CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY: FOUNDATION FOR DEFENSE OF DEMOCRACIES

Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party

Deterrence Amid Rising Tensions:

Preventing CCP Aggression on Taiwan

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Washington, DC
May 15, 2025

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Chairman Moolenaar, Ranking Member Krishnamoorthi, distinguished members of the committee, on behalf of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD), thank you for inviting me to testify.

Introduction

America's ability to defeat a coercive attack conducted by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) against Taiwan continues to shrink. China is rapidly developing its ability to execute campaigns across both kinetic and non-kinetic mission areas and is expanding its ability to threaten the U.S. homeland as part of its warfighting plans. Actions taken — predominantly by Congress — over the past three years have served to slow the rate of reduction of U.S. and allied advantages, but America's ability to deter the CCP is withering, and thus, the risk of conflict is growing.

While this testimony will highlight the threat posed by the People's Republic of China and the advantages it has in the most likely threat area — a Taiwan conflict — urgent congressional action can reverse dangerous trends. Thus, this testimony will also identify 20 key investments across two broad lines of effort that Taiwan and America can take to help maintain the future balance of power in our favor, deter China from taking action, and, if needed, defeat Chinese aggression.

Recommendations

I. Siege Proof Taiwan and Enhance Its Ability to Defend Itself

1. Insist that Taiwan properly resources its defense.
2. Support Taiwan's efforts to reorganize its ground forces for a counter-intervention fight.
3. Recognize that Taiwan still needs a crisis response force — anchored in air and naval forces.
4. Continue fixing the FMS program and prioritize Taiwan's place within it.
5. Maximize military assistance to Taiwan.
6. Pre-position munitions in Taiwan.
7. Work with Taiwan to field a more integrated and interoperable force.
8. Support training and exercises with a 'named operation.'
9. Create a 'Taiwan Contact Group' and work with key allies and Taiwan.
10. Help Taiwan build its societal resilience.
11. Continue supporting the development of Taiwan's cyber capabilities.

II. Protect America's Ability to Respond to and Win a Crisis in the Western Pacific

12. Secure the critical infrastructure that supports military mobility.
13. Build societal resilience against Chinese malign influence.
14. Utilize the National Guard to defend America's critical assets.
15. Develop a space-based approach to defending the United States from missile threats.
16. Double down on investments in hypersonic defense.
17. Develop and field persistent mid- and high-altitude sensor platforms.
18. Build capacity to operate in a contested logistics environment.
19. Invest in low-cost anti-ship weapons to disrupt a cross-strait invasion.
20. Create an independent cyber service

The Chinese Challenge

When preparing to counter Chinese aggression against Taiwan, the United States and Taiwan need to prepare for both the most dangerous scenarios — a cross-strait invasion or a full-scale air and maritime blockade; as well as the most likely scenario — a comprehensive, cyber-enabled economic warfare (CEEW) campaign.

China is skillfully integrating kinetic and non-kinetic instruments of power in a way that the United States and its allies struggle to match or defend against. The United States relies heavily on precision-guided munitions at range, large-scale military mobility and sustainment capacity, trained and empowered non-commissioned officers, and expansive intelligence collection and analysis capabilities to deter and, if needed, defeat adversaries. While China is investing in similar weapons and sensor systems, it is also using emerging technologies to attempt to neutralize America's operational superiority and reduce the ability of U.S. forces to rapidly detect, track, and kill the adversary.

Chinese military readiness has benefited from a 30-year investment plan focusing on advanced technologies that target observed U.S. weaknesses (missile defense of ships and airfields) and marginalizing U.S. advantages (military mobility and precision targeting). While the United States frequently labels China as the "pacing threat," the Chinese act to develop and procure weapons as if the United States were actually *their* "pacing threat." Not surprisingly, Chinese actions have outperformed American rhetoric.

While a cross-strait invasion or blockade will most certainly cause the most destruction and havoc on Taiwan, it is more likely that the CCP will attempt to gain Taiwan's capitulation through a comprehensive pressure campaign that uses non-kinetic pressure tactics against the financial, energy, and communications sectors, enhanced with malicious cyber activity and military feints to create a maximum-pressure CEEW campaign against Taiwan's societal resilience.[1] These maneuvers against Taiwan could be combined with cyber and electronic attacks on infrastructure in Japan and the United States that seek to blind U.S. intelligence networks and degrade America's ability to communicate with forward forces. China may employ malicious cyber activity to weaken U.S. critical infrastructures in order to both paralyze military mobility and logistics enterprises and bring the American economy to a standstill.

