
WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Joshua Hodges, Commissioner

U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission

Counting the Cost: Communist China's Toll on Older Americans' Health, Finances, and Security

United States Senate Special Committee on Aging

June 17, 2026

Chairman Scott, Ranking Member Gillibrand, and Members of the Committee, I am grateful for this Committee's sustained attention to these issues, and for your recognition that the threat posed by the Chinese Communist Party is not only a geopolitical one, but a direct threat here at home. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

The U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission was created by Congress 25 years ago to examine, in an integrated way, how the People's Republic of China's actions affect American economic and national security. The central finding I want to convey today is this: the Chinese Communist Party is engaged in a deliberate, systematic campaign to build new leverage and chokepoints across multiple domains — upstream raw material inputs, industrial processing and manufacturing, downstream applications, and the frontier technologies that will define the next generation of economic and national power. They also seek to eliminate American production capability across sectors that Americans depend on for their health, financial security, and daily lives. These chokeholds are visible in everyday household products, in the devices that keep older Americans alive at home, in retirement accounts, and in the infrastructure that underpins American health and security.

My fellow Commissioners will address the pharmaceutical supply chain and active pharmaceutical ingredient dependency, the industrial-scale scam networks, and the data collection architecture Beijing is assembling against the American public. I would like to bring into focus domains that have received less attention but are equally consequential — the biotechnology competition that will determine who controls the next generation of medicine and military capability, the infrastructure vulnerabilities that put medically dependent older Americans at specific physical risk, and the uncomfortable reality that American retirement savings have in some cases helped finance the apparatus being deployed against the United States.

The Commission's 2025 Annual Report documented this playbook in detail in its chapter on China's manufacturing and innovation engine — what the Report describes as 'China Shock 2.0.' The pattern is straightforward: China identifies a critical input, deploys state-backed overcapacity and below-cost pricing to drive Western and allied producers out of the market, and then owns the supply chain — permanently. The Report found this dynamic operating across a wide range of sectors essential to the American economy, and recommended coordinated action to offset the cost disadvantage facing U.S. companies that rely on non-Chinese suppliers.

Beyond this, the Commission has not yet specifically produced a look at the chemicals-related examples but my personal views on them are based on conversations with industry about China's market distorting

practices—and the trend is very alarming. Materials needed for IV tubing, pacemaker leads, surgical implants, pharmaceutical processing equipment, semiconductor fabrication, and advanced defense systems are all items that should concern us. China holds a dominant position across this supply chain and is the world's largest producer at several key steps, through deliberate market manipulation that has systematically driven down the economics of allied and partner producers over decades. The Department of Defense has confirmed there are no functional substitutes within a ten-to-fifteen year horizon. If these gaps are not corrected, America's ability to manufacture essential products will increasingly have no alternative but Chinese supply.

The Commission's recent hearing series has examined each face of China's strategy: the commodity derivatives markets China is using to acquire pricing leverage over raw material inputs; the data collection architecture Beijing is assembling that can be used against the American public; the scam networks in Southeast Asia specifically targeting older Americans, documented in the 2025 Annual Report's dedicated appendix on China's exploitation of scam centers; and the supply chain chokepoints eroding U.S. security. Each hearing revealed different instruments. Each instrument is part of one strategy. And Beijing is also focused aggressively on establishing firm leverage over the technologies that will dominate the future — including biotechnology, commercial space, and AI.

As part of the Commission's efforts to look over the horizon, we have held hearings in 2024 on *Current and Emerging Technologies in U.S.-China Economic and National Security Competition*, and in 2025 on *Made in China 2025 — Who Is Winning?*. Based on the Annual Report, biotechnology is simultaneously a frontier technology domain and a production chokepoint in formation — and the competition with China is acute enough that the timeline for action is measured in years, not decades. The National Security Commission on Emerging Biotechnology concluded in December 2025 that the United States has a three-year window to retain, or in some cases regain, biotechnology leadership — or risk ceding profound military, geopolitical, and economic advantages to China. China is no longer a fast-follower in biotechnology; in certain domains of biopharmaceutical innovation, it is now leading.

