

House Select Committee on Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party.

June 25, 2026

Subnational influence operations and state government responses for the hearing on “China’s Economic Espionage and Subnational Influence in the United States”

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Chairman Moolenaar, Ranking Member Khanna, and Members of the House Select Committee on Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Michael Lucci. I am the founder and CEO of State Armor. My remarks on subnational influence operations across the United States will focus on:

1. CCP-affiliated entities and individuals pre-positioning near critical infrastructure and military bases;
2. CCP infiltration of state institutions;
3. State responses to these problems, which will focus on Texas and Nebraska as examples; and
4. CCP-aligned influence operations that interfere with state responses.

These items highlight two under-addressed homeland security problems that manifest at the subnational level which I believe are crises. The first crisis is CCP prepositioning across both physical and cyber domains to surveil, disrupt and potentially destroy our critical national assets. The second crisis is the sweeping and malicious influence campaigns attributable to the CCP’s united front political warfare apparatus. This crisis of united front infiltration is spread throughout American civil society but is most acute on college campuses.

Introduction

State Armor’s mission is to win the American homeland. We do this by working state-by-state with policy leaders who want to protect critical infrastructure, protect state government supply chains, and leverage state powers against malicious influence operations. Declaring that we seek to ‘Win the homeland’ of course implies that the homeland is contested. It very much is contested by the Chinese Communist Party and other malicious actors.

State Armor works with state governments, including governors, attorneys' general, state legislatures, law enforcement, and other agencies of jurisdiction to mitigate and solve a variety of security problems. There are several reasons why this is an urgent mission.

1. First, America is a massive continental power. We spread from sea to shining sea. Even if Washington D.C. functioned perfectly, we could not expect every problem of homeland resilience to be solved from Washington D.C. There are tremendous resources and expertise at the state and local level that should rightly become the first layer of defense against our adversaries.
2. Second, the CCP exploits governance seams that naturally exist between our federal and state governments. These seams are a strategic gap that the CCP uses to 'surround the city from the countryside,' by cultivating and leveraging statehouses leaders against our national security consensus.
3. Third, states are co-sovereign with the federal government and are the appropriate jurisdiction to solve a number of security and resilience problems. The power to address security problems in state universities, local utilities, and state pension investments and procurements resides with the states.
4. Finally, the federal government, including this Committee, has repeatedly warned state and local leaders of the need for greater vigilance and protective action against the Chinese Communist Party.

States broaden and deepen our national resilience by taking protective actions. This is State Armor's mission and work. Our experience in carrying out our mission has taught us that the problem of CCP infiltration and subnational influence operations are generally more acute than perceived by federal leaders.

Federal warnings to state leaders are incredibly valuable on national security issues. Whereas, policymakers in Washington D.C. are generally reticent to tell states what to do, state and local leaders are often interested in guidance for definitive action on security threats. In fact, the two most common questions we answer are:

1. Why hasn't the federal government solved this problem?
2. What do federal leaders think we should do?

While a variety of executive agencies and congressional committees have consistently provided warnings and advice, we point to two documents that have helped state leaders translate federal warnings into state action.

First is the document released by President Biden's Office of the Director of National Intelligence in July 2022. The memo is titled "Protecting Government and Business Leaders at the U.S. State and Local Level from People's Republic of China (PRC) Influence Operations." This document describes PRC influence operations targeting the subnational level and business

leaders, and points to a series of potential policy measures and safeguards.¹ The second document President Trump's E.O. 14239: Achieving Efficiency Through State and Local Preparedness, which declared "It is the policy of the United States that State and local governments and individuals play a more active and significant role in national resilience and preparedness." This order calls upon state and local governments to enhance national resilience by adopting measures that protect critical infrastructure and otherwise leverage state and local expertise to secure our homeland.²

Pre-positioning near military bases and critical infrastructure

One of the most persistent and widely reported homeland threats is that of foreign adversaries like the CCP pre-positioning assets, entities and individuals near military bases and critical infrastructure. Such pre-positioning allows for intelligence collection and potentially sabotage.

