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LIES, LAWFARE, AND LEVERAGE: THE CCP'S GASLIGHTING  
AND MANIPULATION TO MARGINALIZE TAIWAN

Wednesday, February 11, 2026

House of Representatives,

Select Committee on the Strategic Competition between  
the United States and the Chinese Communist Party,

Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:04 a.m., in Room 1310, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. John Moolenaar [chairman of the committee] presiding.

Chairman Moolenaar. Good morning.

I would like to welcome the new ranking member, Ro Khanna, to his new role on the committee. He has been an outstanding member of this committee, and I look forward to working together as we have in the past.

In this committee there is a long history of bipartisan work being done. The strength of this committee, just like our Nation's support of Taiwan, is grounded in bipartisanship, and I hope that tradition will continue.

The staff on your side has been outstanding under the leadership of Raja Krishnamoorthi, with a track record of doing tremendous work together with our team, and we look forward to working together in the months ahead.

I also want to take a moment to welcome Ambassador Yui, Alexander Yui from Taiwan, who is joining us this morning.

Welcome, Ambassador.

That illustrates both the bipartisan nature of this relationship and the steadfast relationship between the United States and Taiwan.

One of the committee's most recent bipartisan efforts was the "Ten More for Taiwan" report we released in December which focused on how we can strengthen our Nation's security partnership with Taiwan.

The report, coincidentally, was released the same week the Trump administration approved \$11 billion in arms sales to Taiwan, demonstrating a continued commitment to peace through strength in the Taiwan Strait.

The sale upset the CCP and it responded with aggressive military drills meant to intimidate Taiwan and its democratically elected government. We are all fully aware of the threat that a PLA

military invasion of Taiwan poses.

Today, in this hearing, the Select Committee on China will examine the CCP's nonmilitary aggression against Taiwan.

Taiwan is a vibrant democratic society, a crucial part of world supply chains, and a close partner of the United States.

But make no mistake, even in the absence of a military invasion, the CCP has no interest in peace. It seeks to dominate Taiwan and the freedom-loving people who live there. It wishes to subject the people of Taiwan to the same loss of freedom and human rights the world has seen occur in Hong Kong where just this week a court issued the tragic decision to give Jimmy Lai what is essentially a death sentence.

Under the leadership of Xi Jinping, the CCP is willing to use any weapon it can to threaten Taiwanese society and security. Through economic coercion, legal manipulation, the exploitation of international organizations, and lies about the history, China seeks to isolate Taiwan and draw it closer into its orbit.

The party has a clear plan: weaken Taiwan's resolve, undermine its democratic institutions, and manipulate the information the people of Taiwan see and hear.

The CCP's economic and trade coercion has forced targeted export bans, such as a ban on Taiwanese pineapples, import inspections, tourism restrictions, and the mislabeling of Taiwan by international companies, including airlines and hotel chains. It launches millions of cyber attacks each day on the island. It collabs local media and business leaders and deploys misinformation and deepfakes to target Taiwanese politicians and the island's sovereignty.

The CCP even wants the world to believe that it has a historic tie to Taiwan, but never in history has the CCP ruled Taiwan.

The CCP's gaslighting and gray zone tactics reflect a doctrine of incremental aggression. They destabilize Taiwan's democratic government and allow China to shift the balance of power

without triggering formal war.

If left unchecked, these tactics risk hollowing out the island's democracy long before a single PLA soldier ever sets foot on Taiwan.

Now, as America prepares to mark its 250 anniversary next year and Taiwan approaches 30 years since its first direct Presidential election, our democracies remind the entire world of one crucial fact: Democracy is not an accident, it is a choice, and one that is renewed by every generation.

This shared commitment is exactly why Congress continues to strengthen its ties with Taiwan across every domain -- diplomatically, economically, and with peace through strength.

The coming years will be decisive in shaping Beijing's calculations. We cannot afford complacency and our message must remain clear: America's commitment to peace, stability, and Taiwan's self-determination is bipartisan and unwavering.

That is why Congress will act decisively alongside our allies to deter CCP coercion, defend democratic values, and ensure a free and open Indo-Pacific.

And with that, I now recognize my friend, the ranking member, Raja Krishnamoorthi, for his opening statement.

[The statement of Chairman Moolenaar follows:]

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Mr. Khanna. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you to the witnesses for being here this morning.

Thank you, Representative Yiu, for being here as well. We appreciate it.

I am grateful to serve as the ranking member alongside you, Mr. Chairman, and look forward to working with you. I have appreciated on a personal level your friendship and graciousness and appreciate the bipartisan trips you have led to Japan, South Korea, and other places. I look forward to working with you on a bipartisan basis on a number of key issues, and certainly with civility and respect and personal respect.

We also must deal, though, in some hard truths, and I will be using this role to call out some of our failed policies on China.

We sit here today at a dangerous time for Taiwan. Unfortunately, this is not simply because of coercion from the Chinese Communist Party, as the chairman eloquently articulated. It is also because of a White House policy of appeasement where President Trump is calling into question decades of bipartisan support for Taiwan.

The President has been more eager to make trade deals with America's strategic competitors than strengthen ties with our longstanding allies and friends. He treats Taiwan as, quote, "a bargaining chip" in trade negotiations with China.

Last year, he forced Taiwan's President to cancel a trip to the United States to avoid angering China during these negotiations.

He called the U.S.-Taiwan relationship a mere, quote, "insurance policy," where Taiwan pays for U.S. protection and allegedly gives us nothing in return, as if the aspirations of the people of Taiwan do not matter.

Most egregiously, when asked if Xi might attack Taiwan, President Trump said, quote, "That is up to him."

Just last month, the Trump administration's National Defense Strategy did not include a single

mention of Taiwan, nor did it mention China's growing aggression toward the island democracy -- or, for that matter, towards any other ally or partner.

And I am not the only one to notice this. According to official Chinese Communist Party media, Trump's NDS showed that the United States is now, quote, "too lazy to even pretend to support Taiwan" and that it would eventually, quote, "abandon" Taiwan.

To his credit, President Trump did approve an important arms sale to Taiwan last December, although he previously held it up during last year's trade negotiations, which further fed Beijing's narrative about U.S. unreliability.

His administration is now reportedly considering another arms sale to Taiwan, which China is now pressuring the President to cancel. Whether or not the sale goes through will be an important test of President Trump's willingness to stand up for Taiwan.

At the same time, the President's administration would have you believe that China's invasion of Taiwan was inevitable.

Why? He views a world where might makes right and great powers can dominate their neighborhood. It is why he has not stood up forcefully to Vladimir Putin's war of aggression against Ukraine and for Ukraine's sovereignty.

The surest way to maintain peace is through deterrence, but the President has undermined the very relationships that are critical to deterrence.

In his failed trade negotiations, President Trump slashed his tariffs on China to 10 percent, a far lower rate than what he has forced on many of our closest allies, like India, Japan, Canada, and South Korea.

I can tell you firsthand how important Taiwan is as someone who has visited there. I can tell you how important TSMC's investments are in every sector across America.

Taiwan is an economic powerhouse and a vibrant democracy of 23 million people worth continuing to stand by. It is not a card to play in a trade negotiation.

As I said after my first visit there, "Nothing about Taiwan without Taiwan."

Assisting Taiwan in its strong defense needs to be coupled with listening to its leaders and people, and effective deterrence strategy depends on credibility and consistency.

As our former chair, Mike Gallagher, said, "Xi Jinping has made it clear that he has aggressive designs on Taiwan, by force if necessary. We in the United States need to protect Taiwan and deter an invasion before it is too late."

President Trump is not engaged in that kind of deterrence. He must be grounded in our One-China Policy, the Taiwan Relations Act, and the Six Assurances.

He clearly has a soft spot for Xi Jinping, who he said just last month has done "amazing" things. But was he talking about the illegal dumping of goods into U.S. markets, extreme government subsidies, and other unfair market practices that are killing U.S. manufacturing jobs?

In 2025 our trade deficit is projected to be higher than when he took office. China's trade surplus is projected to be higher than when he took office. That is why, as I said, President Trump's China policy is the "art of the squeal," not the "art of the deal."

We will be leading a "forgotten Americans" tour in May to speak to our farmers, our port workers, and our factory workers who continue to be shafted. Congress has continued its strong leadership on Taiwan policy, led in part by this committee, which has been a bastion of bipartisan support for Taiwan, including our chairman. This committee's work will be important ahead of Trump's meeting with Xi in April.

Let me be clear: Any deal with China must put America's workers and families first and include a clear commitment to Taiwan's peace and stability. Any other outcome would make for yet another disastrous summit with Xi and put America's economy and our friends in Taiwan in greater jeopardy.

Thank you, and I yield back.

[The statement of Mr. Khanna follows:]

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Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you, Ranking Member. And I may have mistakenly referred to you as Raja Krishnamoorthi earlier in my comments. So I apologize. I got used to Raja being here with us.

Mr. Khanna. He is a good guy.

Chairman Moolenaar. He is a good guy.

I appreciate your comments.

