October 10, 2018

Federal Election
Commission 999 E Street
N.W. Washington, D.C.
20463 *Submitted via
email, FAX*

   **RE: Groups Encourage FEC to Proceed with AO 2018-15,
          "Use of campaign funds for cyber security purposes" (Wyden)**

Dear Commissioners:

Our organizations – Demand Progress, Project on Government Oversight (POGO), and
Public Citizen – encourage the Federal Election Commission (FEC) to proceed with the
Advisory Opinion request 2018-15 from Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.) to allow Members of
Congress to use campaign funds to protect themselves and their personal devices from
cybersecurity threats. This would mirror current regulations that permit the use of excess
campaign funds to protect candidates from physical threats.

Two years have passed since Russian interference in the 2016 election came to light, yet
little has been done so far by the Trump administration, Congress or the FEC to address
this very real problem of cybersecurity threats designed to influence our elections and
public policy.
The FEC could act on this advisory opinion expeditiously and help Members of
Congress protect themselves against foreign hacking of personal cell phones and other
devices – hacking that may be used to influence elections and otherwise pose a grave
national security risk.

There is already ample evidence that foreign interests are actively hacking into personal
accounts of Members of Congress with the intent of influencing the 2018 elections and
beyond. Private-sector intelligence reports show that several senators and their staff have
been targeted by cybersecurity attacks beginning in June 2017.[1]

Given the ongoing and persistent threats to our elections and national security from foreign
cybersecurity attacks, we encourage the FEC to proceed with AO 2018-15 promptly.

Sincerely,

Demand Progress
Project on Government Oversight (POGO)
Public Citizen

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[1] Letter from Thomas Rid, Professor of Strategic Studies, The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International
Studies, to Sen. Ron Wyden (Sep. 14, 2018).