

Chairman Brian Babin
Opening Statement
Select Committee on Strategic Competition between the United
States and the Chinese Communist Party Hearing
“Protecting American Innovation: The Federal Research Security
Enterprise”
Wednesday, July 15, 2026, 10:00 AM

Thank you, Chairman Moolenaar, for holding this hearing on such an important topic and allowing me to waive on.

Today, we are here to address a matter of increasing concern for Congress and the American people: protecting our federally funded research and development enterprise.

The threats are real. They come from hostile governments and organizations that do not share our commitment to openness, integrity, and mutual collaboration. Protecting American research from such exploitation is not a partisan issue; it is a national security imperative.

The purpose of today's hearing is clear: to ensure that the laws and directives Congress and the Executive Branch have put in place to protect U.S. research are being implemented effectively and consistently across federal agencies and to identify gaps where additional guidance may be needed.

In 2021, President Trump issued National Security Presidential Memorandum-33, directing federal agencies to safeguard the integrity of U.S. government-supported research and development. The following year, Congress strengthened that foundation through the CHIPS and Science Act, which reinforced federal research security standards and required institutions to establish policies on foreign affiliations, conflicts of interest, and data protection.

Together, these measures form the backbone of our national research security framework. They are meant to defend

American innovation against foreign espionage, cyberattacks, and intellectual property theft—threats that are neither hypothetical nor distant. We’ve seen individuals attempting to smuggle federally funded research, sensitive data, and even dangerous biological materials into and out of the country.

This Committee, along with the Science, Space, and Technology Committee, which I chair, has already issued several letters to agencies, including those represented by today’s witnesses, seeking information on research security implementation. The responses we’ve received highlight significant confusion about expectations, timelines, and enforcement. These gaps are exactly what our adversaries seek to exploit, and that is why congressional oversight is essential.

The federal government has a duty to provide clear, actionable guidance, and the research community has a

responsibility to follow it. Protecting taxpayer-funded research should not depend on which agency an institution works with or which grant it applies for. It must be streamlined, clear, and effective.

However, as these directives are implemented, we must ensure that agencies are not imposing unnecessary administrative burdens or conflicting requirements that make compliance harder rather than easier. Security and innovation are not mutually exclusive, but achieving both requires coordination, clarity, and commitment.

I hope the goal of today's discussion is to identify what is working, what needs improvement, and what Congress can do to strengthen our research enterprise.

We must protect American innovation, uphold the integrity of our research system, and ensure that taxpayer dollars advance U.S. interests—not those of our adversaries.

I want to thank the witnesses for being here this morning and for the work each of you is doing to strengthen our research framework and address these obstacles. Thank you, and I yield back, Mr. Chairman.