

U.S. Rep. Gallagher: Gallagher and Gallego send letter on national security threats posed by Chinese telecommunications firms and 5G

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Washington, D.C. — Today, Rep. Mike Gallagher (WI-08) and Rep. Ruben Gallego (AZ-07) sent a letter to the Acting Secretary of the Defense and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff seeking greater information about national security threats to military operations and communications posed by 5G technology provided by Chinese telecommunications firms. This letter comes in advance of Secretary Shanahan and Chairman Dunford's testimony before the House Armed Services Committee on Tuesday, March 26.

"If firms like Huawei provide the 5G networks of the future, we have to expect the Chinese Communist Party will have access to whatever information is transmitted across those networks. The American public and our allies deserve more clarity on how these emerging threats could impact our national security. I look forward to working with Secretary Shanahan and Chairman Dunford on this issue," Gallagher said.

"It is imperative that we have confidence in communications critical to the national security interests of the U.S. Government and of our allies and partners around the world. We should make sure that Chinese-controlled firms like Huawei and ZTE are not allowed to compromise our national security or the integrity of our allies' networks as the world transitions to 5G technology. I hope and expect that DoD plays its role in informing this conversation in U.S. conversations and abroad,"

Gallego said.

In January, Rep. Gallagher and Rep. Gallego introduced legislation to impose denial orders on Chinese telecommunications companies that violate U.S. sanctions.

Text of the letter follows:

Dear Secretary Shanahan and Chairman Dunford:

Congress has been briefed that Chinese telecommunications firms seeking to construct 5G networks around the world represent a potential threat to American national security and the information security of allies and partners.

China's own National Intelligence Law and concept of Military-Civil Fusion ensures that Chinese firms are not independent of the state. Rather, they must support the law enforcement, intelligence, and national security interests of the Chinese Communist Party. In light of this reality, the threat of a compromised 5G network and its negative effects on personal data, government secrets, military operations, and privacy, is high.

Accordingly, in advance of your testimony to the House Armed Services Committee next week, please consider the following questions:

1. Can you articulate the espionage threat posed by the transfer of U.S. data and voice communications over a Chinese constructed 5G network?
2. Will the United States be able to have confidence in allied or partner networks that rely on Chinese technology and which could be used for military or defense communications purposes?
3. Will our ability to share information with key allies change if a country like Germany or a Five Eyes ally were to adopt a 5G network with major systems or hardware sourced from Chinese state-directed companies?
4. What steps will DoD consider to mitigate these threats at home and at facilities abroad?
5. In light of these threats, do you find it concerning that American technology companies are selling critical enabling components to Chinese telecommunications firms like Huawei and ZTE?

Thank you for your attention to this matter as we continue this dialogue about our digital national security.

Sincerely,

Congressman Mike Gallagher

Congressman Ruben Gallego