

INFORMATION SECURITY AND PRIVACY ADVISORY BOARD

*Established by the Computer Security Act of 1987
[Amended by the Federal Information Security Management Act of 2002]*

October 7, 2019

Dr. Walter G. Copan
Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology
Director, National Institute of Standards and Technology

Dear Dr. Copan:

I am writing to you as the Chair of the Information Security and Privacy Advisory Board (ISPAB). The ISPAB was originally created by the Computer Security Act of 1987 (P.L. 100-235) as the Computer System Security and Privacy Advisory Board, and amended by Public Law 107-347, The E-Government Act of 2002, Title III, The Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) of 2002. The statutory objectives of the Board include identifying emerging managerial, technical, administrative, and physical safeguard issues relative to information security and privacy.

We are writing to express our concern regarding the significant delay in publishing NIST Special Publication 800-53 Revision 5, Security and Privacy Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations (800-53 Rev. 5). 800-53 provides a critically important catalog of security and privacy controls for federal information systems and organizations to protect operations and assets, individuals, other organizations, and the Nation from a diverse set of threats including hostile attacks, natural disasters, structural failures, human errors, and privacy risks. As these threats evolve, 800-53 must be updated to help ensure that our IT systems, components, and digital services remain sufficiently trustworthy and provide the necessary resilience to support the economic and national security interests of the United States.

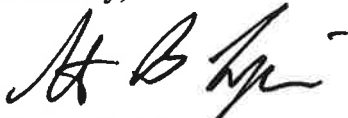
NIST published the most recent update of 800-53 Rev. 5 for public comment in August 2017 and the public comment period closed on September 12, 2017. It is now two years later and NIST still has not published a final 800-53 Rev. 5. We are not privy to the specific reasons for the substantial delay, but we understand that the draft is under review. We urge the Administration to make the publication of 800-53 Rev. 5 with both security and privacy controls a priority, as it is critical to the effective implementation of the federal government's cyber security and privacy programs.

I am available and happy to speak with the staff or individuals responsible for clearing the document to further discuss the board's insights and concerns.

Thank you very much.

The ISPAB supports our country's efforts to improve cybersecurity and looks forward to working with you on these important issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. B. Lipner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line extending from the end.

Steven B. Lipner
Chair
Information Security and Privacy Advisory Board