Beijing's approach mirrors the chokepoint strategy precisely. Since its 14th Five-Year Plan in 2021, the CCP has built a vertically integrated biotechnology ecosystem — from genomic data collection through biomanufacturing infrastructure through clinical trial systems — that is now positioned to challenge American leadership across the full value chain. Government-directed venture capital, subsidized manufacturing capacity, and state-funded genomic data collection have advanced in coordinated sequence. This is not market competition. It is strategy implemented on top of non-market practices and brute force economics, with the full weight of the Chinese state behind it.

Though the Commission did not delve into this in depth, the threat to the constituents you represent is direct and documented. Entities like BGI Group — one of the world's largest genomics companies — operate as military-civil fusion enablers for the People's Liberation Army and sit on the Department of Defense's 1260H list of Chinese military companies operating in the United States. Its systematic harvesting of genomic and health data from Americans serves Beijing's strategic targeting architecture alongside its commercial ambitions. The BIOSECURE Act provisions in the FY2026 NDAA represent congressional recognition of this threat, but the underlying dynamic — Chinese biotechnology entities embedded in American research institutions and healthcare supply chains — is far from resolved.

For this Committee's constituents specifically: as our April 2026 hearing on *Taking a Bigger Byte: China's Expanding Strategy for Data Dominance* documented, older Americans can be the most genomically and medically profiled population in the country — their clinical histories the longest, their genetic data the most complete, their medical records the most valuable for precision targeting, whether for intelligence profiling, insurance actuarial exploitation, or social engineering fraud. Biotechnology is not a future risk. The data collection is already underway.

Let me bring this to the Americans this Committee represents. Older Americans are the population most exposed to every vector I have described. They are the heaviest users of the generic drugs whose ingredients China controls. They are the patients with pacemakers and surgical implants containing fluoropolymer components from supply chains increasingly dependent on China. And they are the primary targets of the scam networks Commissioner Price has described.

The energy and infrastructure vulnerabilities most directly relevant to this Committee's constituents has not yet received adequate legislative attention. Chinese-manufactured components in American grid infrastructure — inverters, battery energy storage systems, power management software — may contain remote monitoring capabilities and in some cases remote access pathways. The Commission's 2025 Annual Report documented Chinese APT activity against U.S. grid infrastructure, and the Volt Typhoon campaign demonstrated that China has already positioned itself for disruptive operations against American critical systems. A deliberate power disruption would fall hardest on older Americans dependent on home medical equipment: oxygen concentrators, insulin refrigeration, cardiac devices, dialysis machines. For this population, a grid failure is not an inconvenience. It is a medical emergency.

The Commission recommended in 2025 that Congress prohibit import of energy storage systems with remote monitoring capabilities manufactured by or with technology licensed from Chinese entities. The House has introduced legislation, but no further action has been taken.

The central challenge is not awareness. The problem is that Washington continues to treat these as separate issues, addressing each in isolation rather than looking at all of it together — and Beijing is counting on that. As Commissioner Miller has observed in this hearing series: Washington still treats privacy, telecommunications security, critical-infrastructure resilience, and artificial intelligence as separate problems. Beijing does not. I would add to that list every biomanufacturing dependency, every supply chain chokepoint, and every retirement account with exposure to Chinese military companies. They are not separate problems. They are one strategy. And it is working — here, on the Americans you represent, right now.

China has a clear strategy, backed by resources and intent. It is building chokepoints across every layer of the production economy — from the minerals in the ground to the frontier technologies of the next generation — while simultaneously deploying that leverage through data collection, financial infiltration, and infrastructure embedding. The harms are not geopolitical abstractions. They are landing on the Americans this Committee exists to protect, right now.

The Commission's 2025 Annual Report and the hearing record we have been building throughout recent years provide Congress with the findings and analysis underlying the recommendations we offer today. I commend both to the Committee. The Americans you represent do not experience these threats one policy silo at a time. They experience them all at once.

I am grateful for this Committee's leadership in examining these issues with the integrated attention Beijing uses to execute them. I look forward to your questions.