I will say, as this committee focuses on what we can do in a bipartisan way, I look forward to that. I will just object to some of the points you made.

I think if you look at the President's commitment in terms of arms sales, it is about three times what any other previous President has done with respect to Taiwan.

And when you look at the investment that is happening, \$500 billion Taiwanese investment in the United States, when you look at the United States being the highest market, the strongest market for Taiwanese goods, and a trade deal being negotiated with the second in command coming here to sign a trade deal, I recognize there are differences in viewpoints of administrations, but I want our focus to be on what we can do together as a country to make sure we support Taiwan.

And with that, I would like to just invite our witnesses. We have got a tremendous group of witnesses here today, and I want to introduce those.

First, let me just start with Julian Ku, the Maurice A. Dean Distinguished Professor of Constitutional Law at Hofstra University. Mr. Ku's scholarship focuses on the relationship between constitutional and international law. He is a leading expert on global lawfare and how the CCP works to exploit the international legal order to promote its own agenda and to silence and isolate Taiwan.

We also have here today Ms. Shirley Kan, an independent specialist in Indo-Pacific security affairs. Ms. Kan is a senior adjunct fellow at the Pacific Forum, a founding member of the advisory board of the Global Taiwan Institute, and has served in government and in many roles, including here

on the Hill with the Congressional Research Service and within the Defense Attache Office at the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. She is a leading global expert on U.S. policy toward Taiwan.

And finally, we have Dr. Mira Rapp-Hooper, a visiting senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. Dr. Rapp-Hooper most recently served as senior director for East Asia and Oceania on the National Security Council for President Joe Biden where she helped shape the administration's Indo-Pacific strategy while managing key initiatives, such as the Quad, the U.S.-Japan Trilateral, and other regional economic and security frameworks.

I want to welcome all of our witnesses today and thank you for being here this morning.

Mr. Ku, you are now recognized for your opening remarks.

**STATEMENTS OF MR. JULIAN KU, MAURICE A. DEAN DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF  
CONSTITUTIONAL LAW, HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY; MS. SHIRLEY KAN, INDEPENDENT SPECIALIST IN  
INDO-PACIFIC SECURITY AFFAIRS; AND DR. MIRA RAPP-HOOPER, VISITING SENIOR FELLOW,  
BROOKINGS INSTITUTION**

**STATEMENT OF JULIAN KU**

Mr. Ku. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Ranking Member and members of this committee. I appreciate the opportunity to testify about the People's Republic of China's use of lawfare against Taiwan.

My central point is this: The People's Republic of China is using law not merely to justify force, but to substitute for it. Through legal and quasi-legal means, Beijing is attempting to coerce Taiwan, its supporters, and even foreign nationals, even U.S. citizens, below the threshold of armed conflict.

If U.S. policy focuses only on deterring invasion, it will miss how Beijing is already changing the status quo against Taiwan and in its favor.

Lawfare is the strategic use of legal rules, institutions, and processes to achieve political and military objectives. While the term emerged in U.S. debates during the war on terrorism, it has long been incorporated into Chinese military doctrine.

A defining feature of contemporary PRC lawfare is asymmetry. Beijing exploits the openness and independence of foreign legal systems, like the United States', as well as international institutions, while remaining largely insulated from reciprocal legal pressure at home.

This matters for Taiwan, because PLA doctrine does not treat war and peace as binary states. Instead, it emphasizes continuous struggle across legal, political, economic, and psychological

domains.

Within that framework, lawfare is not merely preparatory to military action, it can be a substitute for it. If Beijing can constrain Taiwan's international participation, delegitimize its democratic institutions, intimidate its leadership in civil society, and deter foreign engagement through legal pressure, it can achieve its strategic objectives without firing a shot. Ignoring these tactics because they are nonmilitary concedes a critical domain of competition.

Most prominently, the PRC persistently mischaracterizes international law by claiming that U.N. General Assembly Resolution 2758 resolves the questions of Taiwan's sovereignty.

In fact, as this Congress has recognized, the resolution addressed only which government would represent China at the United Nations. It did not determine Taiwan's international legal status.

Nevertheless, through sustained legal pressure and other diplomatic campaigns, Beijing has induced U.N. bodies and affiliated organizations to treat Taiwan as, quote, "a province of China," purely as a matter of administrative practice, but which has transformed a contested legal claim into a bureaucratic norm.

Similarly, the PRC asserts that its "One China Principle" is a binding rule of international law which conflates diplomatic recognition with legal obligation, and it categorically rejects the applicability of the principle of self-determination to the people of Taiwan, claiming the people of Taiwan are not, quote, "a people."

PRC domestic law reinforces this strategy. Most recently, PRC authorities have expanded criminal liability for so-called "Taiwan independence" activities through judicial interpretations and policy documents. These measures criminalize mere political advocacy, including speech, occurring entirely outside of the PRC, and explicitly asserts extraterritorial jurisdiction.

These are not empty threats. PRC authorities have issued arrest warrants, wanted notices, and imposed sanctions against Taiwanese officials, political leaders, and online influencers for

conduct occurring wholly outside of China.

These actions serve classic lawfare functions. They intimidate civil society in Taiwan and delegitimize Taiwan's democratic leadership.

PRC law also targets foreign nationals who support Taiwan or oppose China. As a leading scholar of Chinese law has observed, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion, if you analyze Chinese law, that any advocacy of Taiwan independence or support for Taiwan by anyone anywhere can be treated as a criminal offense under PRC law. My comments just now could be a criminal offense under PRC law.

Even if it is unenforceable, it can impose reputational and professional costs and chill lawful and necessary speech.

I conclude with recommendations for how the U.S. can respond.

First, the U.S. should reaffirm publicly and clearly that Taiwan's international legal status has not been resolved under international law and that the PRC is mischaracterizing Resolution 2758.

The U.S. should use its diplomatic pressure to ensure that international institutions stop referring to Taiwan as a, quote, "province of China," even if it is just for administrative purposes.

And the U.S. should refuse cooperation with PRC legal actions that target Taiwan's democratic governance. And even more importantly, it needs to work to push allies to refuse any cooperation with PRC law enforcement authorities.

And finally, it needs to ensure that court judgments from the People's Republic of China, which form part of its course of political strategy, are not recognized or enforced in U.S. Federal or State courts.

To conclude, we must remember that effective deterrence must deny not only invasion but coercive success below the threshold of armed conflict. Recognizing and countering the PRC's asymmetric welfare is essential to preserving stability in the Taiwan Strait.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The statement of Mr. Ku follows:]

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Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you.

Ms. Kan, you may proceed. Thank you.

## **STATEMENT OF SHIRLEY KAN**

Ms. Kan. My name is Shirley Kan, independent specialist who mainly worked for Congress at CRS. I am very pleased to testify at this hearing today partly because "gaslighting" is the term that I used in an article where I pointed out that the Communist Party of China, or CPC, has been gaslighting the world about Taiwan.

Why is this important? This distortion of reality is political warfare.

What is the bottom line up front? It is critical to counter this political warfare. This means showing Xi Jinping that his dream of national rejuvenation with its requirement to attack and annex Taiwan will become a nightmare.

However, there are issues about the Trump administration and about Taiwan's opposition giving leverage to Xi Jinping.

Deterrence focuses on the first island chain. However, the unspoken part of that is that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

Another unspoken point is that China might try to coerce Taiwan and other countries, but that coercion is not very effective. Big and small countries have and can stand strong.

However, the opposition parties in Taiwan, the KMT and the TPP, have been undermining deterrence. They have undermined and blocked President Lai's special budget in the legislature.

The main opposition party, the Kuomintang, or KMT, even helps the CPC's propaganda on so-called "national rejuvenation" and its United Front tactics.

So I have a question -- actually, two questions -- for the KMT, the Kuomintang.

Does KMT secretly stand for Kill Me in Taiwan? Is it the Kill Me in Taiwan Party?

Two, can the KMT meet a challenge to write its own national defense strategy?

Now, I want to highlight the big lie, the big lie that is more than just diplomatic annoyance.

For years, Beijing's lawfare has been distorting U.N. General Assembly Resolution 2758. For years, I have called for the United States to just counter this big, this fake news, and just simply tell the truth.

Resolution 2758 did not determine Taiwan's status as part of China. In fact, it is so egregious that the resolution doesn't even mention Taiwan.

Now, China uses the U.S. warning of the PLA's possible attack in 2027. Palau's courageous President Whipps has explained how China uses this warning by telling countries like Palau: Now, 2027 is coming soon, and soon you won't have a partner, and if you don't denounce Taiwan and join with us now, you will be left out in the cold.

Now, still INDOPACOM Commander Paparo has emphasized that we should not fixate on the date of August 1, 2027. Why? Because defense must be strong today, in 2027, and in 2028.

Now, in this context, the congressional role is critical for oversight of the President and this attention to Taiwan.

On decisions.

There is global uncertainty about the President's policies from day-to-day. I want to highlight that the TRA does not permit the President to decide alone to deal with Taiwan.

