

# COMPUTER SYSTEM SECURITY AND PRIVACY ADVISORY BOARD

*Established by the Computer Security Act of 1987*

June 18, 1999

The Honorable William M. Daley  
Secretary of Commerce  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
14<sup>th</sup> Street and Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Computer System Security and Privacy Advisory Board is a statutory body under the Computer Security Act of 1987. Our mission is to advise the Secretary of Commerce and the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) on computer security matters. We are administered through the Department of Commerce, and get our support from NIST.

At our June meeting, the Board was pleased to learn that the Department's Technology Administration, including NIST, is planning an initiative to promote Electronic Commerce. Such an initiative is particularly timely as the nation moves toward a digital economy. NIST's overall capabilities, security expertise, technology leadership, and ability to act with industry collectively can support the success of such an important effort.

While details of the initiative were not available, it is critical and appropriate that suitable emphasis be placed upon security as your planning moves forward. Security is an enabling foundation necessary to effectively implement Electronic Commerce and gain public trust. As the nation's reliance upon paperless transactions grows, the need for confidentiality, integrity, and availability likewise increases. Moreover, the need to assert ownership of information, including personal information and intellectual property, is exacerbated in the electronic commerce environment. It is most important that security be addressed up-front, thus avoiding costly, often unsuccessful attempts to retrofit security at a future date. We therefore encourage you to ensure that security within the planned initiative is sufficiently funded and given appropriate prominence.

With respect to funding of and support for the computer security program at NIST, the Board wishes to reinforce its strong long-standing view that the ability for NIST to address critical security issues **requires** a significantly enhanced level of fiscal support. In addition, there are two supplementary needs -- **namely**, the adequacy of technical resources and aggressive executive leadership. We solicit your support for addressing all three issues.

We look forward to hearing more about the initiative as it evolves and stand ready to provide any assistance you may request.

Sincerely,



Willis H. Ware, PhD  
Chairman

cc: NIST - Mr. Kammer