



July 18, 2018

The Honorable John McCain  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Armed Services  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mac Thornberry  
Chairman  
House Committee on Armed Services  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jack Reed  
Ranking Member  
Senate Committee on Armed Services  
228 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Armed Services  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman McCain, Chairman Thornberry, Ranking Member Reed, and Ranking Member Smith,

We write to convey the strong support of BSA | The Software Alliance for Section 886 of the House version of the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act, which would limit the use of Lowest Price Technically Acceptable (LPTA) source selection in government-wide acquisitions. These provisions would greatly strengthen the cybersecurity of US Government information systems in the face of growing cyber threats, and we urge conferees to retain them in the final version of the legislation.

Hundreds of millions of Americans depend on the government to defend the United States against malicious cybersecurity activity and to protect the enormous volumes of data, ranging from the sensitive personal data of American citizens to closely-guarded military technologies and intelligence secrets, with which it is entrusted. Yet, the government's cybersecurity is only as strong as the technology infrastructure and services upon which government agencies rely to store, process, and transmit such data.

We can strengthen the government's defenses against malicious cyber attacks in part by ensuring that this technology is equipped with the strongest available cyber defenses. Unfortunately, LPTA, a commonly used acquisition policy, often prevents the acquisition workforce from investing in cybersecurity. Section 886 of the

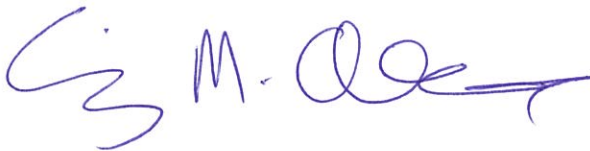
House bill, championed by Reps. Don Beyer and Mark Meadows, would change that.

LPTA contracting is a useful source selection method for acquisitions with simple, well-defined requirements when cost is the sole objective differentiating factor. However, when it comes to more complex acquisitions involving multiple technical variables or functions, such as innovative information technology or cybersecurity services, LPTA's priority of price over value leads to acquisition outcomes that actually prevent the government from getting the most for its money. It inhibits the flexibility of the acquisition workforce to make tradeoffs between cost and desired capabilities, and risks higher long-term costs due to mission failures and contract rework actions. Moreover, it can prevent the government from acquiring products and services that offer cost-effective, innovative enhancements to government cybersecurity, creating downstream risk and cost.

As the world's leading associations representing the technology sector, we urge your support for this common-sense measure to limit the use of LPTA contracting in order to ensure that the government is investing wisely, and with security in mind, as it procures the next generation of information technology systems. The Department of Defense has taken this step as part of its "Better Buying Power" initiative. The time has come for the rest of the government to follow suit.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Craig Albright  
Vice President  
BSA | The Software Alliance

CC:  
Senate Conferees  
House Conferees