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ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

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April 18, 2024

Mr. Andrew P. Witty
 Chief Executive Officer
 UnitedHealth Group, Inc.
 9900 Bren Road East
 Minnetonka, MN 55343

Dear Mr. Witty:

Your company's response to the February 21, 2024 cyberattack on your subsidiary Change Healthcare (CHC) and lack of cooperation with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and other federal agencies is deeply concerning. It has been almost two months since cybercriminals claimed to have stolen six terabytes of patient data from CHC and in response, you took down at least 18 critical CHC systems that VA relies on to do everything from processing community care payments, to transmitting prescriptions for patients. After initial reports of a ransom being paid to prevent the data from being published, there are now other reports of a second, related ransomware group holding stolen data hostage and demanding additional ransom payments.¹ This bad situation seems to be getting worse. While nearly every institution is the target of cyberattacks, your company's reticence seems to be impeding VA from fully understanding and recovering from this incident.

CHC was the target of this ransomware attack. But make no mistake, the victims are healthcare providers, agencies like VA that operationally depend on CHC, and crucially, the veterans who are being kept in dark by CHC about the status of their patient data. VA Assistant Secretary for Information and Technology Kurt DelBene recently wrote to alert me that CHC has yet to inform VA whether any veteran patient data was compromised in the cyberattack. Specifically, that *"On March 28, 2024, CHC informed VA that impact attestations were available but that CHC would provide those attestations to all customers at a later date. CHC did not provide VA a timeframe when we would receive impact attestations. This is indefensible."*²

I find it impossible to understand why CHC believes it is acceptable to tell VA that they know who was impacted by the attack, but they won't provide any details or even commit to a timeline. Until CHC does so, there is nothing VA can do to alert veterans or help them protect

¹ ["Change Healthcare stolen patient data leaked by ransomware gang."](#) Zack Whittaker, TechCrunch (Apr. 15, 2024)

² Letter from Assistant Secretary Kurt DelBene to Chairman Mike Bost (Apr. 8, 2024)

themselves from fraud, scam, or identify theft attempts. This undermines VA's efforts, when the agency is still reeling from the impacts of critical systems and interfaces going offline.

As you know, the circumstances that led to this catastrophe are being investigated and soon we will learn why this happened and if CHC violated any minimum privacy and security requirements or breach notification requirements.³ Going forward, I will urge VA to reevaluate its vulnerabilities to service providers such as CHC that represent a single point of failure with respect to clinical and administrative operations. Any such concentration of risk is a liability. However, if VA cannot rely on CHC or any other company to be a good-faith partner in the event of a breach, the Department must immediately look elsewhere as patient privacy and safety must be the number one priority.

I ask that you provide VA with the relevant impact attestations immediately. If you are unwilling to do so, I ask that you provide me with a written explanation of why you believe it is in the best interest of veterans or otherwise defensible for CHC to withhold the attestations. The nation is watching.

Sincerely,



MIKE BOST
Chairman

Cc: The Honorable Mark Takano, Ranking Member

³ Dear Colleague from Melanie Fontes Rainer, Director of the Department of Health & Human Services Office for Civil Rights (Mar. 13, 2024)