ACADEMIC SECURITY AND COUNTER EXPLOITATION PROGRAM

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JOINT STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES IN SUPPORT OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION: REENGAGING THE WORLD TO MAKE THE UNITED STATES STRONGER AT HOME

U.S. Department of State and U.S. Department of Education | July 27, 2021

The United States cannot afford to be absent from the world stage: U.S. leadership and engagement makes an essential difference abroad, as well as at home. Indeed, in today's interconnected world, our foreign and domestic policies are inextricably intertwined in pursuit of a preeminent goal – improving the lives of the American people. Many of our most pressing challenges are inherently global in scope and impact and can only be addressed by nations and individuals working together. From tackling pandemics and the climate crisis, to reducing economic disparities and building prosperity, to countering threats to democracy and maintaining peace – resolving these global challenges requires partnership and collaboration across borders. It is imperative that we continue to cooperate with our allies, invest in our relationships, and broaden our engagement worldwide. The robust exchange of students, researchers, scholars, and educators, along with broader international education efforts between the United States and other countries, strengthens relationships between current and future leaders.

Read the full joint statement here.

RUBIO, CRAMER INTRODUCE BILL TO TARGET DONATIONS FROM FOREIGN ADVERSARIES TO AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES, HOLD HIGHER EDUCATION MORE ACCOUNTABLE

Senator Marco Rubio Press Release | August 3, 2021

U.S. Senators Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Kevin Cramer (R-ND) introduced the Greater Insight into Foreign Transactions (GIFTs) in Higher Education Act to target gifts and donations from designated foreign adversaries to American colleges and universities. The legislation would also hold institutions of higher education and the U.S. Department of Education more accountable to reporting requirements under Section 117 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA), which governs reporting of foreign gifts. A one pager of the legislation is available here. "Hostile foreign adversaries, including the Chinese Communist Party, routinely seek to infiltrate our higher education institutions to steal our research and exploit our intellectual property," Rubio said. "There is absolutely no reason that bad actors should be able to run these foreign influence operations that seek to undermine America.

Read the full article here.

NIH-WIDE STRATEGIC PLAN: FISCAL YEARS 2021-2025

As our nation's biomedical research agency, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has been the driving force behind many of the recent innovations in science and technology that are improving the health of all humankind. The coming years are certain to offer many exciting new opportunities for scientific exploration—and to pose some serious new challenges for human health. To rise to those opportunities and challenges, it is imperative that NIH, along with all sectors of society, work together in unprecedented ways with unprecedented speed. Indeed, science is moving faster than ever before. To fuel this engine of discovery, NIH must continue to support the highest caliber research throughout the country and the world, while at the same time take vigorous steps to uphold the ethical conduct of science. NIH will further enhance the science of tomorrow by continuing its efforts to build a next generation of researchers that better reflects the rich, creative diversity of our great nation. The increasingly complex scientific questions that our society will face in the future will require not only diversity of scientific disciplines, but also diversity of thought, experience, and demographics. As a publicly funded agency, NIH has a responsibility to be a good steward of the funds entrusted to us by the U.S. taxpayers. NIH will do this by investing efficiently and effectively in a wide range of basic, translational, clinical, and applied research, while at the same time supporting the workforce and infrastructure required for a sustainable research enterprise.

Read the full report here.

NATIONAL SCIENCE BOARD VISION 2030

Roger N. Beachy, Vicki L. Chandler, Robert M. Groves, Ellen Ochoa, Julia M. Phillips, and Maria T. Zuber

United States (U.S.) leadership in science and engineering (S&E) has shaped Americans' way of life for seven decades, contributing to the nation's economic prosperity and ensuring its national security. The U.S. S&E ecosystem, built on federally funded fundamental research, has led to innovation and new industries, revolutionized health care, promoted peace, created the mobile digital world, and transformed nearly every aspect of Americans' lives. Today, science continues to be the endless frontier, but U.S. researchers are not the only explorers. Science and engineering – particularly fundamental research conducted transparently and openly – benefits the entire world. Yet if the U.S. is to ensure a strong economy and national security, it is vital that a significant share of future scientific breakthroughs and world-changing innovations be made here. In this new era, the National Science Board (Board, NSB) sees three trends that threaten the nation's S&E leadership.

Read the full report here.

STAYING AGILE WHILE GOING GLOBAL: UNDERSTANDING TRENDS AND CHALLENGES AROUND FOREIGN INFLUENCE IN RESEARCH

Amanda Ferguson and Roseann Luongo | American Health Law Association | July 28, 2021

In a year that showcased the power of science and collaboration, resulting in rapid development, testing, and approval of vaccines for COVID-19, universities, academic medical centers, and research institutes continued to navigate concerns about undue foreign influence on the U.S. research and development enterprise. The federal government's focus on interactions between researchers and foreign entities impacts how researchers and their institutions partner with scientists around the globe, and research institutions are facing ongoing scrutiny around the actions institutions are taking to address foreign threats to U.S. research. While the Biden administration transition may alter some federal activity, the administration appears likely to continue efforts to strengthen controls and oversight of several components of research security.

