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Alaska and other states reconfirm that they were unsuccessfully targeted in a Russian Cyber Scan in 2016

(Juneau) In response to an NBC TV story that Russia ‘compromised’ seven states prior to 2016 election, Alaska Division of Elections Director Josie Bahnke stated:

“In September 2017, representatives from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) officially informed our division that Russian cyber actors made a failed attempt to access the division’s public information website prior to the 2016 General Election.

“At that time, DHS officials stated that Alaska was one of 21 states that possibly were the target of an unsuccessful Russian-affiliated cyber incident in October 2016. We have not received any additional information from the federal government to dispute this statement.

“DHS reported, and we confirmed, that Russian actors scanned our public information website in 2016. The division immediately [informed the public of the issue in a press release](#) on September 22, 2017.

“Many businesses and governments have had threat actors scan systems, which is like a robber rattling the door knob or trying to peek in the windows. But scanning a system, versus breaking and entering, are two very different scenarios. We have extensive procedures to secure our information, with multiple layers of security which include a combination of people, processes and technologies to help us conduct secure, trustworthy and accurate elections.

“We will continue to work collaboratively with the National Association of Secretaries of State and DHS on cyber security issues.”

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