China is certain to combine these CEEW campaigns with influence operations campaigns aimed at weakening public support in both Taiwan and America for action and freezing — or at least slowing — the national security decision-making processes. Utilizing aggressive cyber and influence campaigns, China would seek to deliver a strong warning to U.S. leaders and the public about the vulnerabilities in U.S. systems, ensuring the United States does not come to the support of its allies and partners. It is also reasonable to assume that if China pursued the most dangerous scenario of a cross-strait invasion, Beijing would also integrate CEEW and influence operations campaigns into the effort.

[1] Craig Singleton, Rear Adm. (Ret.) Mark Montgomery, and Dr. Ben Jensen, "Targeting Taiwan: Beijing's Playbook for Economic and Cyber Warfare," *Foundation for Defense of Democracies*, October 4, 2024. (https://www.fdd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/fdd-memo-targeting-taiwan-beijings-playbook-for-economic-and-cyber-warfare.pdf)

This is Not a Lost Cause

Despite all these challenges, the United States, Taiwan, and other allies such as Japan, Australia, and Europe can take actions to retain military-technological superiority and, in the process, overcome China's asymmetric advances. These efforts must help maintain America's ability to project power, impose costs, and support both its allies and partners and the stability of the region over the next two to five years. These efforts require investments in multiple areas so that the United States and its key partners, especially Taiwan, can develop and deploy new offensive and defensive capabilities in ways that China will struggle to match.

There is a great deal that Congress can do to address the challenges posed by China. My colleagues at FDD — Bradley Bowman and Craig Singleton — and I have written extensively on these issues and argued that the United States and Taiwan need to work across two broad lines of effort: (1) Siege Proof Taiwan and Enhance Its Ability to Defend Itself;[2] and (2) Bolster America's Ability to Respond to and Win a Crisis in the Western Pacific.[3]

These actions — which can be driven or overseen by Congress — will increase deterrence and, if war comes, improve the chances for success and reduce U.S. casualties — all at a fraction of the current defense budget.

Line of Effort 1 — Siege Proof Taiwan and Enhance Its Ability to Defend Itself

No country can do more to prepare Taiwan to defend itself against any threat than Taiwan. Whether by strengthening economic and technological resilience to prevent a cyber-enabled siege campaign or by building a military capable of contesting an opposed landing or blockade, the buck — pun intended — starts and stops with Taiwan's defense spending efforts.

To confront the most dangerous scenarios, Taiwan has to organize and equip its military forces to achieve maximum efficiency. This requires building both a counter-intervention force to oppose a cross-strait invasion and air and naval capabilities to mitigate or oppose an air or maritime blockade. This will involve continuing the evolution of Taiwan's military posture and organization and demand significant resources, but deterrence will only work if Taiwan credibly prepares for both scenarios.

Organizing and equipping Taiwan's forces will require the United States to be a more effective and efficient partner to Taipei. The stories of Foreign Military Sales (FMS) delays are not anecdotal — they are persistent. The United States must fix this problem. Targeted investments in Taiwan's defense procurement can accelerate adaptation and success. And only the United

[2] Rear Adm. Mark Montgomery (Ret.) and Bradley Bowman, "Washington is waking up on weapons for Taiwan," *Defense News*, December 19, 2022. (https://www.defensenews.com/thought-leadership/2022/12/19/washington-is-waking-up-on-taiwan)

[3] Rear Adm. (Ret.) Mark Montgomery and Dr. Samantha Ravich, "We Have a New National Cybersecurity Strategy, Now What," *The Cipher Brief*, March 3, 2023. (https://www.thecipherbrief.com/column_article/we-have-a-new-national-cybersecurity-strategy-now-what); Bradley Bowman and Rear Adm. Mark Montgomery (Ret.), "America's arsenal is in need of life support," *Defense News*, October 12, 2022. (https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2022/10/12/americas-arsenal-is-in-need-of-life-support)

States can provide the training and exercises needed to ensure the two countries' forces are interoperable.

Alongside these military-oriented preparations, Taiwan must also prepare for the most likely scenario: a CEEW campaign designed to break Taiwan's societal resilience and force Taipei to bend the knee without a damaging ground war or missile attack campaign. Withstanding this pressure campaign will require Taiwanese preparations across key critical infrastructures, such as energy, communications, and financial services, building resilience and developing redundant or mitigating systems. It will also require an aggressive effort to counter CCP-driven influence operations that twist the facts and create a sense of despair on the island. The role of key allies such as the United States, Japan, Australia, and Europe both in equipping Taiwan's forces as well as in building Taiwanese resilience cannot be ignored.

