

GOP Urges US Colleges to Cut China Scholarship Ties

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House Republicans are intensifying their scrutiny of U.S. universities with ties to Chinese government-backed scholarship programs. In a series of letters sent this week, Republican leaders called on seven major American universities to end their partnerships with the China Scholarship Council, a program they argue is quietly advancing China's military and technological ambitions.

The China Scholarship Council sponsors hundreds of Chinese graduate students to study abroad every year, including at institutions like Dartmouth College, the University of Notre

Dame, and several University of California campuses. Under the program, students must return to China for at least two years after graduation. Lawmakers on the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party say this requirement is part of a broader effort to gather research and technological know-how that could benefit the Chinese government.

“CSC claims to be an academic exchange, but in reality, it is a Chinese Communist Party-managed technology transfer effort,” wrote Representative John Moolenaar, who chairs the committee. He called the program a risk to national security and an exploitation of American universities.

Some universities have already responded. Dartmouth said it had only a few students in the program and had already decided to end its participation. The University of Notre Dame confirmed it began the process of cutting ties earlier this year. Both schools said they plan to cooperate fully with the committee’s review.

Other institutions named in the letters include Temple University, the University of Tennessee, and the University of California campuses in Davis, Irvine, and Riverside. The committee is demanding records about whether scholarship recipients worked on research funded by the U.S. government.

Concerns about Chinese influence in academia have grown in recent years. During former President Donald Trump’s administration, the U.S. restricted visas for Chinese students linked to China’s “military-civil fusion strategy.” More recently, Secretary of State Marco Rubio confirmed that the U.S. would revoke certain visas for Chinese students studying in sensitive national security-related fields, citing risks linked to China’s military-civil fusion strategy.

While universities acknowledge the importance of protecting research, many caution against casting suspicion on all Chinese scholars. China remains the second-largest source of international students in the United States, with more than 270,000 Chinese students enrolled last academic year. Most of them pay their tuition privately and pursue studies unrelated to national security.

Still, lawmakers are determined to tighten oversight. Representative Moolenaar has said ending these partnerships will remain a priority as Congress seeks to protect American innovation and research from foreign exploitation.

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