

VICKY HARTZLER  
4TH DISTRICT, MISSOURI

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES  
CHAIRWOMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
[WWW.HARTZLER.HOUSE.GOV](http://WWW.HARTZLER.HOUSE.GOV)



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, DC 20515-2504

2235 RAYBURN BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515  
(202) 225-2876

2415 CARTER LANE, SUITE 4  
COLUMBIA, MO 65201  
(573) 442-9311

1909 NORTH COMMERCIAL STREET  
HARRISONVILLE, MO 64701  
(816) 884-3411

219 NORTH ADAMS AVENUE  
LEBANON, MO 65536  
(417) 532-5582

November 28, 2018

The Honorable Michael Pompeo  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20230

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I write to you today to express my serious concerns regarding efforts by the People's Republic of China to gain access to and steal U.S. research and technology. Numerous reports describe how Chinese researchers collaborate with U.S. researchers in U.S. facilities for extensive periods before funneling the sensitive information back to the Government of China. I am particularly concerned about a recent report published by the Australian Strategy Policy Institute (ASPI) highlighting efforts by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to infiltrate U.S. academia.

The report entitled *Picking Flowers, Making Honey: The Chinese Military's Collaboration with Foreign Universities* revealed that over the past ten years, China's military, also known as the PLA, has sponsored more than 2,500 military scientists and engineers to study abroad in countries worldwide. An analysis of peer-reviewed articles co-authored by PLA researchers, found that they collaborate with researchers in the United States more than in any other nation. These individuals often mask their PLA and Chinese Communist Party ties, allowing them to work at top universities without the schools' knowledge of their military affiliation. The *PLA Daily* has described these covert efforts as, "Picking flowers in foreign lands to make honey in China."

According to the National Security Strategy, "Part of China's military modernization and economic expansion is due to its access to the U.S. innovation economy, including America's world-class universities." As the agency responsible for vetting visa applications, the Department of State is the first line of defense against Beijing's efforts to exploit America's free and open society. I would like to learn more about the visa vetting process for individuals seeking to conduct research in the United States. Specifically, I would like to know:

1. What procedures are in place to screen visa applicants from countries considered by the National Security Strategy to be strategic competitors?
2. If an individual is a member of a non-allied military or military-linked organization, can they still be granted a visa to conduct research in the United States? Are there additional security measures in place to mitigate the risk of exfiltration of sensitive information and research?
3. Does the United States currently limit or prohibit certain types of engagement with non-allied research organizations or personnel? If so, what activities are limited?

4. Does the Department of State maintain a list of Chinese and other non-allied military and military-linked research institutions, including civilian universities heavily engaged in military research, for use by immigration officials?
5. Does the Department of State work with the Department of Education to educate universities about the risks posed by Chinese and other non-allied researchers?

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I will be reaching out at a future date to discuss your responses to my inquiry and to learn more about the visa application vetting process. Please direct any questions to my Legislative Director, Chrissi Lee, at [chrissi.lee@mail.house.gov](mailto:chrissi.lee@mail.house.gov) or 202-225-2876.

Sincerely,



Vicky Hartzler  
Member of Congress