On arms sales, I am concerned that the President is going back to the broken process of so-called freezes in arms sales to Taiwan so that they are all sent up for congressional notification on one day, like what happened on December 17, in one so-called package, instead of routine, regular notifications to Congress, as Congress is allowed to do.

On strategies.

The National Security Strategy does not cite the law of the land the Taiwan Relations Act. The National Defense Strategy does not mention Taiwan or the TRA. In fact, the Pentagon's Under Secretary for Policy, Elbridge Colby, just spoke in late January and he talked about a stable

relationship with China.

But I ask, how can he say that the Trump administration respects China's proud history with its Tiananmen crackdown, genocide of Uyghurs, and the 20-year sentence for Hong Kong's Jimmy Lai?

So in conclusion, I am confident that many in the United States urge the ruling and opposition parties to work on a bipartisan basis, just as our Congress works on a bipartisan basis, to protect the peace and prosperity of Taiwan, especially as we proactively prepare for the timeline looking towards 2027 and 2028.

I don't have time in this opening statement to get into those details, but I am happy to be here today. Thank you so much.

[The statement of Ms. Kan follows:]

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Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you, Ms. Kan.

And, Dr. Rapp-Hooper, the floor is yours.

#### **STATEMENT OF MIRA RAPP-HOOPER**

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. Chairman Moolenaar, Ranking Member Khanna, distinguished members of the House Select Committee on China, thank you for including me in this important hearing today.

Since its inception, this committee has played a critical role in providing bipartisan oversight and making recommendations that have strengthened U.S. policy towards China and in support of Taiwan.

We are at the beginning of what can be the most consequential year in U.S.-China relations in recent history. The world is looking to the leadership of Congress and this committee to signal with resolve and clarity the bipartisan U.S. support for Taiwan that is necessary to maintain its status and its security.

As I outline in my written testimony, the PRC's use of peacetime coercion against Taiwan is vastly increasing in scope and scale in the military, information, economic, and cyber domains.

The PRC's purpose is clear: to demoralize the people on Taiwan so that they conclude that their status quo is untenable and they must submit to the PRC.

But despite this unrelenting and accelerating pressure, the Taiwan people are resolved. They increasingly see themselves as Taiwanese, hold unfavorable views of the PRC, oppose unification with China, and strongly support the status quo.

Efforts by the United States to rally like-minded partners to Taiwan support have also paid off. Over the course of the Biden administration, my colleagues and I worked energetically to ensure that American allies from the Indo-Pacific to Europe understood the stakes of a potential Taiwan contingency and were increasingly willing to assume risk to support Taiwan and the status quo.

These were not diplomatic niceties. This was a deliberate effort to ensure that Beijing would have to look beyond Taipei and Washington to make its calculations about potential economic, political, and military responses to a Chinese attack on Taiwan.

And these efforts were largely successful. Nowhere is this clearer than in Prime Minister Takaichi Sanae's comments before the Japanese Diet that a Chinese attack on Taiwan could constitute a survival-threatening situation to Japan.

But Taiwan and our allies' resolve cannot be taken for granted. Both are predicated on a status quo that must be backstopped by a clear and consistent United States.

This makes the PRC's latest Taiwan tactics noteworthy. Over the course of the last several months, it has become evident that the PRC is attempting to shape U.S. policy towards Taiwan through ongoing trade negotiations.

The PRC's approach appears to be at least twofold.

First, to degrade or delay American security assistance to Taiwan by objecting to arms sales and defense dialogues.

And second, to push for changes to U.S. declaratory policy on Taiwan, advocating for language that the United States, quote, "opposes Taiwan independence," or, quote, "supports peaceful reunification."

The intent may be to ask for policy changes so specific that they do not trip a strong reaction from Congress or from the American public. But at a time when Taiwan is demonstrating a renewed commitment to its own defense and resilience, such a setback could not only demoralize the people on Taiwan, but drain political support from these vital efforts when there is absolutely no time to waste.

In the coming weeks, the Congress, with the leadership of this committee, can take decisive action to demonstrate that American policy towards Taiwan remains strong, bipartisan, and consistent.

In my written testimony, I share eight policy recommendations and will summarize just a few of them here.

First, Congress can reaffirm the Taiwan Relations Act and codify the Six Assurances as law. Congress should disabuse the PRC's attempt to connect Taiwan to trade talks on a bipartisan and bicameral basis and should pass a resolution reaffirming overwhelming support for the TRA and passing the Six Assurances Act into law.

Second, and relatedly, Congress should also codify the other essential elements of our Taiwan policy to limit the PRC's ability to reinterpret or relitigate these aspects of our policy.

A single resolution, for example, could list out all of the essential elements, including our One-China Policy, the TRA, Six Assurances, Taiwan Travel Act, support for peace and stability in the strait, opposition to unilateral changes to the status quo, and belief that Taiwan's future should be determined peacefully and consistent with the wishes of the Taiwan people.

This could serve as a basis for combating PRC disinformation and would reduce doubt in Taipei and other capitals that the PRC may be able to shape U.S. policy.

Third, Congress must strengthen Taiwan's ability to resist gray zone coercion given the onslaught of diversifying PRC tactics. This committee can work with the administration to prioritize area for gray zone support and insert a provision into the next NDAA that mandates a strategy for immediate execution.

Fourth, Congress should relatedly advance strategic support to Taiwan's Presidential election in 2028 and press the administration to support local elections in 2026.

Fifth, Congress can ensure that extreme PRC behavior does not become the routine by working with the executive to release statements and hold hearings every time the PRC undertakes a large-scale military exercise that surrounds Taiwan or begins an economic pressure campaign against an ally like Japan using Taiwan as pretext.

Sixth and finally, Congress should keep Taiwan's most powerful partners mobilized by asking

the administration to report on a classified basis its efforts with all Indo-Pacific and European allies on all issues related to Taiwan.

A stronger and more resilient Taiwan requires accelerated efforts to strengthen conventional deterrence as well as to respond to the PRC's daily accelerating use of peacetime coercion. But in this moment, Taiwan's security also requires a unified and unmistakable message from the U.S.

Congress: The longstanding bipartisan U.S. support for Taiwan endures.

I look forward to answering your questions.

[The statement of Ms. Rapp-Hooper follows:]

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Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you very much to all of our witnesses for their opening testimony.

I would like to now move to questions, and I would like to start with a few.

Ms. Kan, how is China attempting to distort history to limit Taiwan's relationship with the United States and other countries?

Ms. Kan. Well, distorting the history, it is amazing to me sometimes that China even tries to lecture us on our history. I mean, that is how egregious it can be almost to the point of, "Well, you had your Civil War."

But if you use that analogy, well, then the Communists were the real rebels and it was Taiwan, the Republic of China, that is the nationalist government. So they have flipped it around.

So that is one. We need to know our own history and not let China distort our history for us, which is pretty egregious.

The second thing is this constant refrain of, "Oh, well, China has suffered this 100 years of humiliation."

Well, we also need to know our own history, that we were not part of that, and that, in fact, the United States was part of building up a reformist, republican China, and we worked very, very hard, indeed, to even have scholarships for people from China over a hundred years ago.

And so Ms. Tokuda also knows that it was in Honolulu that the founding father of the Republic of China, that is where he studied when he was young, in her great State.

So we have actually a very, very strong relationship with China in terms of a reformist and democratic China.

Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you.

I wonder if each of you could give me your impression, because one of the things that has come up in the National Defense Strategy was that Taiwan was not mentioned by name.

How important is that? I know that in the strategy it emphasizes preventing any nation,

including China, from dominating the first island chain and that being central to protecting U.S. allies, partners, and freedom of maneuver in the western Pacific.

Do you think there needs to be more clarity when it comes to external communications on this? Whoever would like to start.

Mr. Ku, maybe start with you and then go right down the --

Mr. Ku. I think clarity is usually good. Sometimes it is not necessary. And I think one thing that we sometimes have a problem with is clarity without being backed up with action.

So I think in this case, whether you mentioned Taiwan, if you are focused on defending the first island chain, I think that could be what you need to do, and that is fine. I think if you didn't mention Taiwan because you were afraid of offending China, which I think is the suspicion, that would be bad, right? So I think it is hard for me to read the tea leaves on what happened here.

I think clarity -- I think echoing what Ms. Rapp-Hooper mentioned -- I think the one thing the rhetoric does matter for is trying to show to Taiwan and international partners and allies the U.S. is still committed to Taiwan. And I think that is where, whether it is in strategy or somewhere else, that the public statements do make a difference in that regard.

Ms. Kan. I would like to point out that -- so I have more details in my testimony. The National Security Strategy emphasizes that deterring a conflict over Taiwan is a priority. So that is an important point that is still in the National Security Strategy.

The problem is it doesn't say deterring against whom. So it does not cite China as threatening that conflict that we need to deter.

Now, the NSS also does not cite the law of the land, the Taiwan Relations Act, 96-8, and that to me is problematic because regardless of the Six Assurances and every other thing that we might talk about, any of the joint communiques, it is really the Taiwan Relations Act that is the most important for governing policy. And it is a change, because in the first term, eight years ago, the 2017 National Security Strategy did cite the TRA.

Now, the current policy also did not cite even the One-China Policy. Now, I am not saying we have to cite it, but I just found it very interesting that even this so-called One-China Policy was left off and China didn't go ballistic over it, either figuratively or literally.

But as I mentioned, the National Defense Strategy is even more vague, because not only did it not cite the TRA, it also did not cite Taiwan.

And then, when we go into the statements by officials to further explain what that strategy means, it continues to raise even more questions of why are we respecting this so-called "proud history" with all the atrocities and threats that we know about?

And the bottom line is that there is just, compared to a year ago, even a year ago, there is just much less talk from officials about China.

Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you.

Ms. Rapp-Hooper.

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. Thank you very much, Chairman, for what I think is a very important question.

As the ranking member did observe in his opening comments, I do believe that it can be challenging for us if an important partner like Taiwan is omitted from the NDS, in no small part because we have seen in the Chinese press efforts to interpret that as a deliberate or indicative omission.

So even if the omission was not indicative and important steps like the historic arms package that was passed in December 2025 indicate a strong commitment, it leaves open space to interpret otherwise.

But to take that further, and I think as both my fellow witnesses have indicated, the declaratory policy that we use over Taiwan is both especially important and especially complex.

We know both in the political science literature, as an academic, and I know from my time as a policymaker, that when U.S. declaratory policy appears to change, even if it is not deliberate,

adversaries often do interpret that one way or another, and, again, often when there is no reason to.

But the reason that I have made the recommendation to this committee that Congress should pass a resolution codifying all elements of our Taiwan policy is because we do see changes between administrations in the language that they use in both the National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy.

And because of Congress' statutory authority and long history in providing bipartisan support to our Taiwan policy, I think a congressional resolution that lays out clearly all of the elements of that policy would help to guard against some of that misinterpretation that can come from omission from a strategy document.

Thank you.

Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you.

With that, I would like to call on our ranking member, Ro Khanna.

Mr. Khanna. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Kan, I appreciated your testimony as the majority witness today. Would you say that you have concerns about President Trump's policy in his second term in terms of being clear and consistent enough to guarantee Taiwan's security?

Ms. Kan. As I mentioned, one question has been about the uncertainty of his policy from day to day, whether the disruptions are welcome or not. So is he a statesman or is he a peacemaker or is he a madman?

But I just want to emphasize for members and also the American public that the Taiwan Relations Act does not permit the President to decide alone on both coercion as well as use of force.

Mr. Khanna. I appreciate that. But it seems like you have concerns, right? You were concerned that he has bundled the arms sales and hasn't had regular notifications. You are concerned with some of the language he has used in abandoning Taiwan as a bargaining chip. Would you say that is a fair characterization?

Ms. Kan. Well, I want to be clear that we have not abandoned Taiwan. So I want to be clear, and I stated that in my written statement, and I didn't have time to go over it in the opening, that just because --

Mr. Khanna. But would there be a few areas that you think he needs to be stronger in that to guarantee Taiwan's security?

Ms. Kan. So in terms of being stronger, I would want -- I do not agree with the so-called "packaging." We should not be talking about packages of arms sales for one thing.

There should not have been eight programs, eight different programs that totaled \$11 billion of arms sales to Taiwan that were notified to Congress on one day --

Mr. Khanna. Are there other areas that you have concerns, or is that the main concern?

Ms. Kan. Well, that is the main concern, and also to let the members know that the TRA does not allow the President to decide alone.

Mr. Khanna. Dr. Rapp-Hooper, do you believe that President Trump in his second term has been consistent and clear enough to guarantee the security of Taiwan?

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. Mr. Ranking Member, as I shared in my last response, I do think it would be to the benefit of the United States to see a clarification of the United States policy towards Taiwan by way of a clear statement of all elements of that policy, including all of those that I mentioned in my last remarks.

Thank you.

Mr. Khanna. Mr. Ku, the same question to you.

Mr. Ku. Well, I think, from my point of view, every President could do a better job being clear on Taiwan. I am not thrilled with the way the President has talked about Taiwan.

Mr. Khanna. What specifically are you upset about in terms of --

Mr. Ku. Well, I am not loving when he says in The New York Times it is up to Xi what to do about Taiwan. I think that is a little out of context but I think it leaves kind of the bad sort of --

Mr. Khanna. So you don't think that is a partisan comment that I made. I mean, that is a genuine concern.

Mr. Ku. Right. I will just say, will point out, I am not trying to play both sides here, but I think American Presidents are often confused on Taiwan, and sometimes the rhetoric can be confusing even the other way, when President Biden said the U.S. would put troops to defend Taiwan. That is good, but it wasn't clear that he really meant it and everyone got confused as well.

Mr. Khanna. What are three things that President Trump's administration could do better to make sure that we have clarity and consistency and that is standing up for Taiwan's security?

Mr. Ku. Right. So I think that a rhetorical campaign to say that -- to reaffirm from the President's own mouth that he is opposed -- he is affirming the TRA and peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and he is committed to deterring any conflict and any attempt by China to coerce Taiwan. Just make that statement.

That would go a long way. I think, obviously, the President likes to say in his own way, but I think here we could use some clarity from the President himself.

I think his administration has been a little bit better on this, but the President obviously counts. And so I would prefer if he would just say that the TRA and the One-China Policy is the policy of the United States and his administration is committed to it just as he was in the first administration.

Mr. Khanna. I appreciate that.

Mr. Chairman, I appreciate actually a lot of the majority witnesses. I agree with some of their comments. I hope that this committee can be bipartisan in calling for more clarity in the administration's policies to guarantee the security of Taiwan.

Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you.

Representative Barr.

Mr. Barr. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Strategic ambiguity has always been a curious policy, regardless of the administration, and I appreciate the ranking member's concerns. I wanted to, though, point out the important context.

The National Defense Strategy establishes a strong defense along the first island chain. It references the Sin Cowe Islands, South China Sea, Taiwan Strait. That is not an abandonment of Taiwan.

I would argue that enhanced military-to-military communication is not appeasement, as my friend the ranking member likes to characterize it.

In contrast, look at the NDAA that this President signed. The COINS Act, a new tool of economic statecraft to deny Chinese access to American capital markets in sensitive technologies and entities of national security concern. The PRC Malign Influence Fund. The Stop China Fentanyl Act. Enhanced relations with Japan. That is deterrence. That is enhanced deterrence.

I would also urge all of my colleagues to take a look at what else is in the NDAA that this President signed. \$15.6 billion for the Pacific Deterrence Initiative. \$490 million in INDOPACOM commander priorities left unfunded by the Biden administration. Increased funding for innovative new technologies to deter the CCP, including hypersonics, AI, autonomous systems, cyber, mobile micro nuclear reactors, high energy lasers.

Requires the Navy to implement a program to ensure the surface fleet can rearm at sea. Supports the Marine Corps 31 amphibious warship requirements. Enables efficiency in the congressionally authorized block buy. Requires DOD to report to Congress on growing military cooperation between China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran.

And then specifically on Taiwan, the bill that President Trump signed reaffirms U.S. support to defense of Taiwan; establishes the Taiwan Security Cooperation Initiative to provide the military and security forces of Taiwan with lethal assistance to enable Taiwan to maintain self-defense capabilities; authorizes DOD to establish a joint program on military trauma care with the military forces of Taiwan; authorizes funding for U.S. forces to continue training Taiwan; requires DOD to

assess and plan to include Taiwan in more defense industrial base cooperation and revitalization agreements; mandates an assessment of deploying asymmetric naval assets for Taiwan's defense and any vulnerabilities of Taiwan's naval platforms.

By the way, the focus on the Western Hemisphere in the National Defense Strategy, not ignoring China. Focusing on Greenland. Focusing on the Golden Dome. That is deterrence of China. Focusing on getting China out of Panama and reestablishing strong American presence in Panama, very pro-deterrence. Getting rid of Maduro in Venezuela where China had a base of operation in the Western Hemisphere, not a lack of deterrence. Very pro-deterrence.

So I just think there needs to be some context. I do appreciate the testimony that Congress might consider reaffirming the Taiwan Relations Act, and I think that is a good idea. The Six Assurances to Taiwan Act is not a bad idea.

Now, quickly to a question. The Trump administration, in fact, did announce an \$11 billion arms sale to Taiwan, the largest in history, that included HIMARS, missile systems, and drones.

I commend the President for approving this historic sale that sends a clear message to China that the United States and this administration stand against their coercive acts with the people of Taiwan.

Ms. Kan, the backlog of U.S. weapons to Taiwan still stands at \$21 billion. What needs to happen to expedite the delivery of these weapons to Taiwan. And with this new \$11 billion announcement from President Trump, what do we need? The PORCUPINE Act? What is the answer?

The PORCUPINE Act is a great proposal, and our colleague, Mr. Wittman, has offered that for this committee's consideration.

Ms. Kan. Well, the continuation of weapon sales to Taiwan is an important signal, and it is important that every administration has continued to make that happen for Congress.

My concern is about the process, and that is what I am highlighting for congressional

oversight, because of the history.

The history is that under President Bush and Obama, we had long periods of so-called "freezes" in arms sales to Taiwan, long periods under Obama, which started under Bush, where Congress did not get the congressional review of arms sales until they were all sent up in a so-called "package." Which is why I really object to the word "package." They should not be sent up on one day.

And so what I am calling for is simply that congressional review means that the President respects that congressional review and sends the pending arms sales to Congress on a regular, routine basis as it should be done.

Mr. Barr. My time is expired, but, Dr. Rapp-Hooper, maybe in another answer to another question you could also address the PORCUPINE Act and how we can expedite these arms sales and get rid of this backlog.

I yield back.

Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you.

Representative Moulton.

Mr. Moulton. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Our new ranking member laid out an important and comprehensive list of ways in which the current administration has weakened America's posture of deterrence against the Chinese Communist Party.

Now, you interjected after his testimony that you disagree because of one thing, the major arms deal that this administration has put forward toward Taiwan.

And our colleague Mr. Barr just laid out his own list of things that he claims are enhanced deterrents, but are almost all things that came from the bipartisan bill out of the Armed Services Committee in Congress on which I serve.

Trump just signed that bill, I would note, after repeatedly threatening not to for political

reasons.

So I would just like to share some observations of this administration's China policy. These are all quotes. Let's start with that arms deal.

"The Trump administration's record-breaking \$11 billion arms sale to Taiwan in December, which will take many years to fully deliver, was merely a pretext for the latest step in Beijing's long-running campaign of rising coercion."

Another quote. "Ever since Xi out-escalated Trump in 2025, culminating in the U.S. President's climbdown on tariffs and export controls, the White House has conspicuously avoided meaningful statements of support for Pacific allies and partners. Even as Beijing has increased its military threats towards Japan and Taiwan, Trump has approved selling to Beijing, for no concessions in return, advanced American AI chips that will help the Chinese military accelerate technological gains over the U.S. military."

Some more. "Trump drives EU trade war over Greenland. China, Russia see opportunity."

Another. "Solidifying a detente with Xi Jinping that in a reversal of years of U.S. policy would more closely integrate China into U.S. manufacturing and supply chains."

"The Venezuela raids, potential for strengthening U.S. deterrence of China around Taiwan," another issue cited by my colleague, "is outweighed by Trump's conciliatory posture towards Beijing in recent months."

"Washington's political posture towards China hints at hesitancy and irresolution."

"Trump's evolving foreign policy with its focus on the near abroad and aversion to upsetting Beijing could encourage Xi Jinping to accelerate his goal of annexing Taiwan."

Do you know where these quotes come from? Mr. Chairman, every one of these statements is from Matt Pottinger, former Deputy National Security Advisor under Trump, the first Trump administration's China lead, completely eviscerating the arguments that we just heard.

Mr. Chairman, you noted the bipartisan tradition of this committee, and you and I both

remember Kurt Campbell, President Biden's China lead, when he told us how much he respected Matt Pottinger, a Democrat saying he respected him, and how closely aligned their policies were.

Here is the reality. There is far more alignment between the first Trump administration and the Biden administration than between the first Trump administration and the second Trump administration when it comes to China policy. And that is why the architect of these policies has laid out in far more quotes than I would have the time to cite this morning how dangerous they are.

The stakes are too high here, because what we are talking about is deterrence, preventing a war, a war that would not just cost Taiwan its freedom and independence and millions of lives, but will cost America perhaps hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of lives as well, a war that could literally be World War III.

Now, this is exactly why the witnesses have called for passing a congressional resolution about our China policy, to solidify what we know is bipartisan concern about this administration's China policy for all the reasons we have heard laid out today.

The problem is that that bipartisan concern is in private. It is our committee's responsibility to make it public. That is our constitutional duty, to serve as a check and balance on the administration, not a mouthpiece for it.

So I hope we can do that, and I hope we can come together in an honest, forthright, bipartisan way to support strengthening our posture of deterrence towards China and strengthening the alliance between Taiwan and the United States of America.

I yield back.

Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you.

Representative Gimenez.

Mr. Gimenez. Thank you.

I always say that it is more important what you do than what you say. And so what is a clear indication of what this administration feels about China is what they ask for in defense spending.

And so we are now close to \$1 trillion in defense spending, and it is not because we are afraid of Russia or anything. The only thing that we are spending that much money for is to deter China.

We are hearing also that next year the administration will be asking for \$1.5 trillion in defense spending. Again, that is to deter our number one adversary, which is China.

I am not sure we are going to be able to get there, but to me, that is a very clear indication of what this administration wants to do and a very clear signal to the Chinese that, "Hey, we see you, we see what you are doing, and we are going to do everything in our power to make sure that whatever it is that you want you can't get."

China wants to be the number one economic and military power by the year 2049, and we are going to do everything in our power to make sure they never attain that.

And so, again, I know a lot of people here, "He said this, they said that." Again, I only care about what you do, because that is the clearest indication of what you want, and that is a very clear indication to me that this administration takes China very, very seriously, like we do. We take China very, very seriously.

And so when the administration asks for \$1.5 trillion, most of us here in this committee will say, "Okay, we understand." I am not sure we are going to get there, but we do understand.

So one thing also my colleague said is that China -- our policy towards China and Taiwan has been strategic ambiguity. I think if you look up the word "ambiguity," it means that you don't know what it is.

So we want a one China, but we also want a separate Taiwan, but sometimes we do and sometimes we don't. And so people want clarity, except that for decades -- for decades -- through many administrations, our China policy has been strategic ambiguity.

And so that the President or any President makes ambiguous statements, it actually follows the strategic ambiguity policy of the United States.

Actually, President Biden, when he was in office, he said that he would defend Taiwan. He

said it, like, six times, he would defend Taiwan. It actually violates strategic ambiguity policy. But he said it. And then he walked it back after he said it.

And so, again, for those on the other side of the aisle, that has been our policy for a long time.

We are going back to lawfare now, which is I think what this is all about.

Mr. Ku, do you have a specific example of when the United States sided with the CCP over Taiwan over a specific issue that you were talking about?

RPTR ZAMORA

EDTR CRYSTAL

[11:04 a.m.]

Mr. Ku. No, I don't think the United States under any administration has sided with Taiwan. I think, in general, over the long course, since 1971, the U.S. has just neglected to fight back.

So in the U.N., China has convinced all the administrative agencies in the U.N. that Taiwan should be treated as a province of China, and successive administrations kind of turned a blind eye and didn't speak up and didn't exert pressure to push back on that.

And that is what I am worried about. It is not so much that we are going to cooperate; it is that we will not notice what is going on, and that is what I am mainly concerned about.

Mr. Gimenez. And you are saying that what is going on is far greater than what we are noticing?

Mr. Ku. Right. Well, I mean, we are noticing it, but we are not doing anything about it. And because I think, obviously, there are more important things going on. We need to get defense spending up. We need to deter a military invasion.

But what I am saying is that this is also important, and this is much less costly, and there are things we can do to push back at this sort of level that can make a difference on the lawfare front, and a lot of it is just paying attention and calling it out.

Mr. Gimenez. Is it one of the things that the CCP is actively focused in on? I mean, when the CCP wants to dominate a certain sector, they really incentivize that sector. So is the CCP incentivizing lawfare, or this legal sector, in order to undermine U.S. interests around the world?

Mr. Ku. Right. I mean, I think that this is -- I think that, to be honest, China cares a lot more about Taiwan than the United States does, and so they spend a lot more resources in their government thinking of different ways to promote their narrative, and the U.S. just doesn't have enough resources or attention span to push back.

And so I think that is -- with other countries that adopt a version of the One-China Policy, even countries that are U.S. allies adopt versions of the One-China Policy that are not what the U.S. would support, the U.S. doesn't really push back on this or doesn't notice it.

And that type of stuff, I think, can make a difference, all these statements at the U.N. Frankly, it is more just we just don't pay enough attention, and China is motivated and effective.

Mr. Gimenez. Fair enough.

I yield back.

Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you.

Representative Tokuda.

Ms. Tokuda. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses for being here.

Ms. Rapp-Hooper, let's be clear here. There needs to be no ambiguity that Taiwan is not a bargaining chip for trade, a hundred percent. I agree with you. Congress needs to take decisive action to disavow this notion that somehow they are on the negotiating table.

So I have some very quick questions that I would like you to address here.

I want to do all those resos, pass all those affirmations, but, one, what happens if we do nothing before those talks in April?

Two, when those talks happen, if we have failed to do anything, what key signal should we be looking for, what should we be concerned about in terms of the verbiage, the language, the decisions coming out of it?

And three, as it relates to Taiwan, what would be the best possible outcome from these negotiations? What do we need to push for in terms of what comes out of these trade talks as it relates to the security and sovereignty of Taiwan?

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. Thank you, Congresswoman, for the very comprehensive questions. I will do my very best to answer them quickly.

To your question -- What happens if Congress does not act to reaffirm the essential elements of American Taiwan policy? -- the concern would be that whether a deliberate concession is made or not, Xi Jinping, Beijing, will represent that some kind of concession or change has been made, that the failure to reaffirm wholeheartedly and in a detailed manner all of these elements of Taiwan policy may leave this space for the Chinese side to interpret that there has been some change, and to publicize that not only in Taipei but in other American allied capitals.

To your question -- What would happen then? -- that could potentially erode the credibility of American commitments, not only to Taiwan but in other allied capitals.

A perception that the United States was willing to change its policy, even if it had not made deliberate concessions, even if these were simply misinterpretations or relitigations by the CCP, could substantially damage American credibility in allied capitals around the world.

What would be the key signals that we would be looking for? We would be looking for, I think, most likely statements from the Chinese Government through Chinese official media or other sources after a meeting that there had been some kind of change, some kind of concession, or some kind of understanding reached between the United States and China.

The Chinese Government might try to represent that there was some sort of so-called "G2 arrangement," a great power condominium. This is a phrase that our allies around the world really fear, because it implies that the United States and China are making arrangements without other allies present that may fundamentally affect their fates. And that type of verbiage would lead to the erosion of credibility that I discussed here.

And finally, what is the best possible outcome? The best possible outcome is a continuation of the status quo with intense focus by this committee and this Congress to increasing its support for Taiwan in the months and years ahead.

A reaffirmation of the policy that Congress has helped to keep steady since 1979 and understanding in Beijing and around the world that that policy has not changed, and a continued

commitment by this committee and by the Congress as a whole to continuing to support Taiwan's security by way of arms sales, other defense activities, like all of those activities that were enumerated from the NDAA, yes, support for important measures like the PORCUPINE Act, and as we have suggested in all of our testimony, a redoubled focus on what the United States can better do to support Taiwan in the face of the PRC's growing gray zone coercion.

So what I would like to see, and I think what we would all like to see, is Congress being able to keep us on this track that you all have put us on.

Ms. Tokuda. Well, definitely, Mr. Chair, hopefully we can work on some kind of resolution to really affirm our position.

Thank you for that answer.

I am not sure if I can get an answer to this, but I did want to mention the fact -- or ask the question -- if we are actually prepared for the kind of hybrid campaign or war without harm that China is already conducting.

As Ms. Kan noted, China doesn't differentiate between peacetime or wartime; they are in a constant state of focusing on reunification. And I feel like we are playing checkers and they are 3D-chessing us, because our approach to Taiwan is a kinetic war situation defense spend. China is leveraging Taiwan and our other allies economically based upon the tariffs that we have now imposed upon them.

We are losing the disinformation war, I feel like, with China, because we are literally feeding them the words from our leaders. As was noted here, the downgrading of the Indo-Pacific in the NDS, the not mentioning Taiwan or the TRA, this is feeding into that disinformation campaign that they launched.

And China is now gaining influence and power on the global stage, because we have abdicated our role and removed ourselves from 65 international organizations. That is going to allow them to shape the narrative around Taiwan. It is going to literally manipulate international law and

international institutions to further isolate Taiwan.

So given that we are still just focused on the kinetic war, what are the one or two other areas that we absolutely have to be refocused on to win this hybrid war with China that is already ongoing?

Ms. Kan. There is a lot of talk about deterrence and also resilience, but we don't really -- it is a term that is thrown around a lot, but there are actually a lot of ways where the United States can work with Taiwan, cooperate on both deterrence as well as resilience.

As Ukraine has shown, it cannot simply be a military defense, it must be a whole-of-society defense with resilience. And there are a lot of things that Taiwan, as well as the United States, can learn from Ukraine.

Ukraine offers a lesson. And I would just point out that Ukraine is transforming its defense industry. If Ukraine can do it, why can't Taiwan? And there are lots of ways where the United States can help in terms of innovation, industry for Taiwan's defense industry.

The second thing that we can also impart is, as we have also learned very clearly as an example, so that it is not just abstract, is the importance of leadership, the importance of leadership with President Zelenskyy in the Ukraine.

And so that is another way that we can express and cooperate with Taiwan in terms of continuity of government, continuity of operations, command and control in times of not only war but also in times of crises. And those crises will happen.

So I would just urge, as we see here in the U.S. Congress, that in the State of the Union, every leader, every official in three branches of the government is here in the Congress except for one. There is always one Secretary who is kept away.

And I would also urge this attention to decapitation, the threat of decapitation in Taiwan, and that in Taiwan the President and the Vice President should never appear in the same place. And that is another area we can work with them on.

Thank you.

Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you.

Representative Bilirakis.

Mr. Bilirakis. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Appreciate it very much. Thanks for holding this hearing.

Dr. Rapp-Hooper, in your testimony you briefly discuss Beijing's economic coercion against Taiwan and some of the vulnerabilities Taiwan faces from that threat.

In my district, there is a vibrant presence of the Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce of North America -- and I represent the Tampa Bay area -- which I feel can be a vital tool for creating alternative trade opportunities for Taiwan.

What are ways that we can reinforce such relationships at the Federal level and at the State level?

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. That is a great question. Thank you so much, Congressman.

I want to give a little bit more thought to the specifics of what your district is doing and will educate myself on that and share some more information with your staff.

But on the question of the economic relationship with Taiwan, this committee and Congress as a whole have previously been very focused on the fact that the PRC has demonstrated both a capability and a will to use economic coercion against Taiwan, both in times of relative crisis and to put political pressure on it around major events like elections.

I would suggest that another important agenda item for this committee is to think about how the PRC is likely to use economic coercion headed into Taiwan's 2028 election, in particular to start thinking in advance about what we can do to help Taiwan build resilience in those product and trade areas where we have seen the PRC place pressure on it in the past.

This means in key parts of the agricultural sector, in its fish sector, and in its construction sector, where we have previously seen trade sanctions from the PRC.

So by taking advanced action and thinking through how we can build resilience by matching

Taiwan's products to other markets, this committee could take on a key leadership role in helping to ensure that future PRC coercion does not negatively impact Taiwan.

Mr. Bilirakis. Thank you again, Dr. Rapp-Hooper. Appreciate it.

I also serve as co-chair of the Congressional Hellenic Israel Alliance, and a big initiative we have been pushing is formalizing the concept of the IMEC corridor, an alternative economic route going from India to Middle East to Europe.

What are the obstacles for Taiwan's involvement in emerging regional trade opportunities such as IMEC that seek to isolate or counter China's One Belt, One Road Initiative, and how can Congress help Taiwan's involvement in this and other new trade initiatives?

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. Directed to me, Congressman?

Mr. Bilirakis. Yes, for you, please.

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. Thank you so much.

I would point to my colleague Professor Ku's comments in his opening remarks about Congress' continued support of Taiwan's international space. Obviously, there are trade agreements that are difficult for Taiwan to participate in, but we also have organizations in which Taiwan is a party by way of its status as an economy, such as APEC.

So I would suggest that looking for additional multilateral configurations where we can organize ourselves by economies would be a way to expand the aperture for including Taiwan in important initiatives on a go-forward basis.

Mr. Bilirakis. Very good.

Next question for Mr. Ku.

We know that China uses economic and political leverage, particularly on small countries, to extract their support in international organizations that support China's political campaign of isolation against the independent Taiwan.

Besides the United States and its allies trying to encourage these international organizations

directly, what are efforts the United States can do to better combat China's influence more at the root level?

Mr. Ku. I am sorry --

Mr. Bilirakis. Question for you, yes.

Mr. Ku. So what level, at the root level you mean?

Mr. Bilirakis. Yes.

Mr. Ku. So I guess I would just reiterate what I was saying.

I think part of the problem is that the U.S. Government is gigantic but sometimes not focused. So I think if we had focus within our system that international organizations really do matter, that we are currently engaged in a push at the U.N. and other institutions to reform the U.N.

And part of the way we should reform the U.N. is demand accountability for these kinds of bureaucratic norms that end up sort of -- this is not even small states pushing it. It is just like someone in the bureaucracy made the decision and no one paid attention, and all of a sudden Taiwan is a problem.

So I think this type of thing where if we had more attention, we had someone in the U.S. Government who is calling it out and paying attention to this and the State Department would push back we could make a real difference in many international institutions if we just paid more attention.

Mr. Bilirakis. Very good. Thank you.

I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you.

Representative Castor.

Ms. Castor. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for calling this hearing.

Thank you to our witnesses for sharing your expertise on the CCP's incessant threats and coercion to Taiwan, but to the U.S. and freedom-loving people everywhere.

It is very important that this committee and all of us continue to shine a light on the CCP's strategy, that their strategy is not just military, it is also economic, it is cyber, it is lawfare.

And I think this committee and the past administrations have done a good job rallying support across the globe from our allies and partners in the INDOPACOM area of concern, but all of the allies when it came to economic pushback on how China cheats and steals.

And that is why I am so concerned right now that the Trump administration has lost that focus, that people now look at the U.S. and say, "Oh, they are taking a much weaker stance to counter the CCP."

Everything the President does is transactional, it is unpredictable, and what that translates into is a lot of uncertainty for Taiwan at a terrible time.

