United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 16, 2017

The Honorable Elaine Duke
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Acting Secretary Duke:

With the conclusion of President Trump's first visit to our longtime ally the Republic of Korea (South Korea), we write to express our support for increased cybersecurity cooperation with South Korea and its participation in the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Automated Indicator Sharing (AIS) system. Given the serious cybersecurity threat posed to the United States, South Korea and the world by North Korea, we urge you to expedite discussions with your South Korean counterparts to facilitate its inclusion in the AIS system as soon as possible.

South Korea's participation in the AIS system will not only strengthen our ironclad alliance and trilateral cooperation with Japan, but also help boost the cybersecurity of our states and private sector partners across the country. As directed by the Cybersecurity Act of 2015 (P.L. 114-113), DHS established a free Automated Indicator Sharing (AIS) capability that enables the exchange of cyber threat indicators between the Federal Government and the private sector at machine speed. As of May 2017, 33 federal entities and 106 non-federal entities are connected to AIS. The Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center, which includes all state governments, are connected to AIS and now receive threat indicators in real time such as malicious IP addresses or the sender address of a phishing email. Extending the reach of AIS are 16 of the 106 non-federal participants who are Information Sharing and Analysis Organizations or cybersecurity providers who are able to redistribute the indicators to their customers. With South Korea part of the AIS system in addition to Japan, Australia, and Taiwan, our states would better positioned to receive valuable threat indicators originating the Asia-Pacific region including those from North Korea.

In addition to the ongoing cybersecurity threats posed to our states, we believe our country must continue to be vigilant in dealing with international cyber threats and must do more to collaborate with South Korea to defend against the major threat posed by North Korean cyberattacks. North Korea is reported to have directed a growing number of damaging cyberattacks against the U.S., South Korea and around the globe such as the 2013 network disruptions against South Korean banks during U.S.-South Korea military exercises, 2014 attack on Sony Pictures, and the worldwide WannaCry ransomware attack earlier this year. With South Korea hosting the Winter Olympics early next year, the country's inclusion in the AIS system can better enable our ability to identify potentially devastating future North Korean cyberattacks on our country and our international partners.

As we marked the 64th anniversary of the signing of the mutual defense treaty between our nations in October, bringing South Korea into our AIS system would be a fitting gesture of our continued efforts to enhance our security alliance and trilateral coordination with Japan. We strongly support South Korea's membership in the AIS system and urge the efforts towards this goal be accelerated. We also request an update on our engagement with your South Korean counterparts on this issue.

Sincerely,

MAZIE K. HIRONO
United States Senator

CORY GARDNER
United States Senator

JACK REED
United States Senator

GARY C. PETERS
United States Senator

MARK R. WARNER
United States Senator

cc: Rex Tillerson, Secretary of State