



September 20, 2022

The Honorable Jason Crow
1229 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick
271 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Crow and Fitzpatrick:

The Joint Commission commends your efforts to improve federal cybersecurity collaboration and training for the Healthcare and Public Health (HPH) sector with the introduction of the Healthcare Cybersecurity Act (H.R. 8806). Cyber threats are very concerning because they can severely compromise or delay patient care. Cybersecurity is essential to ensuring that the delivery system can provide services without fear of incursions to patient safety.

Founded in 1951, The Joint Commission seeks to continuously improve health care for the public in collaboration with other stakeholders, by evaluating health care organizations (HCOs) and inspiring them to excel in providing safe and effective care of the highest quality and value. An independent, not-for-profit organization with a global presence, The Joint Commission accredits and/or certifies more than 25,000 HCOs and programs in the United States. The Joint Commission evaluates HCOs across the continuum of care, including most of the nation's hospitals. Although accreditation is voluntary, a variety of federal and state government regulatory bodies, including CMS, recognize The Joint Commission's decisions and findings for Medicare or licensure purposes.

The Joint Commission recognizes that cyberattacks continue to threaten HCOs and that the number of these threats have significantly increased. While HCOs have historically focused on protecting against patient data breaches, threats have evolved raising the need to address ransomware and malware attacks. We believe S.3904 will provide meaningful steps to help HCOs mitigate these serious threats.

The Joint Commission supports bill language formalizing the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency's (CISA) relationship with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services to improve cybersecurity in the HPH sector. Additionally, the requirement in the bill for CISA, in coordination as appropriate with private sector healthcare experts, to provide training to HPH sector organization owners and operators is critical to ensuring an all-hands approach to cybersecurity. The Joint Commission has repeatedly worked with CISA to share their valuable cybersecurity resources with our accredited HCOs, offering health care providers information on organization-wide cybersecurity and "cyber-hygiene" practices, which referred to many CISA tools.^{1,2} We strongly believe a data safety culture across the entire HCO, starting at the top of the

¹ <https://www.jointcommission.org/-/media/tjc/newsletters/quick-safety-62-cybersecurity-final-10-7-21-rev.pdf>

² <https://www.jointcommission.org/about-us/federal-relations-and-public-policy/joint-commission-cisa-webinar-on-cybersecurity-resources/>

organization, is essential to building a cybersecurity culture. Providing resources and tools to HCOs is one step to ensure they establish build this culture in their own health system.

The Joint Commission is pleased to answer any questions you may have regarding our efforts to share cybersecurity resources and our strong support for this legislation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff: Patrick Ross, Associate Director, Federal Relations at pross@jointcommission.org; or Kathryn Spates, Executive Director, Federal Relations at kspates@jointcommission.org or 202-783-6655.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. VanAmringe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Margaret VanAmringe, MHS
Executive Vice President for Public Policy and Government Relations