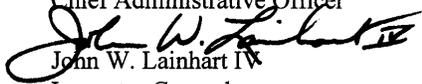


Office of Inspector General
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-9990

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Scot M. Faulkner
Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: 
John W. Lainhart IV
Inspector General

DATE: May 3, 1995

SUBJECT: Chief Administrative Officer: Member Computer Systems Security Weaknesses
(Report No. 95-CAO-01)

As part of our performance audit of House Information Systems (HIS) operations and Office-level computer security, we have reviewed a wide range of issues associated with computer security and control. During this performance audit, Price Waterhouse LLP identified certain security and control weaknesses which are described in detail in the confidential attachment.

The weaknesses identified in the attachment could expose information on Member computer systems to unauthorized access, disclosure, modification, or destruction. For example, as part of our normal security testing, we were able to access Member computer systems and view Member files. By gaining this access, we could have changed documents, passwords, and other sensitive information residing on these systems. Thus, the primary emphasis of the confidential attachment focuses on issues pertaining to access to Member computer systems. Other related security areas are still under review by Price Waterhouse LLP and the results of these reviews will be reported separately.

We discussed our observations and recommendations for initial corrective action with your Associate Administrator for Information Resources and Deputy Associate Administrators for Technology Resources & Electronic Dissemination and General Support & Special Services. Recommendations addressed the issues of:

- Security over access to systems;
- Log-on password control procedures; and
- Security over critical data and files.

All Members, whose computer systems are potentially impacted by the weaknesses we identified, have been notified. Furthermore, the initial corrective action steps identified by Price Waterhouse LLP are being expeditiously implemented by your staff in order to protect Member systems. Specifically, your staff immediately notified the computer system vendor and committed the needed HIS staff to ensure that the vendor takes the needed corrective actions.

This report has been prepared in order to immediately correct the identified weaknesses and is not intended to represent our final report on computer security issues.

If you should have any questions regarding the issues identified in this report, you can contact me on x61250.

Attachment

cc: Speaker of the House
Majority Leader of the House
Minority Leader of the House
Chairman, Committee on House Oversight
Ranking Minority Member, Committee on House Oversight
Members, Committee on House Oversight