



Chairman Rick Scott's Opening Remarks March 11, 2026 Hearing

"The U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging will now come to order.

What if I told you that Communist China, an adversary of the United States, has sole control of the building blocks of many of the medicines seniors and Americans rely on?

I'm not just talking about a few medicines. I'm talking about our antibiotics. Our diabetes drugs. Our blood pressure medications. Essential life-saving medicines found in every hospital, every pharmacy, and every medicine cabinet in this country.

This isn't speculation. It's our reality.

Xi Jinping and his thugs in the CCP are our enemies, and they're controlling the very medications our families rely on to live happy, healthy lives.

Today's hearing is about getting to the bottom of why this is the case.

And I want to be very clear – it didn't happen because Communist China was clever or lucky.

This happened because Washington was negligent, lobbyists are powerful, and politicians in both parties chose cheap over safe.

For 30 years, we watched Communist China's government and its leaders execute a deliberate, documented, publicly stated plan to capture the global drug supply chain.

They weren't trying to hide it. The signs were obvious – and our government did absolutely nothing to stop it.

As a matter of fact – Washington politicians created regulatory barriers and enacted policies that pushed manufacturing overseas and right into the CCP's hands.

This Committee has spent the last six months exposing this threat and building this case, piece by piece, hearing by hearing.

In September, we exposed how our dependence on foreign generics is threatening drug safety and availability for American patients.

In October, we brought in experts to examine solutions and discuss ideas like procurement reform and supply chain transparency.

In November, we had American manufacturers testify what a rebuilt domestic industry could actually look like.

And in January, I, along with Ranking Member Gillibrand and several members of this Committee, introduced the [CLEAR LABELS Act](#), to inject transparency into our drug supply system.

Because the American people have a right to know where their drugs and the medicines keeping their mothers, fathers, and children alive come from. We have written to the FDA and the Secretary of HHS. We have written to drug distributors and group purchasing organizations, demanding answers about their foreign sourcing.

We have written to Secretary Hegseth about what dependence on Communist China means for the health and readiness of our own troops.

We even published an investigative report that documents, in plain terms, what decades of offshoring has done to the American drug manufacturing industry.

Over the last 24 years, domestic production has COLLAPSED – dropping from 84% of the U.S. market in 2002 to just 37% today.

80% of APIs used in these essential medicines have no U.S. source whatsoever.

Let that sink in. 80%.

During COVID-19, the Chinese government nationalized its own medical supply production, turned off the exports, and decided which countries got lifesaving drugs based on politics.

37 Chinese factories that made ingredients for American drugs shut down during the pandemic. U.S. hospitals and health care workers fighting to keep Americans alive ran out of sedatives, antibiotics, and cancer drugs.

That was a taste of what it looks like when you let an adversary control your supply of essential medicines.

And it should serve as a warning for us all. If we just sit here, hold this hearing, thank our witnesses and go home without acting – it will happen again, but worse.

I didn't come here today to preside over another Washington exercise where all we do is identify a problem and then pat ourselves on the back because we named it.

This Committee has been working since DAY ONE to sound the alarm, talk to experts, and present REAL solutions to fix the problem.

I hope today will be the moment that alarm becomes impossible to ignore.

To all the members of this Committee and all our Congressional colleagues, let's continue to work together to fix this problem.

Let's find a path forward that will protect American patients and American lives – the lives of OUR CONSTITUENTS."

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