



October 7, 2020

VIA EMAIL

Steve Lipner, ISPAB Chair
lipner@outlook.com

Dear Mr. Lipner,

Thank you for your letter of July 29th on behalf of the Information Security and Privacy Advisory Board (ISPAB) noting the issue of technology and security standards that contain what may be considered to be racially insensitive language. We at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) appreciate the Board's many contributions as well as its interest in diversity and inclusivity, and its expressed concern about widely used terminology in the technology space that may have potentially negative connotations.

We at NIST have taken note of this issue and have begun to consider appropriate actions. I want to personally assure you that I, and this institution more broadly, take this matter seriously. Indeed, inclusivity is one of the core values of NIST.

Our Information Technology Laboratory (ITL), under Dr. Charles Romine's direction, has taken an initial inventory of our existing security and privacy publications to identify uses of terms with possible racially insensitive connotations. ITL is formulating its approach for possible updating of these publications to use more appropriate terminology. We would appreciate any thoughts or recommendations the Board has on other specific non-inclusive terminology as well as possible replacement language.

Dr. Romine will be available to discuss our progress with you on this issue during ISPAB's next meeting in October.

Thank you once again for the Board's attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,

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

cc: Dr. Charles Romine, ITL Director