Some of the most widely reported cases occurred in Texas, North Dakota, Utah, Missouri and Louisiana. In each case, a national security threat has been addressed by state and local action. While these cases generated significant attention, they are but a sampling of the threats rather than an exhaustive list. In fact, through our work with state legislatures, we incidentally found that some of the very individuals and entities involved in these stories were also implicated in concerning asset purchases in other areas around the country that did not make the same headlines even though they involved the same actors pre-positioning near other critical assets. Through our work in 15 states, we have seen dozens of stories like the ones I will describe here. Some we believe to be legitimate threats, while others we never explored far enough to have a developed opinion. Our operations in roughly 15 states have provided insight into what we assume is only a minority of the overall cases.

First, in 2021 a Chinese national who previously served as an officer in the People's Liberation Army was found to have purchased roughly 140,000 acres near Laughlin Air Force Base and the Mexican border. These properties were complete with a ranch airport and runway.³ He intended to build wind turbines and solar fields there, which would give him direct connectivity to Texas' energy grid along with the potential for surveillance upon Laughlin Air Force Base and the Texas-Mexico border. The State of Texas enacted the Lone Star Infrastructure Protection Act to curtail his plans to connect to critical infrastructure after federal authorities did not prevent the investment. While Texas resolved the most acute parts of this threat, much of the property remains under the same ownership.

¹ https://www.dni.gov/files/NCSC/documents/SafeguardingOurFuture/PRC_Subnational_Influence-06-July-2022.pdf

² <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/achieving-efficiency-through-state-and-local-preparedness/>

³ <https://www.forbes.com/sites/johnhyatt/2021/08/09/why-a-secretive-chinese-billionaire-bought-140000-acres-of-land-in-texas/>

The next example came in 2023 when the CCP-connected agricultural company Fufeng Group planned to build a large corn mill processing plant 12 miles from Grand Forks Air Force Base. In this case, the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States did not have jurisdiction. However, the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force sent a letter to Senator John Hoeven which stated: “While CFIUS concluded that it did not have jurisdiction, the Department’s view is unambiguous: the proposed project presents a significant threat to national security with both near-and long-term risks of significant impacts to our operations in the area.”⁴ This project was stopped through local government action. The Grand Forks City Council voted unanimously (5–0) in February 2023 to stop the project by denying the infrastructure connections and approvals needed for construction.⁵

Last year, Utah Governor Spencer Cox blocked the purchase of land near Provo Airport by Cirrus Aircraft, which the Pentagon recently blacklisted as a Chinese Military Company.⁶ Cox was able to take this protective action because of laws Utah enacted in 2023 and 2024 to prevent such CCP-linked purchases. In addition, this past spring, Governor Cox required the owner of the Utah Motorsports Campus to sell the property after Cox described the owner as a shell company for the Chinese Communist Party. Cox also described the divestiture of roughly 35,000 acres from a company that described as owned or controlled by the Chinese government. These assets were near Tooele Army Depot and the Utah Test and Training Range.⁷

Also in 2025, investigative journalist Philip Lenczycki uncovered a trailer park sharing a fence line with Whiteman Air Force Base owned by a Chinese-Canadian couple with alleged ties to Chinese intelligence.⁸ The trailer park is located almost immediately off the runway at Whiteman AFB, which is home to America’s B-2 Spirit Stealth Bomber fleet. Whiteman is also a key part of America’s nuclear deterrent. In January of this year, Missouri Secretary of State Denny Hoskins announced a plan to administratively cancel the business entity that owns the trailer park adjacent to Whiteman.⁹

Also, in January this year, Lenczycki reported on two golf courses that flank Barksdale Air Force Base, which is the headquarters of the Air Force’s Global Strike Command. These golf courses are owned by a man who Lenczycki describes as a CCP intelligence official who previously held a variety of Chinese government jobs.¹⁰ Lenczycki found and reported on the

⁴ <https://www.hoeven.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/media/doc/USAIRFORCE-FUFENG-LETTER-HOEVEN.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.foxbusiness.com/economy/china-fufeng-north-dakota-corn-mill-project-halted-grand-forks-city-council>

