



COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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

Beijing's Air, Space, and Maritime Surveillance from Cuba: A Growing Threat to the Homeland, Part II

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Spy stations established in Cuba with Chinese support have the potential to collect valuable intelligence on the United States, as well as our allies in the region. Unfortunately, the Trump Administration's reckless actions and idiotic policies are exacerbating the challenges posed by China and Cuba.

In just a short few months, Donald Trump and his Republican minions have done tremendous damage to the United States' reputation as a trusted ally and partner. Trump's cuts to foreign aid within Latin America and across the globe have decimated essential programs aimed at reducing hunger, corruption, poverty, and inequality. Trump's cuts have undermined efforts to support U.S. national security and assist non-governmental organizations that help counter autocratic regimes and advance democratic values.

Currently, the Cuban government is undergoing one of its most severe crises in decades, with increased repression and crackdowns against political dissent. Under the Biden Administration, the U.S. Agency for International Development provided funding to support independent media in Cuba, which is essential to pushing for democratic reforms. Now, the Trump Administration has illegally cancelled that funding.

Under the Biden Administration, the "CHNV" parole program legally allowed over 110,000 Cubans to flee their authoritarian government and seek asylum in the United States. Now, the Trump Administration has tried to terminate that program.

Cubans who legally migrated to the United States are now potentially facing orders of deportation and denial of asylum requests, which will place them in danger. Thankfully, the rule of law has so far prevailed, as a Federal district court has issued a nationwide temporary order halting the termination of this program. The Trump Administration should focus on why these migrants are leaving Cuba instead of blocking them from coming to the United States. Cuba is facing its worst economic crisis since gaining independence in 1902.

It is high time for the United States to take a more surgical, humanitarian approach to relations to Cuba, rather than the Trump Administration's chainsaw tactics of cutting any and all programs that advance U.S. soft power in the region. The termination of humanitarian programs and other foreign aid allows China to fill the void through economic, diplomatic, and potential military support. The PRC is using Cuba in its geopolitical strategy against the United States and seeking to make inroads with other Latin American countries as well.

Trump's tariff wars and foreign policies will cause many international partners to turn away from the United States and seek the possibility of a more stable partnership with China. I hope my colleagues across the aisle will open their eyes and recognize the Trump Administration is placing America last.

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