

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:
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FOREIGN RELATIONS
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

June 15, 2021

President Joe Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

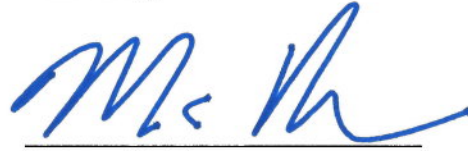
I write with regard to your meeting with Vladimir Putin this week in Geneva, Switzerland. As you know, cyber-attacks originating from Russia have targeted American and international companies. The most recent attacks on Colonial Pipeline and JBS, as well as the Solarwinds attacks earlier this year, indicate these attacks are now increasing in frequency.

I urge you to make it clear to Putin that the United States will meet any future cyberattack from Russia with a strong response. The U.S. Department of Justice has recently demonstrated its ability to track and penetrate the networks used by Russian cybercriminals in their retrieval of the ransom paid by Colonial pipeline. I urge you to use this meeting to inform Putin that the United States will use these capabilities, and others, to mitigate the effect of future attacks. In addition, you should open the possibility that the United States will deploy targeted sanctions on Russian officials who enable cyberattacks and will arrest cyber criminals who violate U.S. law when they travel to other countries. I also urge your administration to coordinate these efforts through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, which Congress established in 2018. In the near future, I will be introducing legislation to give your administration greater tools to address the scourge of ransomware and target foreign governments that knowingly provide safe haven for cyber criminals.

Putin's record of egregious behavior has consistently shown that when presented with an opportunity to advance his interests, he will do so with no regard for human rights, democratic freedoms, and his international commitments. He continues to unjustly detain American citizens, Paul Whelan and Trevor Reed, on false charges of espionage. His regime has abused Russian law to harass independent media outlets, such as RFE/RL, Meduza and VTimes. Russian courts recently designated Russia's most popular opposition organization, Alexei Navalny's Anti-Corruption Organization, with the same status it reserves for terrorist groups. In Ukraine, his military continues to illegally occupy Crimea and back separatist authorities in Donbas, in contradiction to Russia's promises to honor Ukrainian territorial integrity in the Budapest Memorandum. I believe the same holds true regarding cyberattacks originating from Russia. Whether or not his regime is directly responsible for these attacks, he will allow them to continue so long as the U.S. response is weak. Only a strong and clear message will deter Putin from engaging in behavior detrimental to a stable U.S.-Russia relationship.

I stand ready to assist you in enacting policies that will increase the United States' deterrence to cyberattacks originating from Russia. Thank you for your attention to these matters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'M. Rubio', written over a horizontal line.

Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator