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COMPUTER CRIME SUBJECT OF TSONGAS BILL

Senator Paul Tsongas introduced legislation this afternoon which would aid high technology firms and other small businesses in combatting computer crime. Experts say that in the next decade, high tech firm will fall prey to all kinds of security problems from computer criminals who want money, research information, top secret plans or revenge.

"Computerized data storage and management is widespread in the small business sector as a cost-effective practice," the Massachusetts Senator stated. "This is particularly true for high tech firms, making them an attractive target for computer crime. Even though there is little official data on computer crime and small businesses, it is estimated that for every one computer crime detected, 99 go unnoticed."

Tsongas is proposing the establishment of a task force under the auspices of of the Small Business Administration to study the scope and severity of computer crime on small business and to make legislative recommendations to Congress. The bill will also establish a resource center to provide information to businesses on security technology and other precautions.

The Tsongas computer crime legislation is a companion bill to H.R. 3074, introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman Ron Wyden of Oregon. The bill was reported out of the House Small Business Committee today.