⁶ <https://governor.utah.gov/uncategorized/utah-blocks-foreign-land-purchase-near-provo-airport-to-safeguard-national-security/>

⁷ <https://www.sltrib.com/news/politics/2026/02/13/utah-forces-chinese-company-sell/>

⁸ <https://dailycaller.com/2025/11/10/exclusive-us-nuclear-bomber-fleet-shares-fence-trailer-park-linked-chinese-intel-miles-guo/>

⁹ <https://www.sos.mo.gov/default.aspx?PageId=10604>

¹⁰ <https://dailycaller.com/2026/01/05/exclusive-ccp-intel-official-owns-golf-clubs-barksdale-afb/>

gentleman's tell-all autobiography, which was published in Chinese. The autobiography describes his work in the United States, much of which is conducted to the benefit of the CCP. This gentleman has since become an American citizen. Louisiana lawmakers passed a series of bills this spring to mitigate this complicated problem.

These five cases made national headlines. There are dozens of other cases which do not make headlines, but which are nonetheless very worthy of federal and state investigation. Coincidentally, when State Armor operated in Indiana, state lawmakers discovered the Fufeng Group was attempting to receive state economic incentives from the Indiana Economic Development Corporation to take over an agricultural location in Kingsbury that would have put Fufeng in ownership of an asset that straddles critical rail lines.¹¹ This occurred in the spring of 2024 after Fufeng had been rejected at Grand Forks. We have seen security threats like what I describe here in every state where we work.

While I personally think CCP ownership of American farmland should be prohibited, I would note that when they own farmland we can at least see where they are, and we can generally see what they are doing. Perhaps a more pernicious threat is their ownership of industrial assets, which can be purchased outright or built upon a greenfield investment. These purchases give them concealment, access to critical infrastructure, integration into American supply chains, and integration into important communities. For example, BYD was recently sanctioned by the Pentagon as a Chinese Military Company operating in the U.S. BYD's factory in Lancaster, California, for which they received significant state and local economic incentives, puts them roughly 8 miles from Lockheed Martin and Northrop Grumman's advanced development programs located at Palmdale Regional Airport.

These examples are spread across the country and are not, in my opinion, isolated incidents and coincidences. Rather, these examples are a part of a systematic infiltration of the American homeland that is a component of broad CCP subnational influence operations.

Infiltration of state institutions

The CCP targets a variety of state institutions. In our experience, they target state university systems and state governments most heavily. The CCP infiltration of American higher education is, in my opinion, a crisis. It is not difficult to check the webpage of practically any large state university and quickly find entities, individuals, research partnerships, funding, and organizations that likely tie back to China's military or intelligence services. Such entities and individuals are heavily involved in our research processes on campus. We have gone through analysis of these problems alongside leading state lawmakers across enough states that we see

¹¹ <https://indianacapitalchronicle.com/2024/03/05/senate-moves-foreign-ownership-of-farmland-bill-over-economic-development-concerns/>

clear patterns emerge that speak to the importance of both state reforms but also federal proposals like the SAFE Research Act.

Unfortunately, we assess that campus research security efforts provide a minimum and insufficient response to the threat. The operative goal of research security efforts seems to be to attempt to ensure campuses do not violate federal law, and there are many documented lapses in achieving even this bare minimum goal. That speaks to the need for new state and federal legislation that makes more of these research partnerships illegal or disincentivized. The appropriate goal of research security should be to ensure we are not transferring intellectual property and know-how that could someday be used against our men and women in uniform. We should provide overwhelming preference for research partnerships with our friends and treaty allies over a designated foreign adversary like Communist China.

The best work on the infiltration of state university research programs came from this Committee which shows that our federal government is funding research that ultimately ends up developing Chinese technical know-how and modernizing China's military. This Committee's seminal "Fox in the Henhouse," report described how American universities are taking Pentagon grants and partnering with entities in China linked to the Chinese military for research on developing advanced military technologies.¹² Over two years, over 1,400 Pentagon-funded research papers were conducted in partnership with Chinese entities. In over half of these examples, the Chinese entity was affiliated with China's defense research and industrial base.

