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COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0509

January 16, 2018

Brian Krzanich
Chief Executive Officer
Intel
2200 Mission College Blvd.
Santa Clara, CA 95054

Simon Segars
Chief Executive Officer
Arm
150 Rose Orchard Way
San Jose, CA 95134

Lisa Su
President and Chief Executive Officer
AMD
2485 Augustine Drive
Santa Clara, CA 95054

Dear Mr. Krzanich, Mr. Segars, and Dr. Su:

I am writing to request a briefing from your companies about the Spectre and Meltdown vulnerabilities. As a Member of Congress who has a strong interest in cybersecurity and who serves on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, I am concerned about the growing cyber threats our nation faces. You may be aware that earlier this Congress I introduced the Securing IoT Act, which would require cybersecurity standards to be established for wireless devices and that the devices be certified to meet those standards.

It was recently reported that computer chips made and designed by your companies are susceptible to the Spectre and Meltdown vulnerabilities.¹ I am looking to better understand the nature of these critical vulnerabilities, the danger they pose to consumers, and what steps your companies plan to take to protect consumers.

Analysis by security researchers suggests that nefarious actors could use Spectre and Meltdown to access and steal users' personal information, including passwords, online bank accounts, emails, and photos.² They could also take advantage of these security flaws to access and steal

¹ *Researchers Discover Two Major Flaws in World's Computers*, The New York Times, January 3, 2018, available at <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/03/business/computer-flaws.html>.

² *Meltdown and Spectre*, accessed on January 16, 2018, available at <https://meltdownattack.com>.

critical documents held by businesses and government agencies. Should the vulnerabilities be exploited, the effects on consumers' privacy and our nation's economy and security would be absolutely devastating.

The Spectre and Meltdown vulnerabilities are glaring warning signs that we must take cybersecurity more seriously. In recent years, we witnessed the largest global ransomware attack in history and the largest distributed-denial-of-service attack of its kind in history. The warning signs keep piling on, yet cybersecurity practices continue to lag far behind.

Please be prepared to address the following issues during the briefing:

- The scope of the Spectre and Meltdown vulnerabilities: which chips are susceptible to these vulnerabilities and what are the products (both hardware and software) that utilize these chips.
- How consumers could be impacted by the Spectre and Meltdown vulnerabilities.
- The timeframe for when your companies first learned about the Spectre and Meltdown vulnerabilities, notified vendors, and notified the public.
- Whether there is any evidence that these vulnerabilities have been exploited or that such attempts have been made.
- The steps your companies have taken and will be taking to mitigate potential risk for consumers, and the timeframe for taking the respective actions.
- What, if any, chips and products (both hardware and software) could still be susceptible to the Spectre and Meltdown vulnerabilities after the above actions are taken.
- In cases where patches are issued, what, if any, adverse consequences should consumers expect to encounter – e.g., potential slowing of operating systems.
- What steps your companies are taking to ensure that other chips they manufacture and design are secure (whether this be protecting chips from Spectre, Meltdown, or other vulnerabilities), and the timeframe for taking the respective actions.

Thank you for your attention and cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely,



Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress