

## [Cybersecurity Policy Report, Bill Targets Chinese Cyber Theft of COVID-19 Data, \(Jul. 2, 2020\)](#)

Cybersecurity Policy Report

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By [Tom Leithauser](#)

A bill that would require the U.S. intelligence community to assess whether the Chinese government was using cyber espionage to steal information from other nations regarding research into the COVID-19 pandemic was introduced today in the House.

The Preventing China from Exploiting COVID-19 Act would task the Office of the Director of National Intelligence with preparing a report on ways the Chinese government might seek to take advantage of the pandemic.

The report would have to include "a description of activities undertaken by China, including with respect to cyber theft, intended to licitly or illicitly acquire information and intellectual property in the possession of non-Chinese governments and businesses relating to COVID-19 testing, treatment, and vaccines," according to the bill.

The report would also have to offer an assessment of whether any Chinese cyber campaign to acquire COVID-19 data violated "the commitment of China under the cybersecurity agreement entered into by China and the United States in 2015 to refrain from conducting or supporting cyber-enabled economic espionage."

That agreement, reached between Chinese President Xi Jinping and former President Obama, obligated both nations to refrain from using cyberspace to conduct commercial espionage ([CPR, Sept. 28, 2015](#)).

The bill was offered by members of the Blue Dog Task Force on National Security, a group of conservative Democrats, including Reps. Kendra Horn (D., Okla.), Stephanie Murphy (D., Fla.), Max Rose (D., N.Y.), Tom O'Halleran (D., Ariz.), Ed Case (D., Hawaii), Ben McAdams (D., Utah), Luis Correa (D., Calif.), Jared Golden (D., Maine), Anthony Brindisi (D., N.Y.), Charlie Crist (D., Fla.), and Joe Cunningham (D., S.C.).

"No one should seek to exploit the COVID-19 pandemic for political or economic advantage," Rep. Horn said.

"We must examine whether the Chinese Communist Party has used intellectual cyber theft, misinformation campaigns, and aggressive territorial maneuvers, among other tactics, to take advantage of the pandemic. We need to get to the bottom of where the Chinese government has exploited COVID-19 and undermined our fight against the global pandemic. Where they've crossed the line, they must be held accountable."

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