In addition, the Select Committee's "Containment Breach" report identified 4,350 research papers that were funded by the Department of Energy and executed in partnership with PRC entities. In half the cases, the partnership was with an entity within China's defense research and industrial base. There are many examples of research work being conducted in partnership with one of China's 'Seven Sons of National Defense.' Some American universities even partnered with China's primary nuclear weapons research and development complex for joint research. These papers were funded by the Department of Energy over a period of just two years.

The degree of CCP campus infiltration is hard to appreciate until you repeatedly experience it first-hand. There are dangerous campus research partnerships that go beyond what is described in your reports, including partnerships on sensitive research with entities sanctioned by the Commerce Department. While this Committee's reports provide a fantastic and broad analysis of federal grants being funneled into research that ultimately benefits the CCP, we believe that this is a symptom of broad, systemic infiltration and subversion of the American academy by the Chinese Communist Party. There are plenty more problematic partnerships that are not federally-funded.

¹² <https://chinaselectcommittee.house.gov/media/reports/fox-in-the-henhouse>

The Select Committee's reports caused an appropriate firestorm in the statehouses where lawmakers digested their findings. State leaders are shocked to read their leading universities are effectively advancing the interests of the People's Liberation Army and using federal funds to do it. This past spring, Louisiana State Senator Adam Bass passed the nation's most comprehensive state law on protecting campus research from the CCP and countering their campus influence operations. Senator Bass made clear that he expected Louisiana's universities to exit the troubling partnerships revealed in your reports.

Furthermore, Chairman Moolenaar has called for Chinese Student and Scholar Associations to be treated as foreign missions on American campuses.¹³ These CSSAs are ubiquitous across large American campuses, and according to our State Department, they are leveraged by the Party to suppress campus dissent against the CCP regime and to steal intellectual property to support China's rise.¹⁴ The American federal and state response to protect the crown jewels of our higher education system has been insufficient to mitigate what we believe is a crisis.

State responses to these problems

Roughly half of American states have taken meaningful policy action against CCP threats to critical infrastructure, supply chains, and higher education. The most common state law is to prevent foreign adversary ownership of farmland. However, there are dozens of other reforms that states should and have enacted. A significant portion of these reforms have been bipartisan. I will highlight the actions taken in Nebraska and Texas as examples because those states have taken the most comprehensive action of any states, and they have also experienced some of the broadest pushback from CCP-linked interests.

Nebraska's work has been driven by a bipartisan partnership between Republican Governor Jim Pillen and Democrat State Senator Eliot Bostar. Over four consecutive years, Pillen and Bostar have delivered nation-leading reforms. They started in 2023 with a unique program to accelerate the removal of Huawei equipment after Nebraska officials discovered the equipment was installed in radio towers that surrounded the nuclear missile silos in western Nebraska.¹⁵

Then in 2024, Pillen and Bostar partnered to enact a Pacific Conflict Stress Test law, which creates a state task force to investigate the potential domestic fallout of a conflict over Taiwan or another conflict in the South Sea. Nebraska is preparing for the type of a contingency

¹³ <https://chinaselectcommittee.house.gov/media/press-releases/chairmen-moolenaar-mast-walberg-ask-rubio-to-act-on-the-chinese-students-and-scholars-association>

¹⁴ <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/CCP-on-campus-FINAL.pdf>

¹⁵ <https://www.cnn.com/2022/07/23/politics/fbi-investigation-huawei-china-defense-department-communications-nuclear>

that would make the supply chain disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic look minor in comparison. Nebraska also enacted a procurement reform to prohibit state purchase of Chinese technologies, along with a property protection law to prevent farmland purchases by foreign adversaries. In 2025, Nebraska enacted a state foreign agent registration law that applies to federally-designated adversaries, a transnational repression law, a ban on using Chinese genetic sequencers in any state-funded or state-regulated regulated facility, a prohibition on financial incentives going to foreign adversary companies, and a special registration requirement for lobbyists who represent Chinese Military Companies that are sanctioned by the Pentagon.

