

**CARR URGES STRONGER RESPONSE TO COMMUNIST CHINA'S
SECURITY THREATS AND XINJIANG GENOCIDE**
Calls for Closing Security Loophole and Action on Uyghur Forced Labor

WASHINGTON, March 30, 2021—Today, FCC Commissioner Brendan Carr called for the FCC to take additional actions to address the threats posed by Communist China at an event hosted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). Carr was joined at the event by Nury Turkel, Chair of the Uyghur Human Rights Project and a Commissioner on the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. Turkel is a Uyghur-American lawyer who was born in a re-education camp at the height of China's Cultural Revolution. Carr was also joined by Dean Cheng, a Senior Research Fellow at the Heritage Foundation.

Carr urged the FCC to close a glaring security loophole that allows insecure devices to continue to be used in U.S. networks. He also called for the FCC to take action to ensure that devices made with forced labor do not enter the U.S. market in a move that tracks the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act introduced by Senator Rubio and a bipartisan group of legislators.

Close the Security Loophole:

Last year, the FCC adopted rules that require U.S. telecom carriers to remove and replace equipment produced by Huawei, ZTE, and other entities because they pose an unacceptable national security risk. That was an important step that substantially advanced America's national security. But those rules only apply to equipment purchased with federal funding, known as Universal Service Funds. The FCC's rules expressly allow carriers to use private funds to purchase and use that exact same equipment.

"It is time to close this glaring loophole," Carr stated. "Once we have determined that Huawei or other gear poses an unacceptable national security risk, it makes no sense to allow that exact same equipment to be purchased and inserted into our communications networks as long as federal dollars are not involved. The presence of these insecure devices in our networks is the threat, not the source of funding used to purchase them. Yet the FCC, through its equipment authorization process, continues to approve for use in the U.S. thousands of applications from Huawei and other entities deemed national security threats. The FCC should move swiftly to eliminate Communist China's backdoor into our networks. Doing so would be consistent with the policies underlying the Secure Networks Act of 2019," Carr added.

The FCC's Covered List identifies communications equipment and services that are deemed to pose an unacceptable national security risk to the United States. The List currently includes Huawei, ZTE, Hytera Communications Corporation, Hangzhou Hikvision Digital Technology Company, and Dahua Technology Company. A review of the FCC's equipment authorizations since 2018 shows that over 3,000 applications from Huawei alone have been approved since then. This includes both new devices and re-certification of existing ones, ranging from network gear to tracking devices. As recently as last year, the FCC approved applications from Hikvision and Dahua for video surveillance and facial recognition equipment.

Adopt Measures to Ensure Devices Made with Forced Labor Do Not Enter U.S. Market:

In his remarks today, Carr also called on the FCC to strengthen the agency's equipment authorization process to ensure that no devices enter the U.S. that are produced with forced labor. His proposal tracks the approach outlined in the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act introduced by Senator Rubio and a bipartisan group of legislators. The U.S. House of Representatives passed a version of this bill last Congress.

The U.S. has declared that the Chinese government is committing genocide and crimes against humanity through its wide-scale repression of Uyghurs and other minority religious groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR). China's extensive program of repression includes severe restrictions of religious freedoms, the use of forced labor, mass detention in internment camps, and other heinous abuses. As recent as last week, the U.S. sanctioned individuals from the Chinese government in connection with such abuses.

Under FCC rules, virtually no electronic device can be marketed, sold, or used in this country unless the device is approved by the FCC through the agency's equipment authorization process. Right now, the FCC's process contains no check on whether devices, including those that may originate from the XUAR, were produced with forced labor.

"The CCP is committing genocide and crimes against humanity in Xinjiang," Carr stated. "One aspect of Communist China's human rights abuse is their ongoing use of forced labor. Senator Rubio and others in Congress have introduced legislation that would strengthen America's existing prohibitions on goods produced with forced labor by increasing supply chain transparency and accountability. We should do our part at the FCC by launching a proceeding that would update our equipment authorization rules to ensure that we are not approving any devices that have been produced with forced labor. One way we can do this is by requiring every company that procures any devices or components from the XUAR to meet a heightened burden to ensure that their supply chain does not rely on any forced labor. Communist China must not profit from their human rights abuses.

"Communist China has made clear that it wants to dominate the global market for semiconductors and chipsets. There is no reason to think they will refrain from using forced labor in pursuing that goal. This is yet another reason why we must require companies to be more vigilant and take additional actions to ensure that their supply chains are not supporting Communist China's human rights abuses," Carr added.

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Commissioner Carr has led FCC efforts to crack down on the threats posed by Communist China. In 2018, Carr urged the Commission to remove insecure network gear from our communications networks, a process that is now underway. In 2019, Carr called for the FCC to conduct a top-to-bottom review of every telecom carrier with ties to Communist China. The FCC has now launched proceedings to revoke the authorizations of several carriers. Carr's proposal that the FCC now use its equipment authorization process marks another step in his efforts to address the threats posed by Communist China.

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