

## United States Senate

July 11, 2023

The Honorable Lloyd Austin  
Secretary of Defense  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1400 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301

The Honorable Janet Yellen  
Secretary of the Treasury  
U.S. Department of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20220

The Honorable Gina Raimondo  
Secretary of Commerce  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Secretaries Austin, Yellen, and Raimondo,

I am alarmed by recent reports that the Chinese spy balloon was loaded with America-made equipment that was used to spy on Americans. This is not only further confirmation that this was not a civilian weather balloon, as the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) claimed, but that the CCP's intention was also to spy on the United States in the most brazen manner possible, by using our own technology against us. Given reports that China has been spying on the United States from a base in Cuba since 2019, all of this indicates a pattern of continued malign intentions on the part of the CCP. This is nothing short of outrageous.

Because the United States does not share military technology with China or allow trade with entities that are considered part of the Chinese military, it is imperative for the administration to immediately identify how China has obtained and illegally deployed this technology and ensure this does not happen again.

This act of espionage shows the high likelihood that China is skirting and evading both the law and spirit of U.S. military end use export restrictions. For this reason, I ask that the Department of Defense work with the Departments of Commerce and Treasury to review the technologies used in the Chinese spy balloon and cross-reference this against current Military End Use/User lists of technologies and entities, as well as sanctions and financial flows. I further ask that your Departments provide the Committees on Armed Services and Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs both a briefing and a report on any and all sanctions and trade regulations that were violated, as well as shortcomings of the current sanctions and regulations that the administration, in conjunction with Congress, can address to prevent future Chinese violation of U.S. national security interests.

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Time and again under the Biden Administration, the United States has been embarrassed on the world stage. It began with the botched withdrawal from Afghanistan and was further perpetuated as the Chinese spy balloon was allowed to traverse our nuclear missile fields at Malmstrom Air Force Base before flying over the rest of the country unabated.

The United States must repair its image around the world. This starts with projecting strength, not weakness. Lack of action by the Administration on this issue will continue to project the Administration's pattern of weakness. I therefore urge you to address this issue immediately.

Sincerely,



STEVE DAINES  
United States Senator