In 2026, Nebraska passed a new law to keep Chinese companies and technologies out of critical infrastructure. The law also provided enhanced punishments for spreading a biological pathogen in Nebraska's agricultural lands. Nebraska also became the first state to prohibit state money transmitter licenses from being issued to foreign adversary companies. They took this action in response to a Financial Times article that suggested Alibaba had used American data to help the People's Liberation Army target the United States.¹⁶

Notably, Nebraska Attorney General Mike Hilgers has brought consumer fraud claims against Chinese camera providers and mobile phone applications. This is a growing area of state enforcement action. State attorneys general have even partnered with the FCC to understand these technological threats and how they might violate state consumer fraud laws.¹⁷

Texas has achieved similarly broad policy reforms. In 2021, Texas enacted the Lone Star Critical Infrastructure Protection Act to keep CCP agents from connecting to critical infrastructure. In 2024, Governor Abbott issued an executive order to crack down on transnational repression, another order to protect state institutions and critical infrastructure, and a third order to prepare for the fallout of a potential pacific conflict. Governor Abbott also ordered the complete divestment of state pension funds from China.

In 2025, Texas' legislature enacted a suite of bipartisan reforms driven in the House by Representative Cole Hefner and in the Senate by Senator Bryan Hughes. These included the first state law on transnational repression, the creation of Texas Cyber Command, a land and property protection law, a broad higher education protection law, a pension divestment law, the creation of a law enforcement unit to track and counter foreign adversary influence operations (including united front influence campaigns), the creation of a geopolitical conflict stress test committee, a prohibition on lobbyists accepting payment from foreign adversary sources, and a prohibition on sister cities with China.

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton has also brought consumer fraud claims against Chinese mobile app providers, camera companies, drone companies, router companies, and TV

¹⁶ <https://www.ft.com/content/30fb83a0-8cb9-4805-b5d2-19b5ef510043?syn-25a6b1a6=1>

¹⁷ <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/fcc-state-ags-join-forces-crackdown-china-linked-communications-technology>

companies. General Paxton has taken more actions against Chinese technology providers than any other AG.

Texas and Nebraska are far from the only states to engage and counter the CCP threat, but they are the two states to do so most aggressively and comprehensively. Their efforts have included action from their governors, legislatures and attorneys general. In addition, Texas and Nebraska provide great examples of how CCP-aligned influence operations interfere with state protective responses.

States like Florida, Tennessee, Louisiana, Kansas, Arizona, Utah, Arkansas, and Indiana have also taken significant action across issue areas, and in some cases have led with new solutions. Even California's Assembly has unanimously passed powerful measures to protect California farmland and to prevent transnational repression, though each of these unanimous bills was vetoed by the governor.

CCP-aligned influence operations to interfere with state responses

The CCP engages in a multi-layered influence and infiltration effort at the subnational level. First comes the infiltration that I have described which includes pre-positioning near military bases and critical infrastructure along with the infiltration of state institutions. Later, the CCP's broader influence campaigns become clear when state lawmakers attempt to mitigate these problems. Any state that attempts to unwind CCP infiltration of its critical infrastructure, supply chains, and institutions will likely find CCP-aligned actors showing up to their statehouses to interfere in the policy-making process.

Jamestown Foundation recently published a report titled "Harnessing the People: Mapping Overseas United Front Work in Democratic States." Jamestown analyzed nearly 1,000 entities in the U.S. that are connected to CCP united front influence operations.¹⁸ These organizations are characterized by having at least one individual who is coordinating the organization's activities with the CCP party-state, often subverting these American organizations and using the organization's voice to advance the CCP's voice. We believe that many of the statehouse interference actions we have experienced are run adjacent to or in coordination with the CCP's broader united front influence operations.

