

## Enhancing K-12 Cybersecurity Act (H.R.8612)

Congresswoman Matsui (D-CA) and Congressman Langevin (D-RI) recently introduced legislation designed to enhance K-12 cybersecurity “by promoting access to information, better tracking cyberattacks nationally, and increasing the amount of cybersecurity experts in schools.” The bill, the [Enhancing K-12 Cybersecurity Act](#) (, H.R. 8612), would provide resources to help schools combat cyberinfrastructure threats as well as improve coordination and access to information to bolster cybersecurity. The measure would also establish a “Cybersecurity Clearinghouse to disseminate information, best practices, and grant opportunities to improve cybersecurity and create a voluntary Cybersecurity Registry within CISA to track cyberattacks on K-12 schools. The bill would also authorize \$400 million for a K-12 Cybersecurity Human Capacity Grant Program, which would be administered through the National Science Foundation’s Office of Advanced Cyberinfrastructure. CoSN strongly supports H.R.8612 and commends Congresswoman Matsui and Congressman Langevin for stepping forward to help protect our schools. Congress should act quickly to help communities address this growing threat.

### The Enhancing K-12 Cybersecurity Act is supported by:

- Consortium for School Networking (CoSN)
- Schools, Health & Libraries Broadband (SHLB) Coalition
- National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAESP)
- National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP)
- National Association of State Chief Information Officers (NASCIO)

## CoSN’s Cybersecurity Advocacy

Cybersecurity is a top priority for CoSN members and a major focus of our advocacy on Capitol Hill and before the Executive Branch. Cyberattacks on school districts are not only a growing problem for school operations, they also pose a serious threat to the security of sensitive student and teacher data. Combatting cyberattacks is challenging and costly for school districts, potentially harmful to student and teachers in cases of data losses and can cause a serious breach of trust between schools and families. With most school districts relying on some form of full or hybrid distance learning during the pandemic, the threat to school networks and databases has grown substantially. It is imperative that local, state, and federal leaders work together to ensure that every school has the capacity, including staffing, to protect their networks. Unfortunately, the current E-rate program only permits investments in basic network security. The program must be updated to support advanced network security – an integral part of a well-functioning broadband network - and federal leaders must also separately support investments in proper school district staffing to help combat this complex technical problem. With that goal in mind, CoSN urges Congress, the FCC, and the incoming administration to make K-12 cybersecurity a top 2021 priority.