

# A country divided needs innovative cybersecurity solutions

By Al Ogata

Cybersecurity is a team sport. With rapidly evolving cyberthreats, no one person has all the knowledge to design, build and maintain an effective security network. It takes multiple organizations with specialists in different domains to win. So, what happens if some of our best players can't show up for the game?

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security and its subordinate agencies, such as the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Transportation Security Agency, had to pull their players out of the game due to the lack of an approved budget. Disagreements over the heavy-handed approach to enforcement of immigration laws and the mass exodus or reassignment of skilled, experienced personnel have also poten-

tially damaged their ability to field a winning team.

Prior to the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln, in a speech to the Illinois Republican State Convention, said, "A house divided against itself cannot stand." It was an ominous statement, spoken at one of the darkest times in our nation's history. It's a statement that unfortunately is also appropriate today. The current divisiveness weakens our nation, prevents us from fielding the best team, and distracts us from real threats.

We are today a house divided, at odds with ourselves about things we once took for granted as being true and for what it means to be an American. Should we be proud to be descendants of immigrants? Should punishment fit the crime? Is justice truly blind?

A ray of hope emerges from the rest of President Lincoln's words.

## ISLAND VOICES



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**A sign marks the entrance to the Department of Homeland Security's headquarters in Washington, D.C., on March 15, 2024.**

"A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved — I do not expect the house to fall — but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or all the other."

History has shown that divisiveness is a temporary state that can be overcome, but only after we decide who we are and what we stand for. Replacing star players and establishing new ways to win

is possible, if we acknowledge that the rules of the game have changed and that new alignments need to be formed. Previously, we could count on a resource-rich federal government partner; today we must take what federal agencies are able to give, and fill the gaps by expanding our roles at the state and local levels.

The changed playing field was evident at the recent Hawaii Corporate Security Symposium, which local nonprofit CyberHawaii hosted because the Department of

Homeland Security could not participate as the primary sponsor as it had done in the past. About 150 security professionals attended to hear local experts talk about trends and developments in the security field, clearly showing a need in the community.

At the symposium, Lt. Gov. Sylvia Luke spoke about Connect Kakou, a statewide digital broadband initiative that is continuing to improve access to the internet for all residents. Other speakers talked about the need for local businesses and organizations to get more involved in fighting cyberthreats, potentially through enhanced public-private partnerships, in order to protect Hawaii residents as they navigate the digital world.

Change is inevitable, and can seem daunting on the surface. But change also makes us stronger. By focusing on more positive activism at the local and state levels we can adapt to changes that are underway around us and establish a structure that protects the community and positions us to win in the long run — without dismantling everything that we've built.