The President is undermining our partnerships, our allies. It wasn't that long ago that we were all working in cooperation with Japan, with Australia, with India, with the EU and others to counter what China is doing. And I just think, as you said, Ms. Kan, it is giving leverage to Xi Jinping.

For example, Dr. Rapp-Hooper, take for instance Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's recent sentiment that a Chinese attack on Taiwan may also serve as a threat to Japan. In response, President Trump told her to stop provoking China. What kind of signal does that send to an ally like Japan?

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. Congresswoman, thank you for your question. And needless to say, I strongly agree with the importance of allies both in the Indo-Pacific and in Europe in sending clear and consistent signals about our mutual support for Taiwan.

What our Japanese friends have faced in the last several months has been very distressing. I thank you for calling attention to it. When Prime Minister Takaichi made her comments before the Japanese Diet in November she was articulating a position that was consistent with that of past Prime Ministers, but was nonetheless a little bit more frank and candid than what others had been willing to say in the past.

And as I mentioned in my testimony, I believe that this is a sign of strength, strength of the U.S.-Japan alliance, that she felt comfortable enough to say that in front of the Diet, because Japan really has stepped up in considerable ways on issues related to Taiwan in recent years.

In the last few months, Japan has become subject to tourism bans, student travel bans, various forms of economic coercion, including potentially critical minerals bans, and is watching closely to see if the PRC will escalate further.

To her credit, Prime Minister Takaichi has stood resolved in the face of this ongoing coercion from the PRC, and one only need look at her recent election returns to know that she has never been more popular, in part as a result of what the PRC has done.

But there is no question that in a moment like this, whether it is Japan or any other ally, the United States must stand beside an ally that is blatantly being coerced by the People's Republic of China, reaffirm the United States' unwavering commitment in the alliance, and use measures not only through our treaties but mechanisms like the G7 to provide support for Japan, particularly if the PRC's coercion continues to be ongoing.

Congress can play an important role, perhaps inviting Prime Minister Takaichi when she visits the United States in March to see President Trump, in reaffirming not only our alliance commitments but our support to Japanese economic vitality in the face of PRC coercive threats.

Thanks.

Ms. Castor. And the other side of the coin, what signal did that send to Xi Jinping?

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. I believe that Xi Jinping was seeking to drive a wedge into the U.S.-Japan alliance through his coercion of Prime Minister Takaichi on the question of Japan. He was seeking to demonstrate that he could pry us apart, the United States and Japan, on this question.

Ms. Castor. And, clearly, when Trump says stop provoking China, that would embolden Xi Jinping?

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. I can't speak to the nature of a private phone call between two leaders,

which I imagine is what the reference is. But, indeed, it is incredibly important for the United States to reaffirm its support for Japan.

Thank you.

Ms. Castor. Thank you. I yield back my time.

Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you.

Representative Nunn.

Mr. Nunn. Well, thank you, Mr. Chair.

I am impressed that today's hearing is called "Lies, Lawfare, and Leverage: How The CCP is Gaslighting and Manipulating a Marginalized Taiwan." And after the opening conversation today, I think it has been more a focus on the U.S. commitment to Taiwan than talking about the greatest threat Taiwan faces.

So I would like to ask each member of the panel, starting with you, Mr. Ku, who would you see today as Taiwan's greatest allied nation, and who would you see as Taiwan's greatest national threat?

Mr. Ku. Well, obviously, the most important ally for Taiwan is the United States, and I think it will always be for the foreseeable future. And --

Mr. Nunn. Who do you see as the most adversarial to Taiwan's independence?

Mr. Ku. And the People's Republic of China is the greatest threat.

Mr. Nunn. I would agree.

Ms. Kan?

Ms. Kan. The United States is the strongest partner of Taiwan. In fact, just last year Taiwan exported more to the United States than China for the first time in 26 years.

Mr. Nunn. That is a move in the right direction.

Who would you see as their greatest adversary?

Ms. Kan. Taiwan needs to be clear that Taiwan only has one adversary, and that is China.

Mr. Nunn. I would agree.

Doctor?

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. Taiwan's single threat and adversary is the People's Republic of China, and Taiwan's most important partner is the United States, and we are all grateful to Congress' commitment to keep it that way.

Mr. Nunn. And I concur. Congress helped forge this alliance, and it is an alliance that Congress must help continue to move forward on behalf of not just two great countries but on behalf of a shared history of both the American and Taiwanese people.

When the CCP has the ability to challenge Taiwan, it is not just in the kinetic space, it is in the nonkinetic space.

When I served in the U.S. Air Force and flew operations and took action here, we saw directly what the Chinese were capable of, and it wasn't just what they could fly against us, it is how they operated from everything from the internet to communications.

In one such event, we ran a counter-information operation against the Chinese where the Chinese specifically targeted Taiwanese pineapple growers. They did it on the verge of an election.

The entire intent was to punish ag producers in Taiwan in the leadup to prefecture elections, and they sanctioned those same growers. And as a result, guess what happened? Local elected leaders found themselves only winning if they were in support of Mainland China.

This is a threat that means China has the capability right now to take Taiwan without even a shot being fired.

Dr. Rapp-Hooper, you talked about the economic side of this. Is the Taiwanese pineapple farmer an anomaly or a reality?

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. Congressman, thanks for the question.

I think what you are pointing to is something very significant indeed, and that is the PRC's ability not only to use economic coercion against Taiwan but to use it on a targeted basis.

In several election rounds running, we have seen the PRC target districts that were DPP strongholds, as you are indicating, with the intent of throwing support to the KMT. That is not only economic coercion, it is election interference.

Mr. Nunn. Absolutely.

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. So we should help Taiwan to fashion strategies against that. And in part because Taiwan is extremely dependent on its agricultural exports, I fear that that threat to Taiwan is a reality.

Mr. Nunn. Absolutely agree.

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. But one factual basis on which I will state a small quibble, and that is the fact that the PRC has the ability to take Taiwan right now without firing a shot.

I actually think that what we see is public opinion on Taiwan that has been remarkably resilient, that understands the Chinese threat against Taiwan, against Taiwan's economy, that does not wish to submit to the PRC, that wants the United States to remain a strong and enduring partner, and that wants more partnerships to help support it as well.

So I think our mandate is to support the resolve of the Taiwan people, as well as our partners within Taipei.

Mr. Nunn. Totally agree. And with the time I have remaining, I would agree with you on this. I want to keep it in that boat.

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. Thank you.

Mr. Nunn. It is one of the reasons that we have led on specifically my bill, H.R. 4860, the U.S.-Taiwan Defense Innovation effort, so that we don't have to engage in a kinetic war, we can do this on the tech level to prevent it from even getting to that point. This bill would drive forward coordination on artificial intelligence, ISR technologies, and counter CCP malign influence.

It also builds on an amendment that we already had passed with my leadership on the NDAA to get a forward operating base for the Defense Innovation Unit, one of America's premier

commercial sector, private partner, and defense sectors to be led.

Last year, we worked in a bipartisan way to increase DIU's funding to nearly a billion dollars, a -- and let me make sure my quote here is correct -- a 563 percent increase providing frontline assistance here.

Ms. Kan, I know you have worked in this area as well. With my few seconds remaining here, would this help with shared technology as we lead a bipartisan delegation to Taiwan this April?

Ms. Kan. The talk about defense innovation is critical, and it is critical for the United States with leadership such as yours to show Taiwan that the fast-changing technology in the world today is what Taiwan's opposition parties cannot ignore. That is why they need to support the increase in defense spending, because there are military-industrial collaborations.

Mr. Nunn. Thank you very much. I yield my time.

Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you.

Representative Stanton.

Mr. Stanton. Thank you very much, Chairman.

Representative Nunn, sounds like a good bill. Look forward to looking into that one.

Thank you to our chair and ranking member for holding this important hearing.

Thank you for the witnesses for being here today.

Taiwan's security is directly tied to stability in the broader Indo-Pacific and our own national security. Taiwan's importance to U.S. strategic interests is partly a matter of geography. Taiwan is at the center of a network of critical waterways and U.S. partners. And as the administration's National Defense Strategy makes clear, maintaining a strong denial defense along the first island chain is essential. Taiwan plays a vital role in that defense, as the chairman has pointed out in his questions.

Taiwan's importance is also economic. It produces approximately 60 percent of the world's semiconductors and manufactures some of the most cutting-edge chips necessary for everyday

consumer devices and high-tech defense systems.

Taiwan has brought these capabilities to the United States supported by incentives from the bipartisan CHIPS and Science Act. TSMC, the Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company, has pledged to invest well over \$165 billion in my home State of Arizona, the largest single foreign direct investment in U.S. history.

They have already broken ground on three fabrication facilities poised to produce some of the most advanced chips in the world, chips that will drive century-defining technologies like artificial intelligence and help ensure that American defense systems remain the most advanced on planet Earth.

The strong economic ties between our two nations have been a boon to Arizona's economy and to American national security, but preserving those ties requires a sound foreign policy.

