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Press Release

Stealing From States: China's Power Play In IT Contracts

Florida Sen. Marco Rubio and ChinaTechThreat.com's Dr. Roslyn Layton Addressed China's Infiltration

WASHINGTON, DC – Today Florida Senator Marco Rubio joined ChinaTechThreat.com co-founder Dr. Roslyn Layton to discuss risky technology contracts in 43 U.S. states with Chinese-controlled companies during a media teleconference.

For the past year ChinaTechThreat focused on the vulnerabilities the federal government faces with their technology networks. While investigating Chinese-controlled companies in the U.S. using publically-available contracts, ChinaTechThreat found two whose products have been banned by U.S. military and intelligence agencies and which are embedded in several U.S. state networks. Sen. Rubio, a longtime critic of U.S.-China imbalances, says China's infiltration to American technology systems must stop.

Rubio said, "The one area that China has been keen to exploit is at the state level because state governments largely are not aware of the threat it poises to them — to have within the backbone of their government system technology that has security vulnerabilities that are deliberate and can be exploited. We have never faced that sort of vulnerability before in the backbone of our country. It is something that we need to create more awareness about and that's why reports like these are so valuable."

Dr. Layton's new report, "Stealing From States: China's Power Play In IT Contracts", found many states have unwittingly entered purchase agreement contracts with Lexmark and Lenovo whose products are listed in the National Vulnerability Database.

"If you are a state chief information officer, there is no place to go in the federal government to really understand the threats you face and what you should do to ensure security. At the federal level we could definitely do more to help empower the many state actors," explained Dr. Layton.

The discussion focused on how these contracts allow the Chinese government to access any sensitive information collected with equipment from Chinese-owned companies including-elections, courts, police, education, social services, etc., a provision required as a part of China's 2017 National Intelligence Law. This law also enables the collection, transfer, processing and inspection of this data by the Chinese government if it so desires.

If you would like to listen to Sen. Rubio and Dr. Layton's teleconference discussion, the full audio recording is available at the bottom of the page here.

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