

Dear Governor Mike Pence,

We are writing this letter with the hope that we can convince you to take a stance supporting strong encryption. Indiana citizens should be free from unreasonable search and seizure, including those searches and seizures that exploit either weak or a lack of encryption. As you are most certainly aware, the United States Government is currently seeking to compel members of the computer and informational sciences community to create backdoors to computer systems and encryption that would allow the government to easily access data and information in the name of national security. As computer scientists and concerned Americans, we would strongly urge you to support strong encryption and not support legislation and government action that would weaken encryption.

Enabling backdoors to encryption would give more than just the government the ability to exploit the weakness in encryption. There is currently no technology available that would enable encryption to have a backdoor that could only be accessed by the government. Determined individuals can and will gain access to those backdoors, which would enable them to steal very sensitive information from all computer users affected. Even if the government used these backdoors for purely noble efforts in law enforcement and for the safety of our nation, the risk of these backdoors being utilized by malicious users is too severe to ignore.

Additionally, it is important to consider the implications of installing backdoors beyond the United States. If the US government can compel companies to provide back doors, other governments will utilize similar methods to compel companies to provide backdoors for them. This will harm not only the security of Indiana residents but companies that do business in Indiana. Forcing companies to provide backdoors to their software as a requirement to operate in Indiana would lead them to avoid doing business in Indiana. Clearly, compelling companies to provide backdoors to software would be detrimental to the prosperity of Indiana residents and companies.

By giving Indiana residents the ability to encrypt their data, you ensure that their privacy is kept intact, and that they are not at risk of having their personal information taken and used without their consent. Strong encryption is essential for preserving the 4th Amendment rights of all Indiana residents and United States Citizens. Furthermore, strong encryption is favorable for the security of everyone in our great nation. For these reasons, we ask that you please reevaluate your stance on encryption, and if you have not already then please speak out in support of strong encryption. We ask that you do this for the good of the people who elected you and whom you govern in the state of Indiana, as well as the rest of the United States of America.

Sincerely,  
John Lake, Kyle Kozak, & Brenden Forte