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**Submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs (PROC)**

**Re: Parliamentary Duties and the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Wednesday, May 6, 2020

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Cisco is the worldwide technology leader that has been making the Internet work since 1984. As the provider of the biggest and most secure collaboration platform in the world, Webex, we believe we are uniquely positioned to assist the Parliament of Canada as it responds to the incredible changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and considers a virtual solution. The Cisco Webex solution covers everything from endpoints to networks and everything in between, all built on the core foundations of security and privacy. In Canada, Cisco is also proud to have deep expertise providing high-definition video conferencing capability in Canada's north, providing a unique perspective on how to help ensure all Canadians, no matter where they are located, remain represented and connected to their Parliament.

### **CISCO**

Cisco designs and sells a broad range of technologies that have been powering the Internet since 1984. Across networking, security, collaboration, applications and the cloud, Cisco provides its customers with a highly secure, intelligent platform to conduct business digitally.

Cisco's products and services include:

- **Infrastructure Platforms:** core networking technologies of switching, routing, wireless, and data centre products that are designed to work together to deliver networking capabilities and transport and/or store data. These technologies consist of both hardware and software that help our customers build networks as well as automate, orchestrate, integrate, and digitize data.
- **Applications:** software offerings that utilize the core networking and data center platforms to provide their functions. They include our collaboration offerings—such as Webex, unified communications, Cisco TelePresence, and conferencing—as well as security (Duo, Umbrella, AnyConnect VPN, Advance Malware Protection (AMP), etc) and IoT software offerings. We offer a portfolio of solutions which can be delivered from the cloud, premise, or mixed environments, and which integrate voice, video, and messaging on fixed and mobile networks across a wide range of devices/endpoints such as mobile phones, tablets, desktop and laptop computers, video units, and collaboration appliances.
- **Security:** includes network, cloud, internet and email security, identity and access management, advanced threat protection, and unified threat management products. This also includes TALOS, Cisco Security's threat intelligence organization, which has more visibility than any other vendor across the global threat landscape.
- **Services:** broad range of service and support options for our customers including technical support and advanced services, for the end-to-end customer experience.

### **SECURITY AND PRIVACY**

At Cisco, security and privacy are at the foundation of everything we do. These are two driving reasons why our technology was used last month to successfully and securely host the first-ever G20 virtual summit to discuss the international efforts to address the COVID-19 pandemic.



**Security:** Cisco is the largest security company in the world. Every day, we take 1.5 million malware samples and block 20 billion threats – nearly four times the 5.6 billion Google searches made per day. The Cisco Security ecosystem covers email, networks, cloud, web, endpoints and everything in between. This allows Cisco’s threat intelligence organization, [TALOS](#), to have more threat visibility than any other security vendor in the world. At Cisco, security is not an afterthought. Cisco makes security the top priority in the design, development, deployment, and maintenance of its networks, platforms, and applications. More information on this can be found at [Cisco’s Trust Centre](#).

**Privacy:** At Cisco, we believe data privacy is a [fundamental human right](#). We are committed to helping our customers and partners by protecting and respecting personal data, no matter where it comes from or where it flows. Cisco complies with, and helps customers comply with, applicable privacy laws worldwide, including in Canada. We have established long-standing security, data protection, and privacy programs. Additionally, Cisco [publishes](#) its Master Data Protection Agreement, data maps, privacy datasheets, transparency reports and policies around privacy and data protection.

### **CISCO CANADA**

Cisco has been proudly operating in Canada since 1992. Our Canadian headquarters is located in downtown Toronto, and we have approximately 2,000 employees in 13 offices across the country. Canada is home to our Ottawa Development Centre in Kanata, one of Cisco’s four R&D centres across the globe and home to more than 400 of our top engineers. Canada is also home to our [Toronto Innovation Centre](#), one of only nine globally and Cisco’s only one in North America.

Our [Cisco Networking Academy](#) is delivering top-tier technology education to thousands of Canadian students at hundreds of academies, with St. Clair College in Windsor [recognized](#) in 2019 as the number one Cisco Networking Academy in all of North America.