However, the first layer of advocacy for Chinese interests often comes from global corporate interests. The 2022 memo from President Biden's Office of the Director of National Intelligence warns that PRC interests "cultivate and leverage business and government leaders at

¹⁸ <https://jamestown.org/harnessing-the-people-mapping-overseas-united-front-work-in-democratic-states/>

the U.S. state and local level,” and that the PRC is interested in “Shaping policy via the business community.”¹⁹

This is happening across the country. For example, on June 4th, Nebraska Senator Eliot Bostar testified to the Congressional-Executive Commission on China that representatives of Smithfield Foods visited him when he was advancing state legislation that would require foreign agent registration. Senator Bostar stated:

*We received thinly-veiled threats from Smithfield, which is owned by the Chinese now, that if we went through with this and passed these bills there was the potential that they could shut down operations, disrupting the economy of Nebraska certainly, as well as food supply for the United States. And so that's just one example that we faced, but we faced many.*²⁰

Nebraska Governor Jim Pillen has also been very outspoken in describing how both Chinese and American corporate interests have pressured his office to back off from enacting state solutions. There are other examples from Nebraska that have not yet been described in public.

In another example, Cirrus Aircraft, which was recently sanctioned by the Pentagon as a Chinese Military Company, has advocated in statehouses like Florida and Tennessee. This spring, they successfully lobbied to remove a critical infrastructure protection from legislation in Florida, and they were unsuccessful in lobbying to create a special tax credit for themselves in Tennessee.

While Smithfield and Cirrus are owned by Chinese interests, American corporations often insert themselves in the state policymaking process in a way that benefits the PRC. The most confounding examples occur when the American companies try to block legislation without making a clear business case for their interference. A Washington Examiner article titled “Amazon wages quiet war to stop state governments from taking Chinese equipment out of government offices”²¹ describes one such case of Amazon seeking to prevent state laws that would ban public procurement of Chinese technologies.

The influence operations that are more directly tied to the party-state fall into what I consider to be the category of united front influence operations that have been described in

¹⁹ https://www.dni.gov/files/NCSC/documents/SafeguardingOurFuture/PRC_Subnational_Influence-06-July-2022.pdf

²⁰ <https://www.cecc.gov/events/hearings/prcs-threats-americans-transnational-repression-state-level-responses>

²¹ <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/3410536/lobbyists-amazon-chinese-goods-state-governments-mark-cochran-legislation/>

publications by this Committee²² and by the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission.²³ To describe how this works, I will first describe an individual.

Imagine an individual who is a Chinese national who graduated from one of China's Seven Sons of National Defense before earning a graduate degree in the United States in a dual-use specialization. This individual then took employment in a highly sensitive science and technology job that has direct American national security implications, and which includes access to vast troves of sensitive data. This individual engaged in multiple suspicious episodes during the pandemic to harvest American PPE early in the pandemic to send back to China, and then later to serve as a conduit for distributing Chinese PPE back into America after China had secured its PPE supply. This individual is also connected to multiple entities that are linked to China's united front system.

This description is not of just one individual, but rather of multiple identifiable people we run into in statehouses across the country who oppose protective state legislation. Multiple people in different states fit into the profile I describe. They also show evidence of other suspicious tradecraft that goes beyond what I have described. These individuals, despite having a background exclusively in science and technology, have testified in opposition to as many as eight bills in one day that cover a range of topics from pension divestment to genetic protection to transnational repression to higher education protection. And these individuals act like statehouse "point men" who lead dozens of Chinese nationals in protests and interference. They are often bused around to state capitals across the country.

When these groups testify, they echo shared talking points that reflect Chinese consulate talking points even when those talking points are completely irrelevant to the legislation in question. In fact, Ambassador Kelly Currie testified next to one of these individuals in Texas and observed the gentleman scrolling his phone during testimony to get talking points off social media run by Chinese government agencies and Chinese state media.²⁴

Texas Public Policy Foundation's Chuck DeVore made exactly this point in his 2025 testimony to the Texas Senate Committee on State Affairs when he said:

I was listening carefully to the testimony of many of the individuals who came before me, and I was struck by the similarity in the arguments of much of that testimony. And further, that the arguments actually did not respond at all to the bill. They were talking about how they would, for example, be prevented from purchasing residential real estate. Well, the bill doesn't address residential real estate. It doesn't affect residential real estate. It also doesn't affect citizens or individuals who are lawful permanent residents. So there was a

²² <https://chinaselectcommittee.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/selectcommitteeontheccp.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/uf-101-memo-final-pdf-version.pdf>

²³ https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2026-03/China_201_United_Front.pdf

²⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWPFalcsZoE>

lot of misperceptions that I heard in the testimony and I thought it sounded a little familiar. So I looked back and I found a statement. I want to read it, Mr. Chairman. It goes as follows:

“Commercial interaction between China and the U.S. benefit both sides. To politicize trade and investment is at odds with market economy principles and undercuts peoples’ confidence in the U.S. market. Such restrictions may also fuel Asian hatred in the U.S. and racial discrimination, thus running counter to American values.”

