

U.S. Rep. Gallagher: Cyberspace solarium co-chairs “extremely concerned” about vacant cyber director role, urge administration for nominee

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — Representative Mike Gallagher (R-WI) and U.S. Senator Angus King (I-ME), Co-Chairs of the Cyberspace Solarium Commission (CSC), are urging President Joe Biden to nominate a new National Cyber Director (NCD). [In a letter](#) to the President, Gallagher and King lay out the importance of the National Cyber Director role and stress that the current vacancy endangers America’s national security. The Co-Chairs strongly recommend Acting NCD Kemba Walden for the role, highlighting her expertise and valuable insights.

“As the co-chairs of the Cyberspace Solarium Commission, we write to you to urge your expeditious nomination of a new national cyber director (NCD),” **wrote CSC Co-Chairs Gallagher and King.** “We believe the answer to this vacancy is at the ready. Since Chris Inglis’ departure and even prior, Acting NCD Kemba Walden has demonstrated that she is highly qualified for and well suited to the position. We urge you to send her nomination to Congress soon, where we believe she will receive fair consideration and swift confirmation.”

“While we applaud the White House’s efforts under Director Inglis to stand up the office and his strong leadership in drafting the National Cybersecurity Strategy, we are extremely concerned that the three-month delay (and counting) in nominating a candidate to replace Chris will hinder the implementation of the strategy and lead to a lessening of the stature of the office,” **the Co-Chairs continued.**

“Acting NCD Walden is a proven, forward-thinking leader who can seamlessly step into the permanent position today. Ms. Walden’s prior experiences in government and industry give her unique insight into protecting critical infrastructure and fostering public-private collaboration, key pillars of the National Cybersecurity Strategy,” **concluded Gallagher and King.** “We urge you to ensure the swift nomination of Ms. Walden as the new National Cyber Director.”

As Co-Chairs of the Cyberspace Solarium Commission (CSC), Senator King and Representative Gallagher are recognized as two of Congress’ leading experts on cyberdefense and are strong advocates for a forward-thinking cyberstrategy that emphasizes layered cyberdeterrence. Since it [officially launched in April 2019](#), [dozens of CSC recommendations have been enacted into law](#), including [the creation of a National Cyber Director](#).

You can read the full letter [HERE](#) and below.

Dear President Biden,

As the co-chairs of the Cyberspace Solarium Commission, we write to you to urge your expeditious nomination of a new national cyber director (NCD). Officials from the Department of Defense, the Intelligence Community, and the Department of Homeland Security have repeatedly testified about the significant cyber threats facing our country and the importance of coordination required across the federal government in view of those threats. We believe the answer to this vacancy is at the ready. Since Chris Inglis’ departure and even prior, Acting NCD Kemba Walden has demonstrated that she is highly qualified for and well suited to the position. We urge you to send her nomination to Congress soon, where we believe she will receive fair consideration and swift confirmation.

Congress established the Office of the National Cyber Director in the FY2021 National Defense Authorization Act to institutionalize a national-level mechanism for coordinating cybersecurity issues. Title 6 U.S. Code establishes a comprehensive and demanding list of duties for this vital position in our federal government. The coordination across the federal government is of the size and scope that demands the leadership of a Senate-confirmed NCD. While we applaud the White House’s efforts under Director Inglis to stand up the office and his strong leadership in drafting the National Cybersecurity Strategy, we are extremely concerned that the three-month delay (and counting) in nominating a candidate to replace Chris will hinder the implementation of the strategy and lead to a lessening of the stature of

the office.

Acting NCD Walden is a proven, forward-thinking leader who can seamlessly step into the permanent position today. Ms. Walden's prior experiences in government and industry give her unique insight into protecting critical infrastructure and fostering public-private collaboration, key pillars of the National Cybersecurity Strategy. We both routinely talk with private sector leaders and they also find Kemba to be a superb choice for NCD.

We urge you to ensure the swift nomination of Ms. Walden as the new National Cyber Director. Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,