Ensure Taiwan is properly resourcing and equipping itself for victory in a demanding kinetic scenario.

1. Insist that Taiwan properly resources its defense. Taiwan must spend 3 percent of its GDP on defense in 2025 and continue to increase its defense spending to 5 percent of its GDP by 2028. Among democracies, this would place Taiwan just behind Israel — a similarly beleaguered democracy. Unfortunately, the inefficiencies in America's FMS program are a major inhibitor to Taiwan's ability to reach this level of defense spending. Only the United States will reliably sell weapons to Taiwan, but America's FMS program is not efficient nor ready to handle Taiwan's spending spree. While fixing the FMS program (as detailed below) is a must, the United States must insist that Taiwan prioritize defense spending.

In the short term, Taiwan should also consider "buying readiness" for its forces and not focus solely on new platforms. This could include high-quality individual kit (night vision, lasers, rifle optics, communications gear, and personal plates) for both active and reserve soldiers. This could also include equipment and munitions storage sites and munition refurbishment sites. Such investment will engender trooper confidence in their equipment and leaders as well as signal a commitment to fighting on the land. Taiwan should also consider investing in additional compensation raises for career solders and funding for more end strength.

2. Support Taiwan's efforts to reorganize its ground forces for a counter-intervention fight. Taiwan needs to significantly reorganize its land army and the reserve forces that will support it in a crisis. (See appendix for recommended changes to Taiwan's military force structure.) Taiwan will have to invest in a reasonably sized reserve force that can be equipped, trained, and supported to make a reliable contribution to the war effort. The conscription program will need to orient itself toward building these future reserve forces in a manner similar to the Israel Defense Forces. This will require transitioning some of the personnel in active-duty brigades into forces that support the training and deploying of reserve brigades — doubling or tripling the 3 percent of active-duty soldiers who support the reserves. Taiwan would be much better served by 10-15 active brigades and 20-30 reserve brigades than by its current model with only 15-20 active brigades. Taiwan will also need to increase the frequency and quality of recall training for the reserves, starting with the six most essential reserve brigades in the greater Taipei area. Reserve units would benefit from maintaining a Tiered Readiness state — with the higher

readiness units keeping their gear at their homes to expedite marshalling. The U.S. Joint Training Team (JTT) in Taiwan and the National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) can both do much to support this transformation.

3. Recognize that Taiwan still needs a crisis response force — anchored in air and naval forces. These forces are needed to respond to the CCP in a build-to-crisis scenario or while contesting a blockade. While it is convenient to say "build a porcupine," that will not work unless the United States intends to fly daily combat air patrols and conduct persistent multi-ship naval patrols in and around Taiwan. The U.S. Navy and Air Force are not equipped to sustain that on a day-to-day basis. Taiwan will need its own modernized F-16 fighters, E-2D airborne control aircraft, and some standing naval forces to respond to CCP air and maritime territorial violations. A myopic focus on the cross-strait invasion scenario without being able to engage the CCP in the grey zone or a blockade scenario is a risky proposition.

Maximize U.S. efforts to support Taiwan in building a defense for the most dangerous scenario.

4. Continue fixing the FMS program and prioritize Taiwan's place within it. Congress must conduct oversight to ensure FMS assistance efforts are aligned with national security theater priority efforts. If the Indo-Pacific is the priority theater, Taiwan should be "first in line." Today, that is not the case. In the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), Congress included much-needed guidance to the U.S. Defense and State departments to prioritize the delivery of arms to Taiwan.[4] Yet thanks to a persistent combination of insufficient U.S. industrial capacity and a sluggish bureaucratic process dangerously disconnected from the serious threats facing the United States and Taiwan, there is still a backlog of around $21 billion worth of weapons intended for Taiwan that have not been delivered.[5] The delay in the delivery of the Harpoon coastal defense system and associated missiles to Taiwan is a perfect example.[6] The sale was announced in 2020 but was only put under contract more than 30 months later, and now, final delivery will not be complete until 2029 at the earliest, barring urgent intervention.[7] In a comprehensive monograph on the health of the U.S. defense industrial base (DIB) and America's ability to provide needed military systems to Taiwan, Ukraine, and Israel, my

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[4] Rear Adm. (Ret.) Mark Montgomery and Bradley Bowman, "Expedite Arms Deliveries to Beleaguered Democracies," *Defense News*, June 14, 2022. (https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2022/06/14/expedite-arms-deliveries-to-beleaguered-democracies); Rear Adm. (Ret.) Mark Montgomery, "Baker's Dozen: Thirteen Recommendations to Improve Deterrence in the Western Pacific," *Testimony before the Select Committee on the Strategic Competition Between the United States and the Chinese Communist Party*, April 26, 2023. (https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2023/04/26/bakers-dozen-thirteen-recommendations-to-improve-deterrence-in-the-western-pacific)

