

Kirk Bill to Impose Mandatory Sentences for Consumer Hackers

Mandatory 25-Year Sentence for Stealing 1 Million or More Credit Card Numbers

Monday, Feb 3, 2014

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senator Mark Kirk (R-Ill.) announced at a Banking Subcommittee on National Security and International Trade and Finance hearing today that he will introduce Credit Card Theft Sentencing Act, which would create mandatory sentences for individuals found guilty of hacking. Senator Kirk is the Ranking Member on the NSITF Subcommittee. The bill would make the consumer hacking of more than 1 million credit card numbers a crime punishable by 25 years in prison.

"Each year, consumer hackers steal millions of dollars from Americans and gravely threaten the safety of our nation's financial system," Senator Kirk said. "These criminals must face real consequences. Our laws do not sufficiently punish cyber criminals, and these devastating breaches of confidential information must be punished."

The Credit Card Theft Sentencing Act also offers a series of mandatory minimums, with each penalty dependent on the computer crime committed. These crimes deserve more prison time because of their seriousness and the vast sums of money involved.

From 2005-2007, Albert Gonzales led a cyber-hacking ring of individuals who targeted big retailers like TJ Maxx, DSW, Sports Authority, BJ's Wholesale Club and OfficeMax. He was able to obtain more than 40 million credit and debit card numbers, and aimed to steal more than \$15 million from consumers and businesses. His hacking ring remains one of the biggest frauds in American history.

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