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Rep. Bono Mack Requests Briefings On Hacking Group Shady RAT (CALLER)

By Tina Nguyen

[Daily Caller](#), August 11, 2011

Congress may be in recess, but that isn't keeping California Republican Rep. Mary Bono Mack from beginning an inquiry into Operation: Shady RAT.

The chairwoman of the House Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing and Trade Wednesday wrote to Dmitri Alperovitch, vice president of threat research for McAfee. He is the author of the report on Operation: Shady RAT.

In the letter, the congresswoman requests a briefing with Alperovitch's research staff on the extent, capacities and novelty of a five-year cyber attack uncovered by the Internet security software maker McAfee.

Mack expresses "alarm" at an unknown state actor's theft of sensitive information during a widespread intrusion into the computer systems of multiple governments, corporations and nonprofits.

"[The subcommittee] has jurisdiction over cyber security and data security and has engaged in a multi-year oversight effort into the effects on consumers, our international competitiveness, and the economy as a whole," she writes. "As the Subcommittee continues its oversight in this matter, I request a briefing from your security threat research team to inform our efforts."

Her letter also seeks information on the scale of the threat to commerce, specifically probing the potential impact the theft of intellectual property and trade secrets during Shady RAT might have on the American economy. (RELATED: Hackers 'Anonymous' target Syrian Ministry of Defense)

Although Shady RAT principally targeted agencies governments around the world, 25 of the 72 organizations targeted were unnamed large private companies in technology, media, and manufacturing, the congresswoman raises the question as to the overall objective of the hacking operation. "What is the greater target: intellectual property and national security information, or consumer information that can be used to perpetrate identity theft?"

In a statement, McAfee emphasized that "Operation Shady RAT showcased the sophistication, reach and impact of these cyberattacks. McAfee looks forward to helping the U.S. Congress and all government entities better address the threat via a strong public/private partnership."

Rep. Bono Mack represents California's 44th Congressional District and has an active interest in data security as co-chair of the Intellectual Property Promotion and Piracy Prevention Caucus.

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