Read the full article here.

ACADEMICS OF CHINESE ORIGIN WARN NEW NATIONAL SECURITY SCREENING FOR RESEARCH FUNDING COULD LEAD TO 'RACIAL PROFILING'

Steven Chase | The Globe and Mail | August 2, 2021

Two organizations representing academics of Chinese origin in Canada are warning that new mandatory national security assessments for federal funding of university research could lead to "racial profiling Chinese researchers as foreign agents." The Canadian Academy of Chinese Professors and the Canadian Association of Chinese Professors recently released a statement, addressed to administrators at this country's universities, saying they strongly oppose the new risk assessment process laid out in national security guidelines for research partnerships unveiled by Ottawa last month. The federal government in July imposed obligatory national security risk assessments on funding requests from university researchers to protect Canadian intellectual property from falling into the hands of authoritarian governments.

Read the full article here.

WITHOUT SAFEGUARDS, U.S. RISKS FUNDING FOREIGN INNOVATION

Deborah Wince-Smith | Forbes | July 29, 2021

In January 2020, news shook the academic world when the Chair of Harvard University's Chemistry and Chemical Biology Department was arrested and charged, along with two Chinese nationals, for aiding the People's Republic of China. Sadly, this was not an isolated incident. As a result, funding agencies such as the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health have worked with the Federal Bureau of Investigation to educate college and university leaders and scientists on the threat from China and other state actors seeking to take advantage of the traditional openness of the U.S. research enterprise. This concern has risen to the highest seats of power in the U.S. In a letter earlier this year to Dr. Eric Lander, nominee for the President's Science Advisor, President Biden posed the question: "How can the United States ensure that it is the world leader in the technologies and industries of the future that will be critical to our economic prosperity and national security, especially in competition with China?" In other words, U.S. competitiveness isn't just about keeping up with innovative and technological breakthroughs on foreign soil, but ensuring the security of what we develop within our own borders.

Read the full article here.

US CONGRESS TAKES AIM AT CHINA'S RECRUITMENT OF SCIENTISTS

Granthshala News | August 2, 2021

A new bill would bar scientists and academics from participating in US-funded research if backed by Beijing. Congress aims to block China's ability to recruit scientists and academics to the US as part of sweeping steps in Washington to counter the Asian nation's growing clout. A recently passed House bill to boost US research and development would bar scientists and academics from participating in US-funded research projects if they are also getting support from Beijing. "For years, Congress, federal research agencies, national security agencies and universities have been working to root out malicious foreign talent recruitment," Iowa Republican Representative Randy Fenstra, who introduced the measure, said on the law. said during a committee hearing. "The time has come to block them from receiving US taxpayer dollars." Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian avoided a question on the bill during a routine press briefing in Beijing on Monday, saying he was unaware of the matter. The House passage of the ban is another sign of strained relations between the world's two largest economies, even at a level of academic scrutiny that has drawn hundreds of thousands of Chinese students and scholars to the US.

Read the full article here.

TALENT MIGRATION IN KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY: THE CASE OF CHINA'S SILICON VALLEY, SHENZHEN

Grace Yuehan Wang | Journal of International Migration and Integration | July 30, 2021

Talent is a key resource in a knowledge economy. It plays a critical role in national economic growth and technological innovation. China's technological power is rising, and its ambitious push for talent is supported by central and local government. Through the lens of Shenzhen, China's Silicon Valley, this article examines the Shenzhen Talent Policy and its effectiveness in attracting both domestic talent and overseas returnees. Document analysis is combined with in-depth interviews with returnee entrepreneurs, university professors, and Shenzhen local government officials to examine talent migration and the effectiveness of talent policy. This study findings reveal that the welcoming and tolerant culture of Shenzhen is key to the city's attractiveness to its existing and potential talent. Entrepreneurial scientists and engineers are likely to return to Shenzhen from abroad for business opportunities in applied innovation and technology commercialization.

Read the full article here.

FADING BEACON: THE U.S. MAY NEVER REGAIN ITS DOMINANCE AS A DESTINATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS. HERE'S WHY THAT MATTERS.

Karin Fischer and Sasha Aslanian | American Public Media | August 3, 2021

American higher education has long prided itself on being a brilliant beacon, attracting generations of students from around the globe. They come for education and for opportunity. Many, having established ties to America, return home to take roles in academe, business, or government. No country has trained more foreign leaders than the United States. Others stay, becoming a critical part of the American talent infrastructure. They fill our faculty offices, our laboratories, our boardrooms. One in five entrepreneurs who founded start-ups in the United States is an immigrant — and three-quarters of them first came to America as students. While they were enrolled, they brought diversity and millions in revenue to their campuses. But that beacon, bright for decades, has begun to dim. The Trump administration, with its America First policies and bellicose rhetoric, sent the message that foreign students were not welcome. Then the Covid-19 pandemic shut the country's borders.

