



Questions for the Record

Import Controls: Tools to Counter the CCP's Industrial Policy and Supply Chain Threats

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Representative Zach Nunn – District 3

Witness – Mr. Oren Cass

1. In your opening testimony, you advocated for a 'hard break' from China through a bounded domestic market. I agree that we cannot remain dependent on the CCP. However, it is also a real reality that when Beijing initially choked off exports of critical fertilizers, U.S. fertilizer prices surged dramatically and put American farmers in a tough position.

As we work to secure our supply chains and stop relying on foreign adversaries for essential inputs, what safeguards should we be considering to protect American industries from potential near-term disruptions like we saw in the ag sector earlier this year?

Answer: Thank you for this question. In my testimony, I spoke about the importance of distinguishing between different types of imports along two dimensions: first, are they ones on which are already dependent (e.g., critical



minerals) or ones on which we worry about becoming dependent (e.g., humanoid robots); second, are they ones where there is a strategic necessity to decouple immediately (e.g., drones), or ones on which we would like to make progress in the long run (e.g., legacy semiconductors).

Fertilizers fall in this last category: we already dependent on imports, but there is no strategic imperative to decouple immediately. In that situation, I recommend that lawmakers implement policies that gradually raise the price of import (through, for instance, tariffs) while providing public support for investment in expanding domestic capabilities and capacity, so that as imports begin to rise in price, cost effective domestic alternatives come on line.