

United States Senate

July 27, 2026

COMMITTEES
SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE
CHAIRMAN
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The Honorable Linda McMahon
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary McMahon:

I write to express concern about sanctioned Chinese entities investments in American universities. These investments allow China to advance their interests, while undermining American innovation and our national security.

On January 2, 2026, the Department of Education launched an online portal which provides aggregate, institution-level data about donations American universities have received from foreign sources. As of January 31, 2026, federally funded universities accepted more than \$6.8 billion from Communist China – including more than \$300 million from sanctioned entities. Harvard, for instance, has received more than \$630 million from Chinese entities. This includes roughly \$418,000 from organizations participating in foreign talent programs and nearly \$420,000 from entities allegedly supporting unauthorized military advancements.¹

I commend the Department of Education's work to improve transparency, which includes actions against universities that have failed to comply with statutory financial reporting requirements.² Federally funded universities are not required to disclose transactions from a single foreign source that are less than \$250,000 in a single year.³ I remain concerned that millions in additional transactions with sanctioned Chinese entities may not have been reported.

Therefore, I encourage additional scrutiny of financial ties between American universities and Communist China.

I look forward to working with you on this matter.

Sincerely,



Tom Cotton
United States Senator

¹ <https://www.foreignfundinghighered.gov/>

² <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-releases-latest-foreign-funding-disclosures-federally-funded-american-universities>

³ <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCIDE-2021-title20/html/USCIDE-2021-title20-chap28-subchapt-partB-sec1011f.htm>