WASHINGTON -- President Barack Obama’s cybersecurity review has ignited turf battles inside the White House, with economic adviser Lawrence Summers weighing in to prevent what he sees as a potential threat to economic growth, according to people familiar with the deliberations.

During the presidential campaign, Mr. Obama said he would appoint a cybersecurity adviser who would report directly to him on efforts to secure U.S. computer networks against spies, criminals and terrorists.

However, a White House review of cybersecurity policy has produced spirited debate on how high the adviser should rank and who should have veto power over his or her moves. A senior administration official called the debate an example of "creative tension," adding: "Far from being concerned about creative tension, I think this president and this team welcomes it...because, quite frankly, we've got to get this right."

Mr. Summers is arguing that his National Economic Council should "co-lead" the issue with the National Security Council, which was originally envisioned as housing the cybersecurity office, people familiar with the debate said. Mr. Summers's council, joined by the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, worries that regulation or other limits could tie companies in red tape and hamper a recovery.

NSC officials, including Deputy National Security Adviser John Brennan, argue cybersecurity is fundamentally a national-security issue, these people said. They say the cybersecurity post should be part of the NSC and have authority to make decisions after consulting with other White House branches.

James Lewis, a cybersecurity specialist who has met with the review team, said the debate points to the trade-off between security and business interests.

Melissa Hathaway, who is leading the White House review, has argued publicly for a strong White House role in cybersecurity, but has shied away from specifics. "The White House must lead the way forward with leadership that draws upon the strength, advice and ideas of the entire nation," she told a conference last week.

A recent draft of the White House review team’s report said the cyber policy adviser would coordinate
are White House posts that report to both the NSC and National Economic Council.

Mr. Summers's staff is also seeking to edit the report's language about vulnerabilities of financial institutions to play down the threat to banks, arguing that the Treasury department has the problem under control, said one person close to the drafting.

Officials in the science and technology office say it has the authority to protect communications infrastructure in an emergency and craft technology policy.

Officials at the science and technology office declined to comment. A representative of Mr. Summers referred questions to the NSC.

Congress is moving ahead on cybersecurity. On Thursday, the chairmen of the House and Senate homeland security committees introduced legislation to require the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to set cybersecurity standards for power companies and to allow it to issue emergency orders if a cyber threat is imminent.

That measure followed two others introduced earlier this week on the electric grid and a proposed White House cybersecurity office. Cybersecurity experts say they expect some version of these or related bills to become law.

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