9jrsecl>

— Bryan Steil (@BryanSteil) [March 9, 2020](#)

Great to have [@DonaldJTrumpJr](#) at the [@WaukeshaGOP](#) Lincoln-Reagan Dinner. [#LeadRight](#) [pic.twitter.com/gu3mgGAPLR](https://pic.twitter.com/gu3mgGAPLR)

— Ron Johnson (@RonJohnsonWI) [March 8, 2020](#)

This International Women's Day, I'm honoring four of my fearless Senate

colleagues who have blazed new trails: Liz. Amy. Kirsten. Kamala.  
(1/3)[#IWD2020 #EachforEqual pic.twitter.com/Col8un6pdt](#)

— Tammy Baldwin (@tammybaldwin) [March 8, 2020](#)

Thanks to [@DHSWI](#) Deputy Sec. Julie Willems Van Dijk for joining me on my telephone town hall last night. Making sure that everyone has access to accurate information is one of my top priorities...  
[pic.twitter.com/dRejVEdLZ9](#)

— Archive: Rep. Ron Kind (@RepRonKind) [March 10, 2020](#)

## **ICYMI**

[Democratic lawmaker calls out CDC for removing data on number of Americans tested for coronavirus](#)

[Sen. Ron Johnson on Biden Investigations: “Joe Biden Has Never Adequately Answered These Questions”](#)

[Ron Kind: Staying healthy and informed during virus threat](#)

[Republican lawmakers celebrate birthday with a Winnie-the-Pooh cake and a not-so-subtle message for Chinese President Xi Jinping](#)

[Sen. Baldwin calls Trump efforts to stop coronavirus ‘wholly inadequate’](#)

[Officials: Federal, local governments are prepared to handle coronavirus: ‘Making really good progress’](#)