

Statement of Rep. Bill Posey (FL-08)
Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
Member Day Hearing
September 29, 2021

Chairwoman Eddie Bernice Johnson and Ranking Member Frank Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss with you an issue of significance to Florida, my district, and our nation: The threat of China. I urge the Committee to hold hearings and support legislation to address this threat. The House Science, Space, and Technology Committee needs to make sure that U.S. taxpayer dollars are focused on Americans and that agencies are pressed to put American companies first.

Back in March, this Committee approved amendments of mine to H.R. 144, the Supporting Early-Career Researchers Act. The amendments strengthen research opportunities for American students studying STEM and whose research has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. One amendment prioritizes American students, because this bill funded only a small fraction of STEM graduate students. This is important because American students generally have higher amounts of student loan debt. Without my amendment, some funding would have gone to Chinese students. It has since passed the House and awaits consideration by the Senate.

The Committee also considered H.R. 3593, the Department of Energy Science for the Future Act in June. One amendment that was adopted prohibits funds going to state-owned (Chinese) enterprises. It states that none of the funds authorized in H.R. 3593 can be used to award federal contracts, grants, or loans, to entities owned, controlled, or otherwise tied to a corporation based in a nonmarket economy country or foreign country of concern (i.e., China). The amendment would also prohibit funds from going to entities listed under the Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act of 2020. The bill has passed the House and awaits

consideration by the Senate.

H.R. 4609, the National Institute of Standards and Technology for the Future Act was amended to include an amendment to stop countries like China from gaming the system by co-opting and subverting international standards-setting bodies and placing the U.S. at a disadvantage. The amendment maintains U.S. participation in these bodies where appropriate, while providing guidance to the National Institute of Standards and Technology regarding how those bodies it participates in should operate with respect to Chinese participation. The foundation of all our work with international partners must include fairness for American companies. I urge this Committee retain this amendment language as the bill proceeds.

When this Committee considered the Budget Reconciliation bill, one of my amendments was adopted to protect the domestic solar industry. Specifically, it reinforces the importance of supporting technologies at all stages of the solar energy supply chains. Today the majority of the world's silicone is produced in China. To address this concern, the amendment directs the Department of Energy to encourage U.S. production of important materials, such as silicone, needed to help the domestic solar industry. This same amendment will also help the domestic semiconductor industry.

Unfortunately, the Committee failed to adopt an amendment to require the NASA Inspector General to establish an interagency task force of Inspectors General to investigate Chinese interference.

Our nation's space capabilities are critical to our economic competitiveness, national security, scientific discovery, technological advancement, and the survival of our species. So much of our modern-day life is dependent on space – making a bank transaction, for example, or even a phone call these days, requires using some type of space-faring technology. From GPS, to life-saving medical research, and advanced agriculture, hybrid car batteries, and even Posturepedic mattresses, our

investment in space, has spawned some truly amazing innovations, and has an ongoing, positive impact, on our nation, and the world.

It all started with the Gemini and Mercury missions, that led to the Apollo Missions. And we will continue to benefit from our accomplishments in space, when NASA returns to the Moon with Artemis, as a steppingstone to reaching Mars, and beyond.

The foundation for such a bold mission, is already being laid, but NASA must continue to lead the way forward, with a strong international partnership, that accomplishes the mission, and inspires the rest of the world. However, China is threatening with its Made in China 2025 and 2050 initiatives designed to surpass the U.S., particularly when it comes to space.

Space is the Ultimate Military High Ground, and whoever controls space, will control the destiny of the free world, and the degree to which freedom spreads, across the world.

The Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community report stated, “Beijing is working to match, or exceed, U.S. capabilities in space, to gain the military, economic, and prestige benefits, that Washington has accrued, from space leadership.” The same report expects a “Chinese space station, in low Earth orbit, to be operational between 2022 and 2024” ... and it “conducted, and plans to conduct, additional lunar exploration missions” ... China also “intends to establish a robotic research station, on the Moon, and later, an intermittently crewed lunar base.”

China also has plans to erode the U.S. military’s information advantage, by integrating its space services, and satellite communications, into its weapons, and command-and-control systems, according to the Annual Threat Assessment report.

According to the 2020 U.S. Defense Space Strategy report, China, and Russia, have weaponized space, as a means to reduce U.S., and allied partners', freedom of operations in space. The same report, claims China has tested, and proven, counterspace capabilities, that threaten U.S., and allied partners', satellites, and national security.

The U.S., and particularly our commercial space assets, face cyber-attacks, from bad actors: Russia and China, in particular. Foreign Governments like China have taken notice of the U.S. space launch market growth, and have begun to fund their own vehicles, to compete in the same market. Foreign launch companies are heavily subsidized from their national governments.

A strong domestic, commercial space industry, with supporting prime contractors, that have large, and diverse supplier networks, is in our national security interest. Another way to promote U.S. space launches, and our domestic space industry, is to simply get out of the way: to not impede progress, with unnecessary red tape.

The SARS-CoV-2 virus (COVID-19) has cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of Americans and killed millions worldwide that originated from China. It has disrupted the life of every American, causing unprecedented economic harm and costing Americans up to \$16 trillion by an estimate in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

With no other Committee in the House investigating the origins of COVID-19, the Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee did hold a hearing on the origins of COVID-19 in July. However, this Committee needs to hold a series of hearings on this subject. There are few subjects more pressing given the magnitude of the disruption and loss of life stemming from this pandemic.

Thank you very much for your consideration of my views, and I look forward to working with the Committee and my colleagues on these threats posed by China.