

**Opening Statement for Chair Cathy McMorris Rodgers
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology Markup
March 12, 2024**

(As Prepared for Delivery)

INTRO

Good afternoon, and thank you, Chairman Latta.

Today, we are marking up four important pieces of legislation that will secure communications networks from threats posed by the Chinese Communist Party and promote U.S. technological leadership.

I want to thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their work on these bills.

CHINA'S THREAT

China poses a significant threat to the security of our communications networks.

Companies with ties to the CCP operate in an environment tightly intertwined with the Chinese government, raising serious concerns about the level of influence and potential for exploitation by the CCP.

Under China's 2017 National Intelligence Law, these companies are required to support, provide assistance to, and cooperate with China's national intelligence work, wherever they operate, which could jeopardize equipment used in American communications networks.

Relying on these technologies comes with significant risk to our national security.

This isn't the first time we've worked to address these threats.

In 2020, we passed the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act to remove Huawei and ZTE entirely from our networks.

Yet more work is needed to thoroughly address these threats.

Vulnerabilities in consumer equipment, such as routers and drones, could be exploited by adversaries to spy on the public.

LEGISLATION

That's why I'm pleased that we are marking up Mr. Latta's ROUTERS Act, which would direct the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to study what consumer routers and modems pose security risks.

We are also considering legislation from Ms. Stefanik to add the drone manufacturer DJI . . .

. . . which also has ties to the CCP . . .

. . . to the Federal Communications Commission's Covered List, which would prevent these drones from operating in the United States.

We should also know when CCP-influenced companies have communications licenses and equipment authorizations in the United States...

... which is why today we are considering H.R. 2864.

This transparency is important to understanding which adversaries are present in our communications networks as well as the threat they pose.

Finally, we are marking up Ms. Matsui's Future Networks Act, which would direct the FCC to establish a 6G Task Force to develop a report on sixth-generation wireless technology.

Carriers are deploying 5G across the country, and we must look to the future and make sure we are leading the development of these emerging technologies.

This task force will ensure that the U.S., both industry and government, are doing what is needed to cement our leadership in 6G and win the future.

CONCLUSION

The United States faces exceedingly complex threats from China and other adversaries that require a comprehensive and coordinated response.

This response must include efforts to secure critical supply chains, protect our allies, strengthen cybersecurity defenses, and engage in strategic competition with China in key technologies.

Failure to address these challenges not only jeopardizes our economic competitiveness and national security but also risks ceding ground to an adversarial power intent on reshaping the global order in its favor.

That's why I'm proud of the impressive bills on today's agenda, which address these issues and continue the bipartisan tradition of the Energy and Commerce Committee.

I want to thank all of the sponsors and staff for their hard work, and I look forward to moving these bills to the full committee.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.