

September 26, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Senate Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Senate Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

Our organizations, which represent a broad cross-section of the U.S. economy, urge the Senate to pass H.R. 3776, the Cyber Diplomacy Act of 2017. This legislation would advance America's public and private efforts to safeguard cyberspace and enhance the nation's economic competitiveness in a global digital economy.

H.R. 3776 would modernize the U.S. Department of State's cyber and digital economy functions that provide key leadership on global diplomatic cyberspace efforts in three important ways.

First, the legislation recognizes the critical importance of keeping the cyber and digital economy a combined function within the department. The proposed Office for Cyberspace and Digital Economy would advance the department's global digital priorities by consolidating efforts relating to international cybersecurity, internet access, internet freedom, digital economy, cybercrime, deterrence, and international responses to cyber threats.

Second, the bill confers the rank and status of ambassador on the office's director, an appropriate title allowing high-level diplomatic access to ministries of foreign affairs around the world.

Third, the bill recognizes and enhances the office's relationship with the private sector on vital political and economic-related policy issues, by locating it organizationally under the Under Secretary for Political Affairs rather than it reporting to the Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Affairs.

We believe that a focused, centralized, and appropriately placed office led by an ambassador-rank official would aid U.S. cybersecurity and digital economy efforts. We believe that enactment of this bill would send a powerful message that the U.S. intends to preserve and protect a secure, reliable, and open internet.

The House passed the Cyber Diplomacy Act in January, and we look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues in the Senate to pass the bill during this Congress.

Sincerely,

Business Software Alliance
Information Technology Industry Council
ACT | The App Association
The Real Estate Roundtable
The Software & Information Industry Association
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Council for International Business

cc: Members of the U.S. Senate