Read the full article here.

'INDUSTRIAL POLICY' IS BACK: THE WEST DUSTS OFF OLD IDEA TO COUNTER CHINA

Greg Ip | The Wall Street Journal | July 29, 2021

The U.S. and its allies have long pressed China to stop helping favored industries with subsidies, government preferences and other interventions. Now they are beginning to copy it. Last month, the U.S. Senate voted for direct industry subsidies with little precedent: $52 billion for new semiconductor fabrication plants, called "fabs." Other regions have done the same. The European Union has committed to nearly doubling its share of global semiconductor manufacturing capacity, to 20%. South Korea approved up to $65 billion in support for semiconductors, and Japan promised to match other countries' semiconductor aid while planning to turn Japan into an Asian data center hub. Chip-manufacturing subsidies are the most prominent of a range of interventions Western governments are rushing out to promote industries they deem strategic, from electric-car batteries to pharmaceuticals.

Read the full article here.

SECRETARY OF STATE TONY BLINKEN SETS OUT VISION FOR GLOBAL TECHNOLOGY DIPLOMACY

Andrea Peterson | American Institute of Physics | July 28, 2021

Addressing an international conference convened by the National Security Commission on Artificial Intelligence this month, Secretary of State Tony Blinken and other U.S. administration officials outlined a vision for building technology partnerships among democratic nations. Much of the current wave of attention in Congress and the Biden administration surrounding R&D, technology, and supply chains is driven by concerns about the rising technological influence of rival nations, and especially China. However, Blinken argued it is not enough to "highlight the horrors of techno-authoritarianism." He said the U.S. must instead establish an alternative model of governance for AI and other emerging technologies that embodies democratic nations' common values. "Democracies have to pass the tech test together. And diplomacy, I believe, has a big role to play in that," he continued, saying that building up the State Department's technology diplomacy capabilities and weaving them throughout U.S. foreign policy is one of his top priorities.

Read the full article here.

FROM PLAN TO ACTION: OPERATIONALIZING A U.S. NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY STRATEGY

John Costello, Martijn Rasser, and Megan Lamberth | Center for a New American Security | July 29, 2021

Ideas abound for actions the United States should take to better position itself for the unfolding global technology competition. Concerning topics as diverse as raw materials to semiconductors to STEM education, a nonstop cavalcade of presidential directives, congressional bills, industry proposals, think tank reports, and pronouncements by big-name luminaries have been issued as measures to address American economic competitiveness and national security challenges. Almost all make their case in the context of dealing with a rising China. Some of these recommendations are excellent and quite a few are good; too many get lost in the noise. It's not just the sheer volume that presents a challenge to identifying and executing the most promising recommendations. The U.S. government lacks a strategic construct to merge these ideas—for research and development spending, public-private partnerships, tax policy and subsidies, immigration reform, and education—into a coherent whole.

Read the full article here.

JOE BIDEN, US LAWMAKERS WORKING ON PARALLEL TRACKS TO BOLSTER CHINA TECH POLICY

Jodi Xu Klein | South China Morning Post | July 31, 2021

In his first six months in office, US President Joe Biden has brought into his administration experts with a wide range of tech, science and national security experience, taking the first steps in assembling a team to develop a more comprehensive policy toward China. His first move was to create a new job to advise and coordinate three White House technology and national security teams. Tech policy veteran Jason Matheny was chosen for the position in March. In May, scientist Eric Lander was confirmed as the director at the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), with the role newly elevated to cabinet level. And last week, former Pentagon official Alan Estevez was nominated to lead US tech export control in the Commerce Department. All three picks have expertise straddling multiple areas of defence, technology and public policy.

Read the full article here.

OVERSEAS CHINESE STUDENTS AND SCHOLARS IN CHINA'S DRIVE FOR INNOVATION

Anastasya Lloyd-Damnjanovic and Alexander Bowe | U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission | October 7, 2020

The report examines Beijing's ecosystem of programs and incentives designed to exploit the expertise of Chinese students and scholars studying in STEM fields at universities in the United States and other advanced countries. This ecosystem leverages the scientific and technical knowledge Chinese researchers acquire while abroad to benefit China's commercial and defense sectors. Much of this research is "fundamental" and not subject to controls, but both countries recognize its strategic value and potential. China's programs are designed to encourage it to be commercialized or applied in China first, depriving the United States of an early mover advantage in developing this technology despite funding the research, in many cases, in the first place. China's activities raise concerning economic and national security implications for the United States.

Read the full report here.