

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 4, 2025

Bridget Bean
Executive Director
Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency
1110 N. Glebe Road
Arlington, VA 20598-0630

Mona Harrington
Assistant Director for the National Risk
Management Center
Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency
1110 N. Glebe Road
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Dear Ms. Bean and Ms. Harrington:

We are concerned by the lack of timely written response to our February 13, 2025, letter on the status of the election-related work and the treatment of employees at the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA). Since the sending of that letter, several additional, disturbing reports have come to light, including (1) more CISA employees have been put on administrative leave,¹ (2) election security efforts have been paused during a secretive review that is being rushed through without consultation with Congress or state and local election officials,² and (3) employees of the U.S. Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), including at least one who is a known cybersecurity risk, are reworking CISA without any transparency.³

We expect a thorough and substantive response to both letters, and a briefing on the results of the assessment following its anticipated conclusion on March 6, 2025, with a discussion of any anticipated changes to the agency prior to any being finalized. While we recognize that CISA and DOGE is declining to communicate with Congress on individual personnel decisions, Congress has a right to understand the overall personnel numbers and structural changes occurring at CISA. We reiterate our request for information on the numbers of CISA employees whose work, in whole or in part, covered election-related matters that have either been placed on administrative leave or fired. Our committees have received information that the number of election security officials put on leave is greater than initially reported and public reports indicate that 130 CISA employees have been fired already.

We understand that CISA launched a review of its election security work soon after receiving our February 13 letter. While we understand the assessment of the agency's work remains ongoing—with a reported March 6 deadline—we urge your continued commitment to maintaining elections as a key component of CISA's core mission. Additionally, we call your attention to the February 21, 2025, letter from the bipartisan National Association of Secretaries of State and urge you to consult with key Congressional committees and Chief Election Officials before the conclusion of the assessment. In their letter, the Secretaries noted the importance of CISA's services, including cybersecurity services, physical security assessments, planning resources, and briefings on the foreign threats facing our election systems at the state and local level. While we encourage CISA to ensure these services remain intact, decisions to upend these programs after a three-week review without seriously considering the

¹ Nicole Sganga & Camilo Montoya-Galvez, *Trump administration fires over 400 DHS employees as mass firings continue*, CBS News (Feb. 16, 2025), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-administration-fires-over-400-dhs-employees/>.

² Nicole Sganga, *Election systems feared to be vulnerable as Trump administration cuts workers tasked with security*, CBS News (Feb. 25, 2025), <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/trump-administration-firings-election-systems/>.

³ Majlie de Puy Kamp, *Recording reveals new details on controversial DOGE employee*, CNN (Feb. 22, 2025), <https://www.cnn.com/2025/02/21/politics/doge-musk-edward-coristine-invs/index.html>.

input of Members of Congress or the individuals running elections in the states would be irresponsible and shortsighted.

We are also gravely concerned about the permanent termination of federal funds for the Election Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EI-ISAC). The EI-ISAC played a critical role in threat monitoring and coordination between state officials, and the lack of notice prior to the termination of federal funding has left states unable to accept the services of the Center for Internet Security.⁴ We recommend restoring federal funding for the EI-ISAC as soon as possible. If CISA or DOGE refuse to do so, they owe Congress a substantive explanation for this decision and details of how CISA will be providing these services to states in the absence of the EI-ISAC.

Furthermore, we are shocked by public reporting that an inexperienced DOGE staffer with a history of engagement with hacking groups, and who was fired for leaking sensitive information from a previous job, is now working at CISA. We demand an immediate answer as to how many DOGE employees are currently housed at CISA, as well as the level of access they have been given to sensitive information.⁵ Senior Advisor to the President Elon Musk has publicly committed the Administration and DOGE to the highest levels of transparency, and we expect a full accounting for DOGE's activities at an agency with a mission as sensitive as CISA's.

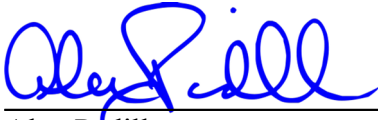
As Ranking Members of the House and Senate Committees with jurisdiction over federal elections, we have a right to understand the changes occurring at CISA given its critical election security mission. Failure to respond to these questions is deeply disturbing given so many high-ranking administration officials' refusals to accept the outcome of legitimate elections and involvement in spreading election-related mis- and disinformation. Election infrastructure is critical infrastructure. Changes at CISA could have dramatic impacts on future elections – the cornerstone of our democracy. Without a reasonable, transparent process that consults with Congress and Chief Election Officials on a bipartisan basis, we are alarmed that political leadership at DHS and DOGE is directing CISA to undercut the security of our elections, making us more vulnerable to malign foreign actors and risking the safety of election officials.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to your prompt response, no later than Monday, March 17.

Sincerely,

⁴ Colin Wood, *Federal cuts to election security concern secretaries of state*, StateScoop (Feb. 20, 2025), <https://statescoop.com/federal-cuts-election-security-secretaries-state-2025/>.

⁵ David DiMolfetta, *DOGE employee Edward Coristine lands at CISA with DHS email*, NextGov (Feb. 19, 2025), <https://www.nextgov.com/cybersecurity/2025/02/doge-employee-edward-coristine-lands-cisa-dhs-email/403126/>; Kim Zetter, *DOGE Now Has Access to the Top US Cybersecurity Agency*, Wired (Feb. 19, 2025), <https://www.wired.com/story/doge-cisa-coristine-cybersecurity/>.



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