

NEWS ALERT**PRIVACY & CYBERSECURITY**

Legislature Addresses Ransomware Threat With Criminal Penalties

By Dena M. Castricone | October 3, 2017

It is fitting that on the first day of Cybersecurity Awareness Month, new legislation takes effect regarding one of the most destructive types of malware. In response to the rapidly increasing rate of computer extortion cases, the Connecticut Legislature has joined several states in creating a statute specifically targeting ransomware. Ransomware is a type of malicious software that prevents access to information in a computer system until a ransom is paid.

“An Act Concerning Computer Extortion by Use of Ransomware” goes into effect on October 1, 2017. Under the Act, the use of ransomware is a class E felony, which provides for up to three years of imprisonment, a fine of \$3,500, or both. Previously, computer extortion was prosecuted under established statutes regarding computer crimes, computer-related offenses, and extortion, as well as the penalties associated with those crimes.

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