The Chinese Communist Party has shown a growing willingness to use economic coercion, tactics like targeted tariffs, boycotts of Taiwanese goods, and tax investigations into Taiwanese companies to isolate Taiwan internationally.

And the PRC's goals are global. Chairman Moolenaar led a congressional delegation to Latin America earlier this year, including to Guatemala, one of Taiwan's remaining diplomatic partners in the region. Guatemala has faced significant CCP economic coercion, including a ban on agricultural imports following a call between the Guatemalan and Taiwanese Presidents.

Strengthening American economic ties with Taiwan and helping Taiwan diversify its economic relationships in Asia, Latin America, and around the world is one of the most effective tools we have to counter this coercion.

Dr. Rapp-Hooper, how exposed is Taiwan to PRC economic coercion? And to what extent are Taiwan, the United States, and U.S. allies prepared for any escalation of PRC coercion scenarios?

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. Thank you very much, Congressman.

Taiwan is extremely exposed to threats of economic coercion, as you indicate, threats of

diplomatic coercion, that is, ongoing threats to try to pick off Taiwan's remaining allies, and these two things often go together.

The PRC will often try to turn Taiwan's diplomatic allies through threats of economic coercion or threats of economic inducement, and we have seen that both in Latin America and in the Pacific Islands playing out in a very systematic way.

While I think it is extremely fair to assume, as I have written in my testimony, that Taiwan will face continued campaigns that include economic coercion, in particular during its election cycles, we are not nearly as prepared as we could be or should be to help Taiwan weather that coercion.

I will say, both as an academic and as a former public servant, it is very hard to develop counter-economic coercion strategies in advance.

But nonetheless, one thing we can do more of and better is something that I indicated in response to an earlier question from Congressman Nunn, and that is to identify the key sectors in which Taiwan is likely to be targeted in future PRC economic coercion campaigns -- I have named a few of them, including its fishery sector, agricultural sector, and construction supplies -- and do the work now to find the markets that could absorb Taiwan's products if and when that PRC pressure does come.

I think it is very fair to assume we may see some of it in the 2026 local election cycle, and a fair bet that we will see a whole lot of it in the 2028 election cycle in Taiwan, so preparation now is key.

Thank you.

Mr. Stanton. Thank you so much.

If we are serious about deterring conflict, as you noted, we need to be serious about countering coercion.

That brings me to a broader point. I have been encouraged by the recent U.S. support for Taiwan's defense, including the recent \$11.1 billion arms package, but we need to recognize that

deterrence is not just about a weapon system, it is also about clarity, consistency, and credibility in American policy towards Taiwan. The PRC is watching every signal we send.

That is why I was disappointed that in a recent interview President Trump suggested that Taiwan's status is ultimately up to Xi Jinping and brushed off China's growing gray zone activity, saying Beijing has conducted naval exercises in the region for many years. That kind of ambiguity can be very dangerous.

President Trump's recent foreign policy actions in Latin America have fueled speculation about the emergence of a world structured around spheres of influence, one in which the United States will seek to assert predominance in the Western Hemisphere while leaving the PRC to consolidate power in East Asia.

And so the question for Dr. Rapp-Hooper, the last one, is how do you believe Xi Jinping is interpreting the President's recent, quote, "spheres of influence" framing, the so-called "Donroe" doctrine? How does that impact Taiwan?

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. I can't speak to Xi Jinping's personal interpretation.

I can say that, as you are indicating, Congressman, it is incredibly important that no one in the Chinese Government or anyone around the world interpret the United States as in any way drawing down or making compromises to our position in Asia.

It is perfectly possible for us to place a strong emphasis on security and stability in the Western Hemisphere while maintaining and, indeed, increasing our commitments within the first island chain as you have indicated that we need to do.

The NDAA is, indeed, a step in the right direction on many of these fronts, but, frankly, when allies, whether in Taiwan or in other capitals, look at the next few years, they don't just want to see stability in our commitments, in our force posture and our force structure, they want to see increases.

And for us to be able to meet and match the challenges posed by the PRC, we need to keep

ourselves on that steady upward trajectory.

So what I would suggest is necessary to disabuse whatever interpretation Xi Jinping might have is a clear set of signals from Congress and the administration that that steady upward trajectory not only is continuing but cannot be interrupted by negotiations with the PRC.

Thank you.

Mr. Stanton. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you.

Representative Murray.

Mr. Murray. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thanks to the witnesses.

I think it is clear that Beijing's objective is certain, and that is to coerce Taiwan into submission one way or the other. It may be with or without firing a shot. I wouldn't put anything past them. And I think we have got to be very careful there.

I do think that to help accomplish this goal, China and the CCP employs -- no doubt, we have talked about it today -- a wide spectrum of economic tools, economic retaliation against trading partners, coordinated propaganda and disinformation campaigns, diplomatic pressure, targeted coercion of multinational corporations, a lot of things that you guys have talked about today, when Taiwan refuses to conform to its demands, and it is really unfortunate and we have got to take note of it.

These actions, though, are not isolated incidents. They are part of what I believe is an intentional strategy designed to reshape the international environment, weaken democratic resilience, and normalize intimidation as their negotiating tactic.

I want to come to you, Ms. Kan, first, because as we hold these hearings and pursue legislation in Congress, some of our constituents may be skeptical about whether China is really a threat and whether they are rivaling the power of the United States globally, and in particular in the

Indo-Pacific region.

So can you weigh in on whether or not you have an opinion on whether or not China's nonmilitary coercion strategy is working, give some examples about where it is working, because I think it is working, unfortunately, in that region?

And then can you provide some additional background to the committee on how this strategy has been evolving and how it has been refined by the CCP to be effective in Taiwan?

Ms. Kan. Well, for one thing, China has been able to switch the diplomatic recognitions of some countries away from Taiwan, which is formally called the Republic of China.

And so today, Taiwan, which is the Republic of China, formally has 12 countries that recognize it diplomatically, and three of which are in the Pacific Islands, which we have a lot of concern about in this theater.

So it is important for the United States to work with Taiwan and for Taiwan to step up, frankly, along with Japan -- other countries have -- to put more investments in the Pacific Island countries. That is one area.

The second area is concerning the perception that, well, if you don't work with us, then you are not going to have a partner and that there will be war. But that is a fallacy. It is a fallacy because of the coercion that you just mentioned. It is really part of a continuum of threats.

There isn't a clear gap between, well, this is now comforting peacetime and that we might move into this wartime. No, it is one continuum of threats.

So people in Taiwan need to understand that they are not in a comforting time of so-called peacetime right now. There is no such thing. It is a continuum of threats.

Mr. Murray. Yeah. And I think we need to look even beyond the Indo-Pacific region about the influence. You are talking about how some of the diplomatic views of Taiwan have shifted over the years because of the pressure. You can look in the Western Hemisphere, and over the past decade a number of countries have flipped their position on Taiwan because of the Belt and Road

Initiative and what pressure China is putting on even countries in the Western Hemisphere to take their diplomatic positions.

One of the greatest strengths of the United States is our economic diversity and our ability to recover economically, even if certain industries are encountering difficulties.

One of the reasons for this is because our country has resilience just because of the sheer size and the diversity in our economy. Taiwan doesn't have that size, and so they are a little bit more vulnerable, less resilient.

I want to come back to you, Dr. Rapp-Hooper, because you mentioned this earlier.

And so you mentioned specifically ag and fish and construction, I think is what I heard you say. How can we specifically help Taiwan build resiliency economically in those areas and others?

Ms. Rapp-Hooper. Thank you.

I think, as noted, the best way to help Taiwan build economic resilience is to help Taiwan identify ahead of time, ahead of any PRC coercion, alternative markets for its products.

So we have seen instances in the past where the PRC puts a great deal of economic coercion both on Taiwan and on other partners, and the way that a partner generally withstands PRC pressure is to find alternative markets for its products.

We can think about our ally Australia that put up with a great deal of PRC economic coercion over the course of years, and that diversification process was what allowed it to come through.

Because Taiwan is geographically smaller and is smaller as an economy, as you say, doing that work ahead of time, identifying potential markets for some of these products, will be what can provide a little bit more resilience ahead of time.

And I would note that, in particular, we should be looking at European countries that have significantly stepped up their interest in stake in Taiwan issues in recent years as potential destinations.

Mr. Moran. Yeah. It is exactly what we need to be doing. It is a long-term project. It is

not short term. It takes dedicated policies to do that over a number of years, but we absolutely have to do that.

What we also have to do is continue to stand with Taiwan, critical partner to us. This issue is not just about the Indo-Pacific region. It is not just about Taiwan. It is about the U.S. national security. It is about stability, security, prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region and around the world. And it is about, are we going to be a force on this world stage for good or are we going to allow somebody like the CCP to dominate?

There is only one choice that is sufficient in my mind, and that is the United States has to be the big dog on the block to support our friends and allies like Taiwan around the world.

Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman Moolenaar. Thank you.

Well, I want to thank our witnesses today for your testimony and your insights that you shared with us.

I just want to say that questions for the record are due one week from today.

And with that, we are adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:43 a.m., the committee was adjourned.]