

HTTP/1.1 Request Smuggling Defense using Cryptographic Message Binding

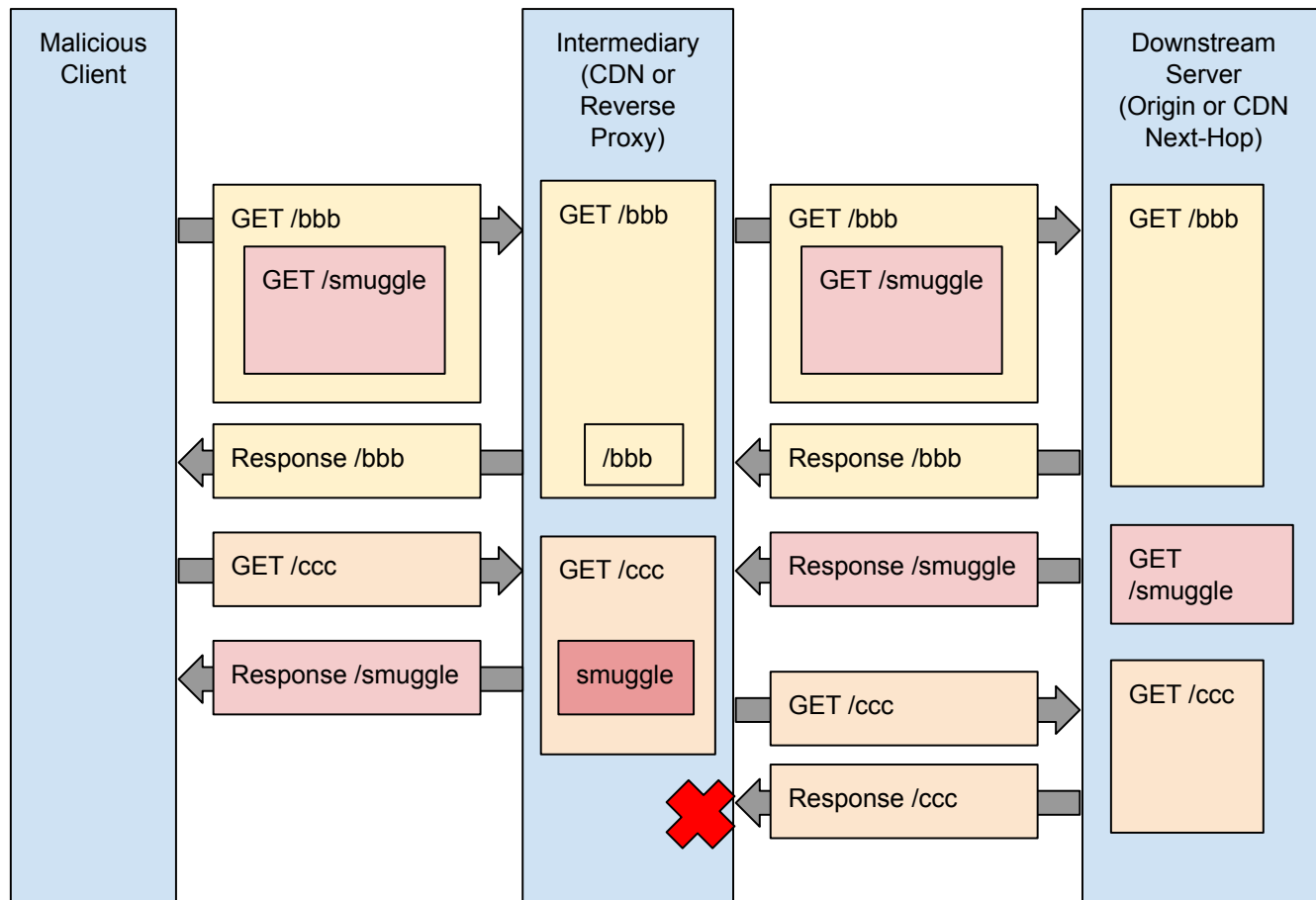
Erik Nygren <erik+ietf@nygren.org>

Akamai Technologies

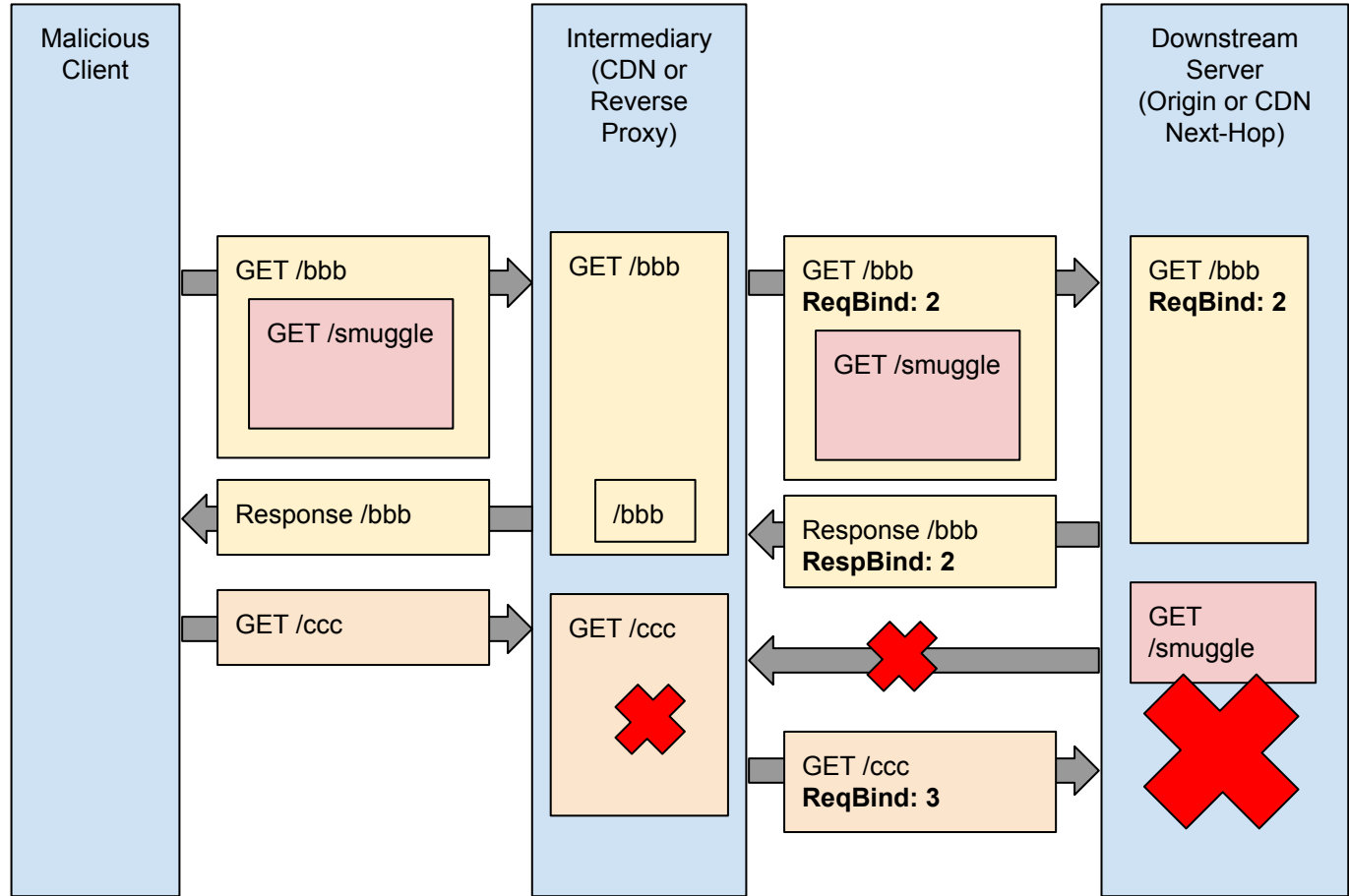
IETF 124 Montreal — Nov 5, 2025

<https://datatracker.ietf.org/doc/html/draft-nygren-httpbis-http11-request-binding-00>

*Request Smuggling:
exploits
differences in
HTTP/1.1
implementations
to bypass
controls and
poison caches*



Idea: use an inband but protected signal to detect and fail when smuggling occurs.



- HTTP/1.1 will be with us for a long time to come
- Multiple vulnerabilities being found each year, especially impacting Intermediary=>OriginServer
- Draft proposes one proof-of-concept approach using TLS Exporters to protect Request Serial (equivalent of H2/H3 stream ID)

Properties of a solution

- Easy to implement, low-overhead
 - Auto-negotiates (to enable drop-in)
 - Protects request Serial (and perhaps other things)
 - Provides safeguards against “enough” attacks
-
- ***Is this a problem the WG and implementers are interested in solving?***