Our [Country Digital Acceleration](#) (CDA) program has helped build a strategic partnership between Cisco and Canada through projects that align with national priorities and long-term economic goals. Just last year, the program announced a [\\$15 million investment](#) towards building Western Canada’s digital transformation through a range of job creation and skills projects.

Cisco is also extremely committed to mental health, not only by providing unlimited benefits to support mental health for our employees in Canada but also by providing the tools and technologies that enable clinicians to deliver secure, virtual care. We are especially proud of our work with the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health (CAMH) in Toronto which has [rapidly expanded its use of Webex technology](#) to support virtual mental health services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are proud of our [Connected North program](#) that is helping address the socio-economic gap between Indigenous communities and the rest of Canada. We do this by working in partnership with Indigenous community leaders, schools and service providers, using our high-definition video-conferencing technology to provide live, customized, virtual education and mental health and wellness support to students in remote, Indigenous communities. The program currently supports 65 northern schools in three territories and five provinces, with more than 15,000 Indigenous youth participating every year. Over 208 content providers deliver real time, interactive sessions including virtual field trips, mentoring, skills training and development, with a focus on building resilience and success in school and in life. And in response to COVID-19, [Connected North @ Home](#) was launched to continue to serve students from



our partner communities wherever possible during school closures. The program is currently serving 5,500 families in northern communities offering four sessions daily. Cisco has led an ecosystem of partners to deploy technology to ensure K-12 students in the north have access to the same opportunities as those in the south. Over ten years, we have built a robust network of partners and a secure collaboration technology solution scaling across the north, ensuring high quality video and audio connectivity in remote regions of Canada. We believe this gives Cisco unique perspective and capabilities to help ensure all Canadians and parliamentarians, no matter where they are located, can participate fully in their democratic institutions.

Finally, Cisco has a long-standing relationship with both the Parliament and the Government of Canada, providing high-quality and secure technology solutions including data centre, networking, cloud security and unified communications technologies and tools. This relationship has existed for nearly three decades and is built on trust and a deep understanding of the customer by Cisco.

### **CISCO'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19**

Cisco is proud to have [committed \\$225 million](#) to support both the global and local response to COVID-19, with a focus on healthcare, education, government response, and critical technology. Part of this will go to the United Nations Foundation's COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund as well as to the World Health Organization's (WHO) worldwide efforts to help prevent, detect, and manage the spread of COVID-19.

Through our Country Digital Acceleration (CDA) program, we are providing funding for governments and businesses to rapidly deploy COVID-19-related technology solutions. A great example is Cisco's [partnership with the University of Alberta that helped create MedROAD](#), a virtual clinic that uses artificial intelligence and cloud-based computing to assess patients in their own homes.

And finally, in response to the pandemic, Cisco has been working around the clock with businesses and governments globally to get remote workforces up and running by quickly expanding capacity, protecting workers and their privacy, and keeping data secure. As part of this we have made available, free of charge, many of our [security](#) and [collaboration tools](#).

### **CISCO WEBEX FOR VIRTUAL LEGISLATURES**

As a result of COVID-19, the demand for collaboration technology, like our video-conferencing tool Webex, has skyrocketed. Most days, Webex hosts more than four million meetings, and in April 2020 we hosted more than 20 billion meeting minutes.

As the largest enterprise security company in the world, we are uniquely positioned to protect organizations in making the transition to remote work, including parliaments and legislatures around the world. Our guiding principle has always been [Collaboration Without Compromise](#) – it's our firm commitment to all of our customers.

When customers choose Webex, they are getting not only the biggest collaboration platform in the world, trusted by 95% of the Fortune 500 companies, they are also getting the industry's [most secure collaboration platform](#), including:

- Strong encryption, compliance, visibility and control
- Secure meeting settings by default
- Strong passwords by default for every meeting



- Messages, files, whiteboards, and actions stay safe
- End-to-end encryption for data in use, in transit and at rest with a key the customer controls
- Cisco's software development lifecycle (SDLC) that ensures products are developed with security built-in as a foundational element
- Cisco's independent Security and Trust organization, separate from the product engineering organization, with governance over Webex
- Policy for immediate remediation and proactive disclosure of all security vulnerabilities

Cisco also employs strong privacy practices, including performance of a privacy impact assessment designed to ensure appropriate privacy features are built into Cisco Webex from the start. This means that Webex can be used in compliance with [Canadian privacy laws](#) including PIPEDA and other provincial laws.

