



May 15, 2015

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

As the Chair of the Board of BSA | The Software Alliance (BSA),¹ I write on behalf of our organization to urge you to avoid any proposals that would require U.S. companies to intentionally undermine the security of their products and services. We urge you also to strongly endorse innovation in security technologies to ensure that individuals and enterprises can reap the greatest benefits of information technologies, which are central to job creation and economic prosperity.

Our member companies develop and offer essential software, security tools, communications devices, servers and computers that drive the American and global information economy, and that improve our daily lives. We earn our users' confidence by providing essential security technologies, such as encryption, to protect them from cyber threats. Those threats are posed by a broad range of malicious actors, including those who would steal our identity, harm our loved ones, steal commercially valuable secrets, or pose immediate danger to our nation's security.

Encryption provides one of the most effective ways to protect us against these and many other threats. But encryption would be considerably less effective if it were compromised from the start by any built-in weakness.

Both at home and abroad there are calls to place limits on encryption technologies. These calls argue that pervasive use of encryption—especially user-controlled encryption—will hinder efforts to identify, stop, and prosecute criminals.

The proposed solutions, unfortunately, have been to limit the use of security technologies, to build in flaws, or to dictate design and capabilities by requiring master keys.

We strongly disagree with this proposed direction, and ask you to oppose undermining the effectiveness of such security tools. If embraced, such a path would weaken our defenses against cybercriminals, undermine the viability of information tools, and shake users' trust. Internationally, calls for encryption controls embolden some regimes to leverage similar policies to weaken fundamental human rights and to artificially create commercial advantages and market access barriers.

We ask you to resist calls to deliberately weaken the availability of encryption as an essential security tool, and we urge you to immediately initiate a concrete dialogue that will explore

¹ BSA | The Software Alliance (www.bsa.org) is the leading advocate for the global software industry before governments and in the international marketplace. Its members include: Adobe, Altium, ANSYS, Apple, Autodesk, Bentley Systems, CA Technologies, CNC/Mastercam, Dell, IBM, Intuit, Microsoft, Minitab, Oracle, salesforce.com, Siemens PLM Software, Symantec, Tekla, The MathWorks, and Trend Micro.

practical policy solutions that spur innovation in security technologies, respect privacy, and promote both individuals' and our nation's cybersecurity.

We stand ready to work with you, and please feel free to contact me directly or Emery Simon, Counselor at BSA, in order to advance a dialogue around these issues.

Respectfully yours,



Steven Dietz,
Chair, BSA Board of Directors

Cc. Denis R. McDonough
Valerie B. Jarrett
J. Michael Daniel
Lisa O. Monaco