



Representative Ann Kirkpatrick
Arizona's First Congressional District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 4, 2010

Contact:
Joe Katz, (202) 225-2315

Rep. Kirkpatrick Praises Cybersecurity Enhancement Act as Useful Step to Protect Against Attacks, Continues Call for Greater Focus on Threat

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Representative Ann Kirkpatrick, Arizona's sole representative on the Committee on Homeland Security, today released a statement in response to the House's passage of the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act. The Congresswoman issued the following statement:

"With so much of our infrastructure connected to and dependent on the internet, cyberattacks are quickly becoming one of the most dangerous weapons our enemies use against this Nation. Our networks are already being attacked millions of times every day, often by terrorists, foreign countries and other forces who want to hurt our country. The danger is real, and it is happening now – we need to address our vulnerabilities as quickly as possible.

"This bill is a useful step in the right direction. It will strengthen our research efforts and help us develop the tools and tactics we need to protect against cyberattacks. However, it is just one part of a comprehensive and sustained effort to keep us safe.

"The White House has said that securing our networks is a top priority, yet more progress needs to be made. Protecting Americans from this threat will take far more work, and we need to see the President provide genuine leadership to reach this goal.

"I call on the Senate to quickly pass this bill and on the President to quickly sign it into law. We must turn our attention to doing what is necessary to protect against these attacks, before irreparable harm is done to this Nation.

"There is no doubt that we will face a devastating cyberattack – it is a question of when it happens, not if it happens. We cannot wait to scramble to action after a major attack. We need to act now so we can defend against and respond to that crippling attack when it comes."

BACKGROUND:

This afternoon, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the bipartisan Cybersecurity Enhancement Act, with Rep. Kirkpatrick joining an overwhelming 422-5 majority in favor. The legislation updates and improves a wide range of cybersecurity research and development programs, helping them find new and innovative ways to protect our electronic networks. It also establishes a unified strategy for conducting this research in the future, helping America stay one step ahead of its enemies in this field.

The White House has in the past indicated that cybersecurity is a focus of their efforts, and the Administration's quadrennial homeland security review named it as one of the Department of Homeland Security's five key missions. However, a high-level security position went unfilled for months, and many of the shortfalls in U.S. cybersecurity infrastructure efforts have not been corrected.

###