

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 13, 2026

The Honorable Chris Wright
Secretary, Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Secretary Wright:

We applaud President Trump for his continued commitment to ensuring American dominance in the field of artificial intelligence (AI). America's long-term scientific advancements and national security depend on the U.S. winning the global race for technology. The "Genesis Mission," a modern-day Manhattan Project the President launched last November via executive order, is necessary to achieve this victory, and harnessing the deep expertise found across the Department of Energy's seventeen national laboratories is key to Genesis Mission's success. We are concerned, however, that the thousands of Chinese foreign nationals who are granted access to, or work at, our labs could compromise Genesis Mission, and we urge you to take the necessary steps to protect it.

China is our main competitor in the race for AI dominance, a position it occupies only because it has stolen American intellectual property and technologies and co-opted them over the years. This is widely accepted and well-documented, and yet for decades we continue to give Chinese national scientists access to our national laboratories, which employ America's best and brightest scientists who work on critical military, economic, and scientific technologies. In fiscal year 2024, approximately 3,200 Chinese nationals were approved for access to national laboratory sites, information, or technologies. This number does not include those with lawful permanent resident status, which means there are likely hundreds, perhaps thousands, more individual Chinese citizens working in our labs.

As you may know, simply requiring these individuals to be properly vetted prior to granting them access is not a sufficient safeguard. First, the sheer number of Chinese nationals coming to the labs outpaces the capacity of the Department of Energy's Office of Intelligence and Counterintelligence to vet them. Second, efforts to vet will likely fail to yield affiliations with the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) because of China's efforts to obfuscate them. Lastly, scientists and researchers who might not directly work for the Chinese government can be compelled in one way or another by the regime to turn over what they have learned during their time at a national laboratory.

Genesis Mission was launched to help the U.S. win the race with China for AI supremacy by harnessing untapped prowess in this space at our national laboratories. Continuing to give access to the cutting-edge work performed at these laboratories to Chinese nationals who will turn everything they know over to the CCP directly undermines the purpose of Genesis Mission. Therefore, we respectfully recommend that you mitigate threats to Genesis Mission by promulgating a policy prohibiting the national laboratories from granting Chinese nationals access to any national laboratory site, information, or technology.

The best way to protect Genesis Mission, and the rest of the important work done throughout the labs, is to put an end to Chinese national scientists and researchers working at them.

Sincerely,



Tom Cotton
United States Senator



Mike Lee
United States Senator



James E. Risch
United States Senator



Jim Justice
United States Senator



John Cornyn
United States Senator



John Barrasso
United States Senator



James Lankford
United States Senator



Dave McCormick
United States Senator



Jerry Moran
United States Senator



Todd Young
United States Senator



Ted Budd
United States Senator

CC: Director Gabbard, Office of the Director of National Intelligence
National Security Advisor and Secretary of State Rubio
Attorney General Bondi
Director Patel, Federal Bureau of Investigation