Testimony for the Record
Support HB 4155
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Joint Legislative Committee on Information Management and Technology
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Good morning, Chairs Armitage and Nathanson, members of the committee – I appreciate the opportunity to share Cisco's perspective on cybersecurity education and coordination.

My name is Ray Blair. I am a Salem area resident and a Distinguished Architect with Cisco Systems. My technology career spans nearly 34 years. Over that time, I have accumulated several industry recognized certifications. I am a Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert (CCIE), a Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), and a Certified Business Architect. I have also coauthored 4 Pearson Education books on technology, one of which is centered around security. Prior to joining Cisco 22 years ago, I was a network consultant for the Oregon Department of Human Services, a Senior Network Analyst for Marion County, and the City of Salem, as well as a US Army veteran.

I am testifying in support of House Bill 4155 – which creates the Oregon Cybersecurity Center of Excellence. The creation of the Center is a strategic use of resources and Oregon is in good company pursuing this investment.

You may know Cisco as a large networking product provider with nearly 80,000 employees in more than 200 countries. Cisco designs and sells a broad range of technologies that power the Internet. Cisco is also one of the world's largest cybersecurity solutions providers, including the world's largest commercial threat intelligence organization in Cisco Talos.

We are aware of the growing threats from malicious cyber actors. Today, these actors are well organized, and highly funded strategic cyber organizations. We have seen attacks in the United States on critical infrastructure, such as water treatment plants, ransomware at hospitals, and a successful power grid shutdown in Ukraine. These types of events upend everyday life and have severe implications ranging from service disruptions to widespread injuries and fatalities. Warnings from the Department of Homeland Security and the FBI indicate an increase in attacks in 2022.

To combat cybersecurity threats, it is important that both public and private sectors are empowered to work together toward a common goal. Organizations that are moving the fastest in this area have active Information Sharing and Analysis structures. The state and our local governments must take steps to spell out a highly coordinated approach, with clear roles and responsibilities, to enable state-wide threat visibility, consistent reporting, education, and rapid incident response procedures. Alejandro Mayorkas,

DHS Secretary, stated during his Senate confirmation hearing, "To enhance our cybersecurity, the Department depends upon and must strengthen its cooperation with the private sector."[1]

The issues the CCoE is designed to address are not new, nor are they confined to Oregon. Organizations like the Arizona Cyber Threat Response Alliance - ACTRA - the National Security Collaboration Center at the University of Texas at San Antonio – NSCC -, and NIST's collaboration with Maryland and Montgomery County to form the National Cybersecurity Center of Excellence, were all created to raise awareness, share information, and educate.

I had the pleasure of working with Colorado's Senator Hickenlooper, then Governor, during the creation of the National Cybersecurity Center (NCC), a 501(c)(3) non-profit for cyber innovation and awareness. The Center was established in 2016 in coordination with the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs (UCCS), the military, and the local community. Our charter was to assist in designing a strategic plan for a Cybersecurity Workforce Development Center in conjunction with the NCC.

Workforce development is a key component of any strategy that seeks to meet our cybersecurity challenge. Cisco's Networking Academy program is one way we partner with educators to help grow the cybersecurity and technology workforce. NetAcad is currently training Oregon's workforce online and via partnerships with a dozen high schools and community colleges throughout the state. The multilingual program has a curriculum to support educators and learners with industry-recognized skills and certifications. Since its inception, NetAcad has served over 15 thousand learners in Oregon and 15 million worldwide.

The Center of Excellence is the right step forward for Oregon as we all work towards improving cybersecurity locally and statewide.

Thank you again for the opportunity to present Cisco's perspective. I welcome questions from the Committee.

Additional Resources:

Cisco Networking Academy Cybersecurity: https://www.netacad.com/courses/cybersecurity

Talos Intelligence: https://talosintelligence.com

Cisco Secure - 2021 Security Outcomes Study:
https://www.cisco.com/c/dam/en/us/products/collateral/security/2020-outcomes-study-main-report.pdf
Cisco Networking Academy overview video:
https://www.youtube.com/embed/NiZWvLqGL3s?iframe=true

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[1] Nomination of the Honorable Alejandro N. Mayorkas to be Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security: U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, 117th Congress. (2021) Testimony of Alejandro N. Mayorkas. https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Prepared%20Statement-Mayorkas-2021-01-191.pdf