



March 1, 2016

## **TechNet Opposes Efforts to Weaken Security in iPhones and Other Devices**

*Washington*—TechNet, the bipartisan network of innovation economy CEOs and senior executives, today wrote to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee to express its opposition to efforts to weaken security in iPhones and other devices and to urge a national dialogue on the issues raised at this afternoon’s hearing. The following is the text of the letter:

“TechNet, the bipartisan network of innovation economy CEOs and senior executives, thanks you for holding today’s hearing: “The Encryption Tightrope: Balancing Americans’ Privacy and Security.”

Today’s hearing has been driven in no small part by the U.S. government’s decision to take the unprecedented step of trying to force a leading American technology company – Apple – to provide access to the encrypted contents of an iPhone. Expanding the 227-year-old All Writs Act, to date used exclusively to require administrative support to the government, into a tool to require a private technology company to create new software and in effect undermine its existing security systems sets a disturbing precedent for obtaining access to iPhones and other American devices. It would also open the door to governments from around the world seeking the very same type of access. This would be a major step in the wrong direction, and given the ubiquity of available encrypted mobile applications, would provide limited useful data to government investigators.

Our smartphones, and the other devices that we depend on, are essential parts of our lives. They hold our most personal information, including our health and financial data. This information needs to be protected from those who would seek to compromise our privacy and security.

At TechNet, we have great respect for the job that the FBI and other law enforcement agencies do. We fully understand that our nation faces grave threats, and that we must be vigilant in protecting our homeland.

The challenge in this case is that creating a precedent that could force companies to eliminate security features from their products is counterproductive for both our nation’s security and economic leadership. From a security perspective, once a vulnerability is established, it could be exploited by others who do not share the FBI’s good intentions. The result: common transactions will become easy prey for

bad actors, and customers around the world could lose faith in the trustworthiness of American products and choose alternatives that don't have the same vulnerabilities.

However, the attention this particular case has drawn can have a positive outcome if we use it to begin a national dialogue to chart a way forward on the complicated set of legal and technical issues now before this esteemed committee. At TechNet, we hope that today's hearing will serve as a catalyst for such a dialogue."

Copies of the letter are available upon request.

**About TechNet**

*TechNet is the national, bipartisan network of technology CEOs and senior executives that promotes the growth of the innovation economy by advocating a targeted policy agenda at the federal and 50-state level. TechNet's diverse membership includes dynamic startups to the most iconic companies on the planet and represents more than 2.5 million employees in the fields of information technology, e-commerce, advanced energy, biotechnology, venture capital, and finance. TechNet has offices in Washington, D.C., Silicon Valley, San Francisco, Sacramento, Austin, Boston, Seattle, Albany, and Tallahassee.*

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