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Op-ed: Like him or not, Tom Corbett did what he said he'd do

President Obama will announce new initiatives this week designed to bolster online security and improve access to cyberspace, White House officials said Saturday.

In a series of speeches, Mr. Obama will call for better safeguards against identity theft, improved privacy protection, enhanced cybersecurity for the government and private companies, and increased access to high-speed broadband connections across the country. A White House official said in a statement to reporters that the president would "lay out a series of legislative proposals and executive actions that will be in his State of the Union that will tackle identity theft and privacy issues, cybersecurity, and access to the Internet."

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The president's proposals are part of what the White House calls "SOTU Spoilers," a series of announcements that preview Mr. Obama's State of the Union address, which he is scheduled to deliver to a

joint session of Congress on Jan. 20. Presidents typically keep State of the Union proposals secret until the last minute, hoping to maximize the political power of the speech. But the White House decided to reverse that strategy, rolling out proposals in the hope of building momentum for the address. "I wanted to give you a little preview," Mr. Obama told an audience on Friday in Knoxville, Tenn., where he unveiled a plan to make the first two years of community college free for all students. "Don't tell anybody I said this. I'm giving you the inside scoop."

In recent days, Mr. Obama also discussed the recovery of the auto industry in Detroit and announced housing proposals during a speech in Phoenix. Officials said he would unveil his high-tech proposals in remarks next week at the Federal Trade Commission and the National Cybersecurity and Communications Integration Center. Mr. Obama will also travel to Iowa, where he will discuss access to high-speed broadband.

Concern about cybersecurity and safety has increased after the recent hack on Sony Pictures, which the United States government says was the work of the North Korean government. Mr. Obama has tried for three years to persuade Congress to pass a cybersecurity bill, and administration officials hope that the severity of the Sony attack and the hacking of retailers like Home Depot and Target will change the political dynamic. But businesses are still wary of new federal requirements, and Mr. Obama now faces a Congress controlled by Republicans who are skeptical of his proposals.

Saturday's announcement by the White House also did not make clear whether the president intended to confront some of the toughest questions raised by the recent

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hacking: When should the federal government step in to fight hackers? And is America's own use of cyberweapons a complicating factor? The White House also said Vice President Joseph R. Biden Jr. would travel next week to Norfolk, Va., to announce new funding to help train people to work in the field of cybersecurity. – **New York Times**

Are reports of 10 million or more broadband-only homes in the U.S. an overstatement? At this week's Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, numerous media executives cited the proliferation of homes that have broadband but no pay-TV video service as the reason for launching over-the-top video services. For example, CBS chief executive Les Moonves said that "it was the realization that there are 10 million broadband-only homes" that caused him to pull the trigger on launching streaming services CBS All-Access and CBSN.

Meanwhile, Roger Lynch, CEO of Dish Network's new OTT operation, Sling Television, put the broadband-only tally at around 15 million. However, a new report from MoffettNathanson, released Thursday, puts Nielsen's sample of broadband homes at only around 2.7 percent. That would work out to just over 3 million of the just over 115 million total homes it counts. The broadband-only constituency is certainly growing: Nielsen pegged it at only around 0.5 percent of homes when it first started including broadband-only users in its sampling in September 2013. The benchmark only stood at 1.5 percent as recently as January 2015. – **Fierce Cable**

Florida Gov. Rick Scott is moving ahead with his inauguration promise to try to lure businesses from other states. Scott said on Friday he will visit Philadelphia in late February where he will meet with business leaders in an effort to convince them to leave Pennsylvania.

While announcing the visit, the Republican governor criticized incoming Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf. Scott contends Wolf will put in place tax hikes that will harm businesses and families in that state. During his inaugural address this week, Scott said he planned to visit several states in an effort to convince businesses to relocate to Florida. Scott's past effort to convince companies to move has drawn fire from other governors. Other chief executives have called Scott's efforts "crude" and "misleading." – **Associated Press**



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