Mr. Chairman, that statement was from the embassy of the People’s Republic of China in an article in the Washington Post in August of 2023.²⁵

Perhaps the most acute legislative disruption in Texas came on September 10, 2024 when the meeting of the Texas House Select Committee on Securing Texas from Hostile Foreign Organizations was disrupted by a cyberattack that took over the live stream.²⁶ Other Texas hearings have been overrun by Chinese nationals so that it was impossible for anyone else to get into the hearing room. At a hearing on April 2, 2025, Chinese nationals yelled at and harassed a Chinese-American who attended the hearing to speak in favor of the proposed legislation. We are even aware of Texas state lawmakers being physically threatened by Chinese nationals inside the Texas statehouse.

What I describe in Texas and Nebraska are not one-off interference events. We observe the same interference in statehouses across the country. Recently, states like Ohio and Louisiana²⁷ have come under significant pressure from similar operations. The individuals involved are identifiable. There is often a “point man” who leads and coordinates the influence activities. Statehouse streaming services record and preserve much of what I’m describing. A Wall Street Journal article covering State Armor’s work featured a photo of me testifying in a Texas.²⁸ Sitting right next to me is an individual who testified in opposition to the majority of the 11 bills considered that day. During that daylong hearing, he repeatedly described himself as conveying the viewpoints and opinions of the Chinese government.

Wherever state lawmakers seek to protect their states in a robust way, influence operations tied to corporate interests and the CCP’s united front system are likely to pop up to prevent state action. They leverage a broad range of businesses, non-profits, academics, Chinese nationals, and others sympathetic to their arguments. In many cases, these pressure groups push to prevent states from enacting the very type of legislation that federal authorities recommend states consider.

²⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWPFalcsZoE>

²⁶ <https://www.fox7austin.com/news/texas-committee-hearing-cut-short-due-livestream-hack>

²⁷ <https://dailycallernewsfoundation.org/2026/03/26/exclusive-ccp-tied-activists-desperately-trying-to-keep-chinese-land-grabs-alive-near-us-military-bases/>

²⁸ <https://www.wsj.com/us-news/the-china-foe-storming-state-capitols-47ae109b>

The CCP's united front seeks to leverage interests and individuals *outside the Party* to advance the viewpoints and geopolitical interests *of the Party*. While there are undoubtedly organic and understandable questions that come from the Chinese-American community in this policymaking process, what American statehouses are experiencing is not merely normal constituent concerns. State leaders are being pressured by entities and individuals that are stealing the voice of the Chinese-American community and weaponizing it on behalf of the Communist Party. They are proving that the first and greatest victims of the Chinese Communist Party are the Chinese people themselves, both in China and now in the United States. That is exactly how academic experts describe how united front influence operations work.²⁹

Influence and pressure campaigns occurring across the country constitute unacceptable interference within our political system by a party-state that believes it should be able to dictate outcomes not just in China, but also in American statehouses and city halls. United front operations ally with and weaponize those outside the Party to advance the interests of those inside the Party. Meanwhile, American statehouses are experiencing entities and individuals who are not a part of our democratic system nonetheless seeking to influence and subvert our democracy.

America's adversaries present physical threats, cyber threats, and supply chain threats within our country. These threats are increasingly backed by influence operations and political muscle that powers legislative interference. One of the great virtues of American society is our openness and transparency. But we cannot allow ourselves to be so open that our foremost adversary can dictate outcomes in the halls of American power in Washington D.C. or in state capitals across the country.

²⁹ https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/183fcc_5dfb4a9b2dde492db4002f4aa90f4a25.pdf