



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Subcommittee Hearing Statement of Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS)

DeepSeek and Unitree Robotics: Examining the National Security Risks of PRC Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, and Autonomous Technologies and Building a Secure U.S. Technology Base

March 17, 2026

Before I begin, I would like to address disparaging comments about immigrants and America's Muslim community made by my Republican colleagues on social media. As Members of Congress, our job is to advocate vigorously for policy positions that make the nation more secure, more prosperous, and more just. Maligning entire groups of people while parroting bigoted stereotypes does nothing to achieve any of those ends.

When I began my work in the civil rights movement in the 1960's, there were people in this country who thought Black people didn't belong in schools, didn't belong in certain jobs, and didn't belong at polling places, much less on the ballot. Americans across the political spectrum worked hard to dismantle entrenched beliefs that certain types of people were less deserving of being American or enjoying the full benefits of citizenship.

I'm disturbed that today, in 2026, Republicans in Congress are devoting so much energy to undoing the progress we made and perpetuating such ugly divisions. As Members of the Homeland Security Committee, our job is to keep the homeland secure – and that requires uniting Americans, not dividing them. I urge my colleagues to stop their divisive rhetoric about their fellow Americans and immigrants – you are putting entire populations of people at risk.

Turning to the subject of today's hearing, we have known for well over a decade that the United States would need to work aggressively to maintain its dominance in technology. Our most formidable competitor – the People's Republic of China – is willing to do things the United States will not in pursuit of innovation. Notably, the PRC has a notorious track record of engaging in intellectual property theft.

As we've seen with DeepSeek, the PRC entities will devote significant resources to stealing U.S. AI models, as it has done with Anthropic and Open AI. The PRC has also invested significant government resources in tech innovation, through which it intends to gain global influence economically and politically. Although the United States would not and should not engage in the kind of intellectual property theft supported by the PRC, we can and should certainly be investing in tech innovation.

Unfortunately, the Trump Administration has gutted investment in agencies that support research and development. Moreover, the Administration has decimated agencies responsible for mitigating the national security risks associated with the emerging dual use technologies that will define the 21st century. This Committee oversees the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency.

Bipartisan Members of this Committee established CISA to empower the United States government to harness the potential of emerging technology securely while defending against the malicious use cases our adversaries might pursue.

Over the past 8 years, CISA has taken on that mantle, building programs to advise critical infrastructure owners and operators on how to deploy security technologies to defend against modern threats and helping tech companies build security into their products so that they are safe for the digital ecosystem out of the box. Unfortunately, the Trump Administration harassed one-third of CISA's staff into leaving their jobs, leaving U.S. less secure as the PRC more aggressively pursues its tech innovation agenda. The President has also recklessly ceded America's competitive edge in AI by permitting the sale of high-powered AI chips to the PRC.

If the President is sincere in his commitment to pursuing "America first" policies, he has a funny way of showing it. I look forward to discussing what the United States can do – on our own and with our allies - to facilitate innovation and preserve our competitive edge in tech innovation.

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