[5] Eric Gomez, "Taiwan Arms Backlog, February 2025 Update: Early Trump Admin Arms Sales and Rumors of a Big Request from Taiwan," *Schar School of Policy and Government, George Mason University*, February 2025. (https://tsm.schar.gmu.edu/taiwan-arms-backlog-february-2025-update-early-trump-admin-arms-sales-and-rumors-of-a-big-request-from-taiwan)

[6] Rear Adm. (Ret.) Mark Montgomery, Bradley Bowman, and Ryan Brobst, "How 'MacGyver' magic can get Taiwan its Harpoon defenses faster," *Defense News*, December 7, 2022. (https://www.defensenews.com/opinion/commentary/2022/12/07/how-macgyver-magic-can-get-taiwan-its-harpoon-defenses-faster)

[7] Rear Adm. (Ret.) Mark Montgomery and Bradley Bowman, "Taiwan Needs our Help Now," *The Dispatch*, April 17, 2023. (https://thedispatch.com/article/taiwan-needs-our-help-now)

colleagues Bradley Bowman and Ryan Brobst concluded that America urgently needs to reform security assistance. They offer 18 recommendations on how to fix the problems plaguing the DIB and call for reform and review of the FMS contracting process.[8] The administration's April 9 executive order to reform foreign defense sales is a good first step, but much more is needed.[9] To alleviate this backlog, the United States could do more to assist with third-party procurement of highly needed systems such as handheld air defense weapons, anti-armor munitions, and autonomous systems to bridge the gap.

5. Maximize military assistance to Taiwan. This can be done through Foreign Military Financing (FMF), Presidential Drawdown Authorities (PDA), and Taiwan Security Cooperation Initiative (TSCI). Taiwan is too small to handle the China challenge alone. (China's GDP is 23 times greater than Taiwan's GDP.) These programs provide the U.S. government with the unique ability to deliver equipment to Taiwan. The FY 2023 NDAA included numerous investments in, and support for, Taiwan's armed forces, such as the provision of up to $2 billion a year in FMF assistance. This Title 22 funding should be appropriated at $1 billion for Taiwan in FY 2026. The FY 2023 NDAA also authorized up to $1 billion a year in PDA. This should also be appropriated in FY 2026. Finally, the FY 2025 NDAA created TSCI and authorized up to $300 million for the first year. Going forward, Congress should appropriate $1 billion for TSCI in FY 2026 and beyond. A key use case for this money would be training and education of Taiwan's warfighters to include maximum attendance at captain's courses in all warfighting areas and paying for off-island battalion-level training at U.S. facilities in Hawaii and the West Coast.

6. Pre-position munitions in Taiwan. An important point gleaned from recent wargaming is the degree of difficulty in re-arming Taiwan during a conflict. By contrast, during the war in Ukraine, land borders with Poland, Slovakia, and Romania have facilitated re-arming and re-supply. In Taiwan's case, a Chinese blockade or invasion will make it nearly impossible to resupply the island. INDOPACOM Commander Adm. Sam Paparo testified to Congress that it took 73 cargo loads on C-17s to move a single Patriot battalion from South Korea to the Middle East.[10] It takes no C-17 lifts to move battalions that are already in theater. The United States must pre-position key munitions in Taiwan that Washington might want to transfer to Taiwan in a crisis, such as anti-armor missiles, air defense missiles, anti-ship missiles, and mines. Other critical items in WRSA-T could include field hospitals and associated medical supplies (to include freeze-dried plasma). Congress can support this effort by authorizing the establishment of a War Reserve Stocks Allies fund for Taiwan or WRSA-T, similar to the existing programs with six sites in Israel and in Korea. WRSA is a collection of materials — munitions, equipment, combat essential consumables, and hospital equipment — maintained for U.S. and partner forces to draw on in times of war until future in-country production and/or external resupply can meet consumption. Congress should move quickly to authorize, appropriate, and execute WRSA-T.

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[8] Ryan Brobst and Bradley Bowman, "Arsenal of Democracy: Arming Taiwan, Ukraine, and Israel While Strengthening the U.S. Industrial Base," *Foundation for Defense of Democracies*, April 2025. (https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2025/04/07/arsenal-of-democracy)

[9] Ryan Brobst and Bradley Bowman, "Trump's Defense Sales Executive Order is an Important First Step," *Foundation for Defense of Democracies*, April 11, 2025. (https://www.fdd.org/analysis/analysis-analysis/2025/04/11/trumps-defense-sales-executive-order-is-an-important-first-step)

[10] Jake Epstein, "US military planes flew a Patriot air defense battalion out of the Pacific to the Middle East. It took over 70 flights, a commander says," *Business Insider*, April 10, 2025. (https://www.yahoo.com/news/us-military-planes-flew-patriot-191451712.html)

Achieve the maximum level of U.S.-Taiwan force integration and interoperability.

