

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 8, 2017

The Honorable John Thune
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
512 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bill Nelson
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
512 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Thune and Ranking Member Nelson:

Thank you for your leadership on the Commerce Committee in addressing critical issues facing American consumers. I write today to urge you to hold a hearing on one such issue impacting the lives of millions of Americans – the recently reported data breach at Equifax, one the nation's largest consumer credit reporting agencies.

According to press reports, beginning in May, cybercriminals gained access to files that the company reports could compromise the sensitive information of 143 million American consumers, including Social Security numbers, driver's license numbers, birthdates and home addresses. Equifax reportedly failed to disclose this massive breach to affected individuals for weeks, meaning the risk of identity theft may have been further aggravated.

I am troubled by the company's failure to address the breach promptly with those whose information was compromised, as well as reports that in offering credit monitoring services to those affected, it has requested additional sensitive information with the promise it will be kept secure.

In addition, I am deeply disturbed that several Equifax executives reportedly sold significant amounts of the company's stock before the breach was publicly announced and the company's stock price plummeted. If company executives acted to profit off this failure, that is simply wrong.

This is yet another example of the failure of a trusted company to properly safeguard the personal information of their customers. A breach of this magnitude could have significant

impacts on the privacy and financial security of millions of people, and merits the prompt attention of the Committee. I urge you promptly to call a hearing to address how this breach occurred, how Equifax will take steps to protect those affected, and how it and other credit reporting agencies are working to ensure that this does not happen again. American consumers deserve answers about this breach and the actions of Equifax executives before this breach was made public.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Senator Tammy Baldwin

Cc: The Honorable Jerry Moran, Chairman, Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security

The Honorable Richard Blumenthal, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance, and Data Security