

U.S. Reps. Gallagher, Slotkin: To Lead Bipartisan Task Force to Strengthen Defense Supply Chain

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – Reps. Mike Gallagher (R-WI) and Elissa Slotkin (D-MI) today announced the formal launch of a new House Armed Services Committee task force dedicated to strengthening our defense supply chain. Gallagher and Slotkin will serve as co-chairs of the task force, and will lead a group of six other members in identifying items critical to our national security, vulnerabilities in those supply chains, and a legislative plan of action to build resilience against future shocks. The task force’s goal is to move bipartisan legislation in the FY2022 NDAA.

“Over the past year, we’ve experienced firsthand how supply chain vulnerabilities have undermined our national security and led to tragic and unnecessary loss of life. Our defense industrial base faces challenges of a similar scale and we must act with a sense of urgency to strengthen supply chains critical to our national defense,” said Rep. Gallagher. “It is long past time to reduce our supply chain dependency on adversaries like China while expanding partnerships with our allies and bringing jobs back home. I am proud to join Rep. Slotkin in leading this important bipartisan effort and look forward to hitting the ground running.”

“The experience we went through in the early days of the pandemic was searing. Back in April and May, I was getting on the phone with middlemen in China to try to get masks, gloves, and other supplies for our frontline workers -- and it impressed upon me the importance of identifying which supply chains have a national security importance,” said Rep. Slotkin. “We can’t be left vulnerable like that again.

“On the high end of the scale, there is a ton of technology-related materials, like clips and battery parts, that continue to leave both the commercial sector and the DoD vulnerable to supply shocks. In this task force, we’ll be focused on identifying the list of critical supplies the Department needs, the vulnerabilities and chokepoints in those supply chains, and recommending legislation for this year’s NDAA. Instead of producing a long report, we’re focused on drafting legislative text for the things that we suggest.”

The task force will meet for three months and hold a number of bipartisan briefings, hearings, and roundtables with supply chain experts in the government and private sector. Gallagher and Slotkin will be joined on the task force by Reps. Don Bacon (R-NE), Donald Norcross (D-NJ), Michael Waltz (R-FL), Chrissy Houlahan (D-PA), Stephanie Bice (R-OK), Mikie Sherril (D-NJ).

The key areas of focus will be:

- Identifying industries or items critical to U.S. national security that are vulnerable to supply chain shocks or chokepoints
- Examining the ability of adversaries, particularly the Chinese Communist Party, to weaponize our defense supply chain
- Analyzing our domestic and allied capacity overcome attempts by our adversaries to weaponize the defense supply chains
- Finding ways to incentivize American and allied research and development and manufacturing capacity to erase current supply chain vulnerabilities and stay ahead of our adversaries