7. Work with Taiwan to field a more integrated and interoperable force. With this force, the United States and Taiwan will be more likely to win and do so with fewer casualties. To best understand what an integrated force looks like, it is useful to understand the attributes or "stages" of combined military command-and-control (C2) enterprises. Partner militaries can work together at four different levels of cooperation: deconflicted, coordinated, integrated, or unified. Higher levels of cooperation and interoperability are a product of shared equipment and networks, organizational structures, experience levels, and, most importantly, frequency of training, exercising, and operating together. This integration drives efficiencies, minimizes shortfalls, and enhances performance. One can think of this force coordination in mathematical terms: a deconflicted force is, at best, "2 plus 2 equals 3," while an integrated force is "2 plus 2 equals 5."

In parallel with this, the two countries need to build and exercise bilateral organizations that facilitate cooperation across mission sets such as logistics, command and control, and intelligence sharing.[11] A similar effort is needed to jump start bilateral planning at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of warfighting. Congress ordered the DoD to begin exactly these types of integration and interoperability efforts in the FY 2023 NDAA, and it has started, albeit sluggishly. Congress should conduct significant oversight of service, joint, and coalition efforts to plan, train, and exercise with Taiwan forces.

8. Support training and exercises with a 'named operation.' The JTT in Taiwan has emerged as the key element of this integration effort, and it should be stabilized at a higher-end strength (doubling in size to approximately 1,000 personnel), with 50 percent of the staff on permanent duty orders. This JTT effort should be supported by a "named operation," which will provide a method for assigning and resourcing forces and operations in a manner that does not inhibit other military service programs or combatant command operations. Over time, this will facilitate the deployment of rotational forces — both special forces and traditional air and ground unites — to Taiwan. This allows for prioritization of the named operation mission set (i.e., developing integration and interoperability with Taiwan's forces). Establishing a named operation has also been an effective way to shape the perception of U.S. military activities during great power competition. This is necessary to compete in the information space against the CCP, which is actively wielding misinformation to shape the narrative against American interests, specifically regarding U.S. military activities and commitments in the region.

9. Create a 'Taiwan Contact Group' and work with key allies and Taiwan. This effort would focus on improving engagement among key leadership**.** As a result of how the United States has historically interpreted the Taiwan Relations Act, the executive branch has severely restricted the level, complexity, and frequency of leader engagement across all elements of national power. This makes planning, resourcing, and coordinating foreign policy difficult. U.S. allies have generally followed suit with similar restrictions. These artificial limitations — put in place to

[11] Jack Bianchi, "Peaceful Resolution: Reframing U.S. Defense Strategy Toward Taiwan," *Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment*, 2025. (https://csbaonline.org/uploads/documents/CSBA8397_(Peaceful_Resolution_Report)_final_web.pdf)

temper CCP emotions — are antiquated and do not reflect today's strategic reality of a provocative and aggressive China. The administration should reverse this policy of limiting engagement with and about Taiwan. And in support of this new effort, the administration should create a "Taiwan Contact Group" similar to that used with European partners and Ukraine to ensure that allied efforts are encouraged and coordinated with Taiwan. This group would include, at a minimum, the United States, Taiwan, and key allies, such as Japan, Australia, and the Philippines, as well as European partners. These efforts should emphasize addressing supply chain issues, encouraging co-production initiatives, and standardizing training for Taiwan's military.

Support Taiwan in designing and building a societal resilience effort to counter the CCP's CEEW campaign.

10. Help Taiwan build its societal resilience to resist the impact of a Chinese CEEW campaign. CEEW campaigns hold significant advantages for the CCP. The limited diplomatic, economic, and military cost to the CCP — especially compared to the blockade or cross-strait invasion scenarios — means that China can turn the pressure up and down at will. Most concerning, the compounding financial and psychological effects of a Chinese CEEW campaign impose escalating political pressure on Taipei without crossing any U.S. redlines.

