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Auditor Edelen urges Senate leadership to protect taxpayers, pass House Bill 5

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 6, 2014) – Auditor Adam Edelen on Thursday called on Senate leadership to put politics aside and pass a cyber security bill that affects every Kentuckian.

“In his own words, Senator Thayer said ‘politics’ is preventing a bill that had near unanimous support in the House from moving forward,” Auditor Edelen said. “This is why good people hate Frankfort.”

House Bill 5 incentivizes state and local government to take steps to increase cyber security protections and requires it to notify individuals affected by a data breach within 35 days of the incident. It passed the House more than a month ago with nearly 80 co-sponsors and almost equal number of Republicans and Democrats. Two former police officers, Rep. Sal Santoro, R-Florence, and Rep. Denny Butler, D-Louisville, are the primary sponsors.

And, Auditor Edelen announced Thursday that almost 30 organizations, businesses and state agencies have endorsed the bill. Entities ranging from AARP of Kentucky, Bluegrass Institute, Kentucky Association of Counties, Kentucky State Police, three chambers of commerce and more are in support.

“Kentuckians of all walks of life understand the importance of this legislation,” Auditor Edelen said. “Why doesn’t Senate leadership?”

Auditor Edelen outlined past cyber breaches that have occurred in Kentucky. In 2009, for example, Ukrainian hackers stole \$400,000 from Bullitt County Fiscal Court because the county had weak cyber controls. In 2007, Kentucky county clerks couldn’t issue drivers’ licenses, renew vehicle registrations or perform other functions after their computers were infected with malware because they failed to install anti-virus software. And in 2012, a state agency accidentally posted on its public website names, Social Security numbers, home phone numbers and birth dates of a couple hundred current and former state employees. It remained on the public website for two days.

“These are just some of the cyber incidents that we know about,” Auditor Edelen said. “Cyber security is a real threat. It’s simply a matter of time before a massive breach like the one in South Carolina occurs here. Millions of bank account and social security numbers were lost in a breach that cost that state some \$30 million. Had they spent \$12,000 on anti-virus software, it could’ve been prevented.”

Auditor Edelen explained how the measure affects every Kentuckian. From birth on, numerous state and local agencies ask for our Social Security numbers, birth dates, drivers’ license numbers, tax records, credit card and bank account numbers, sensitive health data and more. Law enforcement officers, for example, have to submit their medical history, undergo a physical, provide their blood type, undergo credit checks and some even have to submit a DNA swab.

“School children, the elderly, guests at our state resort parks, corporate CEOs and hunters have one thing in common – massive amounts of their private data is in the hands of Kentucky government,” Auditor Edelen said. “At a minimum, government should take steps to increase security and tell you if your information is compromised. That is something every Kentuckian supports.”

Cyber Security for Every Kentuckian Support

AARP Kentucky
Bluegrass Institute
Kentucky Association of Counties
Kentucky County Judge/Executive Association
Kentucky Magistrates and Commissioners Association
Kentucky League of Cities
Kentucky Sheriff’s Association
Kentucky Chamber of Commerce
Northern Kentucky Chamber of Commerce
Greater Louisville, Inc.
Kentucky Public Retirees
Kentucky Association of State Employees
Kentucky School Boards Association
Kentucky Press Association
Common Cause of Kentucky
Kentucky Retail Federation
Kentucky Education Association
Humana
Anthem
Coventry
Wellcare
Passport
Kentucky State Police
Commonwealth Office of Technology
Council on Postsecondary Education
Kentucky Board of Education

Kentucky Department of Education
Kentucky Council of Area Development Districts
Kentucky Department for Local Government
Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives

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