

U.S. Sen. Johnson: Joins Sen. Kennedy, colleagues in urging Biden Administration to protect Americans against Russian cyberattacks

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WASHINGTON – On Friday, U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) joined U.S. Sen. John Kennedy (R-La.) and 11 of their colleagues in urging Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas to provide resources for private and public institutions to defend against cyberattacks by Russia or its proxies.

“The realm of cyber escalation remains largely unexplored. Presently, Russia is justly cornered by extreme sanctions measures and there are concerns it will lash out against the United States through non-kinetic attacks,” **the senators wrote.**

“Even beyond the current Russian-induced conflict, cyber threats are growing faster than our private, state, and local institutions can adapt to them. From banks, hospitals, liquefied natural gas terminals, bridges and roads, our institutions need to be informed and supported by the federal government in order to be prepared to absorb and rebuff offensive cyber operations by foreign adversaries,” **the senators continued.**

The senators asked for answers regarding, among other things, the state of American institutions’ preparedness for a major Russian cyber offensive and what measures the Department of Defense and Department of Homeland Security have taken to reduce Americans’ cyber vulnerabilities in our local and state infrastructure, private institutions, U.S. electrical grid and private citizens.

The senators also urged Austin and Mayorkas to provide a written assessment of all recent significant malicious cumulative cyber activities against the U.S. or reported activities against U.S.-based private institutions by Russia or a suspected proxy.

“We must act now, with increased haste, before we find ourselves under a major retaliatory cyber offensive that causes extreme disruption in the lives of everyday Americans,” **the senators concluded.**

Sens. Johnson and John Kennedy were joined on the letter by Senators Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.), Mark Kelly (D-Ariz.), Roger Wicker (R-Miss.), Ted Cruz (R-Texas), Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), Bill Cassidy (R-La.), Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.), Steve Daines (R-Mont.), Mike Braun (R-Ind.), Bill Hagerty (R-Tenn.), and John Boozman (R-Ark.).

The full text of the letter can be found [here](#).