The answer for Taiwan is to increase economic, cyber, and societal resilience — particularly across the financial services, energy, and communications sectors. Extending the island's ability to withstand CCP coercion from days and weeks to months and years not only provides time for America to impose countermeasures and corral reluctant democratic allies but also decreases the likelihood of CCP aggression in the first place. The CCP is less likely to launch CEEW campaigns if it assesses that Taiwan can withstand the pressure.[12] Building this resilience, however, takes time and coordination across central and local governments, the private sector, and civil society.

My colleague, Craig Singleton, and I conducted a tabletop exercise (TTX) in Taiwan last summer focused on financial sector challenges during an extended CEEW campaign.[13] We are planning a similar TTX for this summer concentrating on energy challenges. Identifying and mitigating complex interdependencies in critical infrastructures and deploying novel technologies to enhance digital resilience must happen before — not during — a crisis.

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[12] Craig Singleton, Rear Adm. (Ret.) Mark Montgomery, and Dr. Ben Jensen, "Targeting Taiwan: Beijing's Playbook for Economic and Cyber Warfare," *Foundation for Defense of Democracies*, October 4, 2024. (https://www.fdd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/fdd-memo-targeting-taiwan-beijings-playbook-for-economic-and-cyber-warfare.pdf)

[13] Craig Singleton, Rear Adm. (Ret.) Mark Montgomery, and Dr. Ben Jensen, "Targeting Taiwan: Beijing's Playbook for Economic and Cyber Warfare," *Foundation for Defense of Democracies*, October 4, 2024. (https://www.fdd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/fdd-memo-targeting-taiwan-beijings-playbook-for-economic-and-cyber-warfare.pdf); Craig Singleton, Rear Adm. (Ret.) Mark Montgomery, Ti-Chen Chen, and Dr. Ben Jensen, "Targeting Taiwan: Beijing's Playbook for Economic and Cyber Warfare," *Oral Remarks Given at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies*, October 4, 2024. (https://www.fdd.org/events/2024/10/04/targeting-taiwan-beijings-playbook-for-economic-and-cyber-warfare)

11. Continue supporting the development of Taiwan's cyber capabilities. The United States should help Taiwan improve its ability to prevent or mitigate the barrage of Chinese cyberattacks that will both precede and be integrated within a broader Chinese attack on Taiwan. China already conducts a persistent malicious cyber campaign against Taiwan that includes intellectual property theft, infrastructure malware attacks, and cyber-enabled disinformation campaigns. The United States has experience helping beleaguered democracies face down cyber threats and should use this experience to help bolster Taiwan's cyber resilience. In 2018, when the Ukrainian government asked for help fending off Russian cyberattacks on Ukraine's electrical power grid, Congress and the State Department implemented a nearly $50 million cyber capacity building program to improve Ukrainian network security. As tensions mounted in 2021, U.S. Cyber Command launched a nearly year-long, persistent "hunt forward operation" to assist Ukrainian cyber defenders identify and excise Russian malicious activity from Ukrainian networks. A similar dual-track effort is needed for Taiwan today — but one more tailored to Taiwan's capabilities and the Chinese threat.

The FY 2024 NDAA included the Taiwan Cybersecurity Resiliency Act requiring the Defense Department to work with Taipei to expand cooperation on military cyber operations. Congress should exercise careful oversight of these efforts to ensure that the DoD is working effectively with Taiwan to help defend its networks against cyberattacks, hunt through systems to eradicate cyber vulnerabilities, and conduct cyber bilateral training and exercises. Both Taiwan and U.S. cyber operators will benefit from consistent U.S. Cyber Command hunt forward operations in Taiwan as they practice working closely together in a crisis environment to confront China in cyberspace.

Line of Effort 2 — Protect America's Ability to Respond to and Win a Crisis in the Western Pacific

China is pre-positioning disruptive and destructive capabilities in U.S. critical infrastructure and developing a robust range of missiles that can impact the U.S. homeland and military forces in the field. Beijing wants to disrupt America's ability to conduct military mobility and degrade the operational tempo of U.S. forces. Maintaining America's ability to project power requires it to protect how it moves and also how it thinks. In parallel to its cyber intrusions, China is conducting influence operations to distort public perception, divide political consensus, and erode America's speed and agility to coordinate and act under pressure. If the United States is unable to defend itself against attacks on both digital and physical systems at home, no level of forward presence will be enough to win wars.

Properly secure American critical infrastructure from CCP manipulation.

12. Secure the critical infrastructure that supports military mobility. A direct military engagement between the United States and China would require the swift mobilization and deployment of a sizable U.S. military force. Moving troops and equipment efficiently over land, sea, and air is essential to America's ability to project power, support partners and allies, and sustain forces to fight and win wars. Alongside the U.S. military's own assets, commercially owned and operated critical infrastructure enables this military mobility. While U.S. Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) conducts logistical operations to facilitate the mobility of U.S. forces, civilian-owned rail networks, commercial ports, and airport authorities will

handle transportation of the majority of servicemembers and materiel during a significant, rapid mobilization.

