

Sen. Wyden seeks cyber info from voting machine makers

Oregon senator sends letters to company CEOs

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and JAKE PEARSON
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden wants to know how well the country's top six voting machine manufacturers protect themselves against cyberattacks, a move that comes just weeks after federal authorities notified 21 states — including Oregon and Washington state — that they had been targeted by Russian government hackers during the 2016 presidential election.

In a letter Tuesday to the CEOs of top election technology firms, Wyden wrote that public faith in American election infrastructure is "more important than ever before."

"Ensuring that Americans can trust that election systems and infrastructure are secure is necessary to protecting confidence in our electoral process and democratic government," writes Wyden, an Oregon Democrat.

An assessment by the Department of Homeland Security found that Russian hackers targeted state election systems. Some states have since disputed that claim.

A representative for Election System & Software said the company had not yet received Wyden's letter. Steven Sockwell, a spokesman for Austin, Texas-based Hart InterCivic, which has provided vote tabulation devices, software and other voting services in 18 states, said he wasn't aware of any cyberattacks on the company or its products.

Company representatives at Dominion Voting Systems, Unisyn Voting Solutions, MicroVote and Five Cedars Group did not respond to requests for comment.

Homeland security officials said in June congressional testimony that Russian hackers didn't target U.S. elections infrastructure "involved in vote tallying," but said a state board of elections website had been compromised, among other cyber activity. Officials have yet to release a detailed account of attempted and successful breaches in those states.

A top-secret National Security Agency report leaked to the online news site The Intercept this summer detailed a Russian military-orchestrated hacking campaign in August 2016 that targeted a Florida-based software vendor with fake, phishing emails. That vendor manages voter registration and voter rolls in eight states, though the document said it was "unknown" to what extent the cyberattack compromised local election systems.

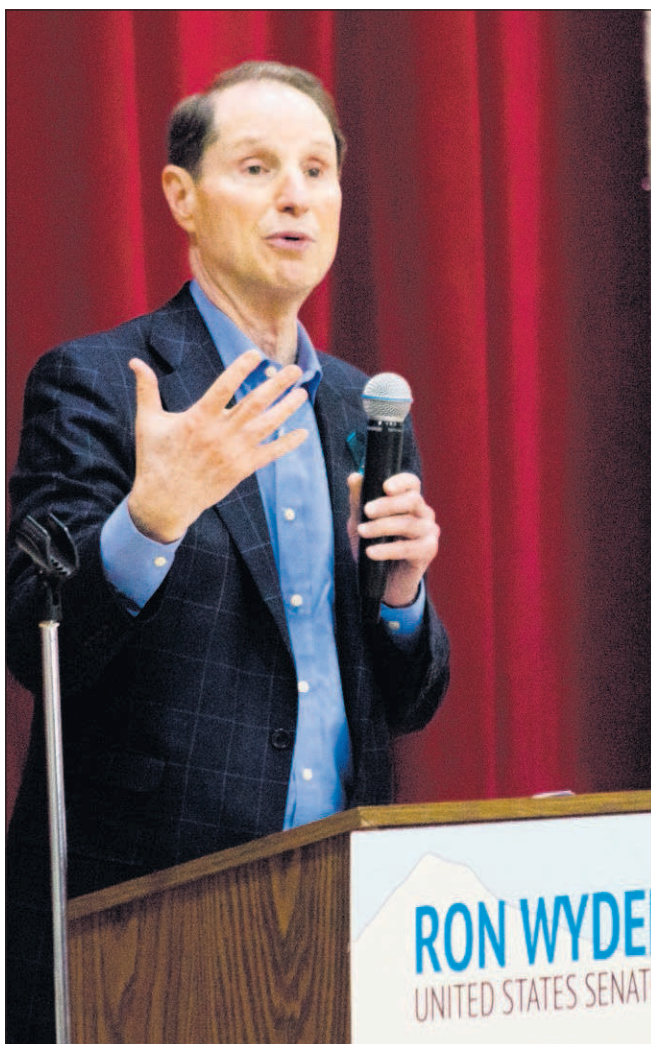
A top federal cyber official has likened most of the Russian cyber attempts on state election systems in 2016 to "somebody walking down the street and looking to see if you are home."

"A small number of systems were unsuccessfully exploited as though somebody had rattled the doorknob but was unable to get in, so to speak," said Samuel Liles, who runs the cyber division of the Department of Homeland Security's intelligence and analysis office. But, he said, in a small number of cases "they made it through the door."

In his letter, Wyden asks the companies to detail their internal security protocols, including whether they test their systems against penetration attempts by outside experts and if they follow federal best practices.

In the wake of Russian interference in the 2016 presidential campaign, federal officials designated election systems critical infrastructure on the order of power plants or electrical grids. But state election officials have expressed confusion over what that designation entails, and some states chafe at the prospect of losing local control of their elections systems.

Pearson reported from New York.



U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden has sought information about the security of voting machines.

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Washington state man gets 10 years for sex crimes

Abused local teenage girl

By JACK HEFFERNAN
The Daily Astorian

A Washington state man was sentenced Monday to 10 years in prison after pleading guilty to sex crimes with a local teenage girl.

Moses Lake Police originally arrested Brandon Wayne Albert Eide, 23 — also known as Brandon Bachold — at his home in March 2016. He was soon extradited to the Clatsop County Jail.



Brandon Wayne Albert Eide

He pleaded guilty Monday to two counts of online sexual corruption, two counts of luring a minor and one count of using child in a display of sexually explicit content.

On two occasions in 2015,

Eide used an online communication method to solicit sex from the girl, arouse sexual desire and arrange a physical meeting with her for sexual purposes. On one occasion, he videotaped the girl while she was participating in sexually explicit conduct.

He originally faced 50 charges that included third-degree rape, third-degree sodomy and first-degree encouraging child sex abuse. After reaching a deal with the Clatsop County District Attorney's Office, though, he pleaded guilty to the five charges.

Supreme Court opts against non-unanimous jury case

Associated Press

PORTLAND — The U.S. Supreme Court will not hear a challenge to non-unanimous jury verdicts in Louisiana and Oregon.

With the decision Monday, Oregon and Louisiana will remain the

only states to allow juries to convict most felony defendants with a 10-2 vote. Oregon does require a 12-0 vote to find people guilty of murder.

The high court was considering whether to hear the case of a defendant from New Orleans.

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