



Opening Statement of Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee Chairman Rich McCormick

As Prepared for Delivery

Investigations and Oversight Subcommittee Hearing
Assessing the Threat to U.S. Funded Research
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Our country is unique in that we attract the most brilliant minds around the world to study and learn here. This quality raises the bar domestically and has allowed us as a nation to be leaders of innovation. Unfortunately, this has also made us a target. Countries that do not play fair and want to thwart our intellectual property laws and other domestic protections are finding unique and ever-changing ways to acquire our innovations. This not only unfairly inflates the profitability of these foreign companies, but it also discourages and stifles progress at home.

America's innovation is threatened by carelessness and the prying eyes of our adversaries. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has made it clear they are taking an "all of country" approach to acquire sensitive information as early as possible and as quickly as possible. They have referred to the fruits of our innovation as "honey" and told the entirety of their country: researchers, professors, grad students, companies, and school children alike that they should "pick flowers in foreign lands to make honey in China." This is not only a quote, but a mantra by the CCP to their academic and commercial base.

The age of this quote and the number of times Congress has had hearings like this should underscore the fact that research security is not a new issue. For the last 20 years we as government have taken the issue seriously, especially as it applies to the CCP. U.S. taxpayers should not be subsidizing Chinese research and development, ever. Congress and the executive branch have made efforts, both legislative and administrative, to slow the leaks and combat the problem.

Despite research security being directly tied to our national security and advancement, our efforts seem to have achieved limited success.

We can look at the following opportunities for improvement:

- Starting with ourselves, we should review federal regulations that are both too "burdensome" and "lenient" at the same time.
- Researchers and research institutions are not diligent enough with mitigating threats of research security, we need new methods to ensure this accountability is enhanced and iterated on.
- Grant awards need to be paired with contractual mechanisms to ensure oversight is conducted and appropriate enforcement actions are taken on violators.

Our goal here today is to learn about the state of play and determine how we can adjust and do better. I fear that our nation's premier research institutions have been all-you-can-eat buffets

which our adversaries are using to consume untold numbers of innovative ideas. If this issue is not taken seriously here, we risk ceding our dominance in innovation and scientific research.

In today's hearing, I look forward to the witnesses' testimony informing the Committee on what steps we need to take next to reverse the current vulnerabilities.