China knows that compromising this critical infrastructure would cripple America's ability to deploy, supply, and sustain large forces. And in fact, over the past year, the intelligence community has revealed just how deeply Chinese hackers known as Volt Typhoon have penetrated U.S. transportation, energy, and water systems. Volt Typhoon demonstrated China's capability to gain and maintain persistent access to closed systems and pre-position malicious payloads to cause disruption and destruction. In addition to enabling potential disruption, compromising critical infrastructure allows Beijing to amass information about the movement of goods, surreptitiously watching as the United States moves its military equipment across the country. Given these threats, the U.S. military has a vested interest in the security of the nation's critical transportation infrastructure.

The cybersecurity of the critical air, rail, and maritime infrastructure that underpin U.S. military mobility is insufficient. To improve resilience, the United States needs significant investment by the government and the private sector as well as improved public-private collaboration to support these investments. The nation can no longer afford to waste time debating the immediacy of the threat. Washington must identify and resource solutions now. My colleague, Annie Fixler, and I have written an extensive monograph on this with 13 specific recommendations, all of which can be acted on by Congress.[14]

13. Build societal resilience against Chinese malign influence. Russia and China are corrupting civil discourse in the United States to undermine American democracy and national security decision-making processes. The intelligence community warned in its annual threat assessment that Beijing is engaged in "coercive and subversive" activities in the United States and abroad to suppress critics of the CCP and sow doubts in U.S. leadership.[15] Russia, meanwhile, seeks to "covertly shape [U.S.] public opinion."[16] Over the past six months, Washington has dismantled many of the systems necessary to identify and disrupt these and other foreign malign influence campaigns against U.S. interests and the U.S. homeland. While Congress is rightfully concerned about protecting the freedom of speech of American citizens, its adversaries deserve no such right. Congress will need to rebuild capabilities at the State Department, FBI, and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency to combat influence operations.

Congress has already taken a critical step in improving American resilience by requiring the sale of TikTok to a Western company. TikTok is not merely another social media platform on which adversaries can conduct influence operations. TikTok is an influence operation itself. The CCP's

[14] Annie Fixler, Rear Adm. (Ret.) Mark Montgomery, and Rory Lane, "Military Mobility Depends on Secure Critical Infrastructure," *Cyberspace Solarium Commission*, March 2025. (https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2025/03/27/military-mobility-depends-on-secure-critical-infrastructure)
[15] U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence, "Annual Threat Assessment of the U.S. Intelligence Community," March 2025, page 16. (https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/ATA-2025-Unclassified-Report.pdfhttps://web.archive.org/web/20250407101240/https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/ATA-2025-Unclassified-Report.pdf)
[16] Ibid., page 20.

influence over the algorithm and its ability to control the information Americans see is unprecedented. At no other time has an adversary had a direct path into the minds of America's population, particularly young Americans. Congress must hold the administration accountable for enforcing the law. Any White House effort to "save" TikTok must ensure ByteDance is divested of its control over TikTok's algorithm.

14. Utilize the National Guard to defend America's critical assets. The National Guard is the asset most likely to garner the authorities, capability, and capacity to help defend domestic networks. As such, Congress needs to define the Guard's cybersecurity tasking to do this. The National Guard's unique position bridging the military and civilian sectors, as well as federal and state government authorities, makes it ideally suited to respond to domestic cyber threats. The 54 Guard entities have the local presence and capabilities that position them well to serve as a rapid response force for cyber incidents at both the state and federal levels. Over the years, the Guard has taken on more cybersecurity responsibilities and has built more cyber capacity. The Congress should work with the administration to determine the Guard's long-term role in the cyber protection of critical infrastructures and identify the necessary new authorities (few, I suspect) and resources (likely many) to do this.

Build an effective missile defense to protect the homeland and U.S. forces in the field.

15. Develop a space-based approach to defending the United States from missile threats to the homeland and deployed forces. Both China and Russia are sprinting to build long-range cruise and hypersonic missiles that can strike the U.S. mainland anywhere with conventional warheads. The Iron Dome for America Executive Order and subsequent Defense Department statements have created a short-fuse process to envision and organize a comprehensive effort to defend the United States from the growing threats across the integrated air and missile defense enterprise.[17]

In the long term, a space-based approach is about identifying, tracking, and engaging threats from (and in) outer space. The United States will need to "weaponize" space like Russia and China already have. There are currently no treaty restrictions on placing conventional (non-nuclear) systems in space. To build this robust defense, the DoD will need to design and procure a comprehensive architecture that mixes detection and tracking satellites, dirigibles (equipped with sensors), and long-range ground-based radars to detect and track threats. The Pentagon must then fuse this network of sensors with a mix of (mostly) space-based engagement systems to intercept and destroy incoming missiles.

