

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 16, 2017

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary of Agriculture
219A Whitten Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Secretary Perdue:

We write today concerning the national security threat Chinese telecommunications providers and manufacturers, such as Huawei and ZTE, pose to the United States and U.S. interests.

On December 20, 2017, a bipartisan group of members from the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) and House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) joined in sending a letter to the Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) alerting him, and the other Commissioners, to this gathering threat. To their credit they responded quickly by requesting briefings from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and on March 26, 2018, announced, “the draft Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, if adopted, would propose to bar the use of money from the FCC’s Universal Service Fund to purchase equipment or services from companies that pose a national security threat to the United States communications networks or the communications supply chain.”

An issue that we wish to bring to your attention is the use and potential use of grants and loans issued by the USDA’s Rural Utility Service (RUS) to purchase items and services from these very same providers and manufactures, which the FCC seeks to bar. We respectfully request that you request similar briefings from the FBI, NSA, and CIA, and consider remedies similar to that of the FCC.

We further ask for your quick response to the following questions:

- 1) Do you currently have statutory or regulatory authority to prohibit the expenditure of taxpayer dollars through the RUS programs for the purchase of technology posing a national security risk, like that originating from Huawei and ZTE?
- 2) Do you currently have statutory or regulatory authority to ensure that Huawei and ZTE technology cannot be acquired through RUS programs via "white labeling"?
- 3) Have you in the past three years surveyed RUS grant recipients to ensure they have not acquired any technology by Huawei or ZTE? If you have not, will you do so now to ensure the Congress and your Department have complete transparency on potential national security risks of the RUS supply chain?

We look forward to your prompt response on this important matter of national security.

Sincerely,

Tom Coltrane

Michael R. Jensen

Rob

Frank A. LaBil

McPh

Vicky Hartzler

James E. Kisch

Heena Ros-Lehtinen

Alvin King

Susan M. Collins

Dianne Feinstein

Michelle Obama

Ray Bennett

Nancy Pelosi

John Cornyn

Mark Warner

Jeff Sessions

Elise M. Stefan

August King

CC: Attorney General Jeff Sessions
CC: Director Chris Wray
CC: Director Mike Pompeo
CC: Admiral Mike Rogers
CC: Commissioner Ajit Pai

ENCLOSURE 1: 2012 HPSCI Huawei-ZTE Report
ENCLOSURE 2: SSCI-HPSCI Letter to FCC Commissioner
ENCLOSURE 3: FCC RESPONSE to SSCI-HPSCI Letter
ENCLOSURE 4: FCC MPRM Announcement