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May 9, 2017

The Honorable Frank Larkin  
Sergeant at Arms  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Larkin:

I understand that the Senate has recently transitioned to the default use of HTTPS encryption for all Member and Committee websites. I write to you today to thank you, and to congratulate you and your staff for all of the hard work that undoubtedly went into this significant upgrade to the security of Senate websites.

As you know, HTTPS encryption provides a number of significant benefits: Information about the specific web pages on a Senate site that a constituent is visiting are protected from interception by an employer, internet service provider, or other third party and the content of Senate web pages is protected from tampering by hackers and foreign governments. In addition to ensuring that constituents only receive legitimate content when they visit a Senate site, HTTPS encryption also protects Senate website visitors from hackers and foreign governments who might try to inject malware to the web pages they are viewing.

I have long argued that strong, backdoor-free encryption is an important cybersecurity technology that the government should be embracing, not seeking to regulate or outlaw. My own Senate website, which has used HTTPS by default since 2015, was the first Senate website to do so. With the transition to default HTTPS for all of the other Senate websites and the recent announcement by your office that the end-to-end encrypted messaging app Signal is approved for Senate staff use, I am happy to see that you too recognize the important defensive cybersecurity role that encryption can play.

I look forward to seeing further improvements to the Senate's cybersecurity.

Sincerely,



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator

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