

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 4, 2015

Mr. Ken Cook
President
Environmental Working Group
1436 U Street NW, Suite 100
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Mr. Cook:

Thank you for your letter of November 4, 2015, regarding H.R. 526, the FACT Act, and the Congressional Cybersecurity Caucus. While we regret that you chose to write this letter without taking the time to familiarize yourselves with the Caucus, either through its website or through contacting us directly, we appreciate the opportunity to correct your letter's misrepresentation of the Caucus's character and purpose.

The Congressional Cybersecurity Caucus is a Congressional Member Organization formed in accordance with the rules of the House of Representatives¹. We founded the Caucus in September 2008 in order to raise awareness of cybersecurity as an issue and to provide a forum for Members and their staff to discuss the challenges we face in cyberspace. Because cybersecurity policy spans a multitude of committee jurisdictions, the Caucus structure allows for a holistic view of the issue, which is rapidly evolving and growing in complexity. The cybersecurity risks our nation faces are ignorant of party affiliation, so the Caucus is thoroughly bipartisan, with a diversity of members from across the ideological spectrum. In order to preserve this neutral space for discussion and education, the Cybersecurity Caucus does not advocate for specific policies or positions, or support or oppose specific legislation. Indeed, it is likely that, on any given issue, Caucus members will hold varying viewpoints that may even be in direct conflict with each other. Because there is obviously no single federal policy solution to cybersecurity challenges, we embrace this dialogue, and to encourage it, we maintain this purposeful neutrality.

As Caucus Co-Chairs, we, ourselves, have strongly held beliefs on many issues, both in agreement and in opposition. However, we routinely and gladly set those matters aside in service to the larger goal of creating a more educated and informed discussion in the Congress on issues of critical importance to our nation.

While we appreciate your taking the time to highlight your policy concerns on specific upcoming legislation with us, the action you propose we take is simply outside the scope of the Caucus's mission. We would have been happy to explain this to you had you raised the issue with us directly. We regret that, in making this letter public without consulting us, you have impugned this worthy educational organization, which we believe has helped build policy knowledge on Capitol Hill.

¹ <http://cha.house.gov/member-services/congressional-memberstaff-organizations>

In the future, we invite you to discuss your concerns and desires regarding the policy positions of particular Members of Congress with those Members directly, rather than implicating a neutral forum following its own mission of neither endorsing nor opposing legislation. If you would like to better understand the role and mission of the Cybersecurity Caucus, we will make our staff available at your convenience. We encourage you to take advantage of this offer.

Sincerely,


JAMES R. LANGEVIN
Member of Congress


MICHAEL MCCAUL
Member of Congress

cc: Ms. Linda Reinstein, President/CEO, Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization
Mr. Robert Weissman, President, Public Citizen
Ms. Joanne Doroshow, Executive Director, Center for Justice and Democracy
Mr. John Richard, President, Essential Information
Dr. Mark Toney, PhD, Executive Director, The Utility Reform Network