We believe this is why Cisco solutions such as Webex are being used for remote work and virtual meetings by world leaders and governments in every region across the globe – including in Canada by local municipalities, provincial bodies and the Government of Canada.

And while many heads of state and governments are embracing Webex, so are legislatures – including parliaments, congresses, and municipal councils around the world. We are seeing Webex used to convene town halls, run committee hearings, conduct debates, consider legislation, and even vote remotely and securely in countries such as France, Brazil, and the United States.

We understand legislatures have their own unique needs and processes. We therefore have six guiding principles in our approach to supporting the virtual functioning of legislatures:

1. **Authentication & Security:** Building a 360 view of security for the proceedings, including SSO and FedRAMP authorization in the US.
2. **Join Simplicity:** Providing a simple way to join from laptop, mobile device, tablet or Cisco endpoint.
3. **Speaker Controls:** Giving speakers/hosts the ability to recognize speakers, place them on video, and mute and unmute participants.
4. **Sharing:** Enabling documents to be shared securely on screen for amending and for expert hearings.
5. **Voting:** Polling including customizable questions, with the future consideration to have named or anonymous vote counts.
6. **Streaming:** Providing the ability to stream proceedings to live and recorded media broadcasts, social media and websites
7. **Interpretation:** Providing the ability for participants to leverage Simultaneous Interpretation (including sign language) as part of the meeting experience.

Based on these guiding principles, our Webex solution today provides the following capabilities to legislatures:

#### CISCO WEBEX CAPABILITIES FOR LEGISLATURES

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**Member Authentication:** SSO and authentication for committee members

**External Participant:** Authentication for experts in hearings (non-members/staff)

**Audio Identification:** Dial-out to audio participants



**Moderator Control:** Ability for moderator (e.g., Chair, committee clerk or staff, etc) to mute/unmute committee members

**Interpretation:** Ability to choose between hearing audio from the Floor or English/French with Interpretation, tying into the House of Commons' existing Virtual Interpretation platform

**Verbal Roll Call:** Ability for designated committee clerk to verbally take a roll call vote and announce results

**"Hard" Muted Attendees:** Ability for staff to join, but not able to speak - moderator controlled muting/unmuting

**Hand Raise:** To "be recognized" click the hand raise button

**Screenshare:** Moderated controlled screensharing capability (document sharing, images)

**Closed Captioning:** Closed captioning/transcription through a 3<sup>rd</sup> party

**Accessibility Features:** Includes ADA Compliant features such as Keyboard Shortcut navigation as well as Screen Reader and Low Vision support

**Cisco End Points:** Purpose built devices providing a simple and intuitive high-quality user experience to facilitate joining and participating in sessions, particularly over prolonged periods of time

**Links Available:** Share links of amendments in chat window

**Recording:** Record sessions for archive or streaming

**Amendment:** Member shares screen with amendment language, and shares link to document

**Vote Counting/Recording:** Real-time tally through polling capability

**Open to Public:** Can be an open public meeting, where only certain individuals can speak; ideal for townhalls

**Live Media Broadcast / Livestream:** Feed provided for live media broadcast and/or livestreamed to a social channel, such as LinkedIn Live, Facebook and YouTube

And through our engagement with legislative bodies around the world, we are constantly refining and expanding existing features while developing new solutions to support specific needs as they are identified.

## **CONCLUSION**

During this unprecedented time, remote working collaboration tools – such as Cisco Webex – have become a lifeline for businesses, governments, and communities to stay connected and productive.

Working remotely and meeting virtually is becoming the new normal, and our democratic institutions must have the right tools to continue meeting if we are to solve this crisis, protect our shared communities, and support the economy.

As the provider of the biggest and most secure collaboration platform in the world, along with Cisco's long-standing relationship with the Parliament of Canada, as well as with our unique experience in Canada's north, we believe there is no company – or team – more committed than Cisco to help ensure all Canadians, no matter where they are located, can participate in and remain connected to their Parliament.