The United States must work to rapidly deploy a multitude of low-cost effectors through and from the space domain to target ballistic, hypersonic, and asymmetric threats. This approach would make a comprehensive space-based missile defense of forward-deployed forces and the homeland both operationally feasible and economically viable. Over time, this system will be able to expand the "Defended Asset List" (i.e., what we can actually protect) to match the much larger "Critical Asset List" (i.e., what we want to protect).

[17] Bradley Bowman and RADM (Ret.) Mark Montgomery, "Trump is Right to Prioritize Homeland Missile Defense," *The Cipher Brief*, February 10, 2025. (https://www.fdd.org/analysis/2025/02/10/trump-is-right-to-prioritize-homeland-missile-defense)

16. Double down on investments in hypersonic defense. Both China and Russia are developing conventional maneuvering hypersonic missile capabilities for which the United States has, at best, a limited defensive capability. This development could easily lead to a strategic imbalance, where adversaries possess offensive non-nuclear weapons that the United States cannot effectively counter — a gap that could persist for five-plus years.

The U.S. Navy has a limited sea-based terminal (SBT) defense capability against some forms of hypersonic missiles. However, this does not meet DoD objectives for hypersonic defense. A more capable approach is the Glide Phase Interceptor (GPI), a hypersonic missile defense system that intercepts missiles during the glide-phase (middle phase) of hypersonic flight.[18] The GPI missiles are designed to be fired from Aegis-equipped ships and the Aegis Ashore system.

In the FY 2024 NDAA, Congress directed the secretary of defense to field a GPI system with an initial operating capability (IOC) by December 31, 2029. At the time, there were two potential GPI systems in the research and development phase. Raytheon proposed a near-term answer — largely utilizing existing system components with a (then) 2027 IOC — and Northrop Grumman proposed a longer-term, possibly more capable system, that could be delivered sometime in the mid-2030s. Last summer, the U.S. Missile Defense Agency (MDA) decided to move forward only with the Northrop Grumman program.[19] This decision means that DoD is ignoring congressional guidance of fielding something by 2029. It is strategically destabilizing for authoritarian "first-mover" countries like Russia or China to have conventional (non-nuclear) weapons capable of destroying significant U.S. warfighting capabilities while the United States lacks a credible defense.

The bottom line is MDA made the wrong call. Congress should require the Trump administration to review the MDA's decision and consider a plan that would continue the research and development of the Northrop Grumman system while moving the Raytheon program into operational testing and development.

17. Develop and field persistent mid- and high-altitude sensor platforms — including balloons and aerostats — equipped with firing-quality tracking radars (i.e., capable of directing weapons). These unmanned vehicles enhance the defense of the U.S. homeland and forward-deployed forces against threats posed by ballistic missiles, hypersonic weapons, cruise missiles, and drones. They can also support resilient military and emergency communication networks in a crisis or natural disaster.

To deliver persistent, resilient, and cost-effective integrated air missile defense coverage, the MDA should develop fixed and mobile dirigibles that operate from 1,000 feet to near-space altitudes coverage. These high-altitude air defense systems are highly effective in detecting, characterizing, tracking, and engaging current and emerging advanced missile threats and are far

[18] "A System of Elements," *U.S. Department of Defense, Missile Defense Agency*, accessed May 10, 2025. (https://www.mda.mil/system/elements.html)
[19] David Vergun, "General Says Countering Hypersonic Weapons Is Imperative," *DOD News*, May 10, 2023. (https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Stories/Article/article/3391322/general-says-countering-hypersonic-weapons-is-imperative)

more cost-effective than manned or unmanned surveillance aircraft in the same mission. Solutions can leverage three decades of innovation by the U.S. military services, defense industry, and allies and partners such as Israel. In addition to missile defense, dirigibles can also support resilient military and emergency communication networks in a crisis or natural disaster.

Invest in logistics necessary to project power in the Western Pacific.

18. Build capacity to operate in a contested logistics environment. America's ability to project power into the Western Pacific will be contested from day one — starting at home. In a Taiwan scenario, the U.S. military must fight an "away game," dependent on long, vulnerable supply lines stretching from continental U.S. factories and bases to the front lines of a vast maritime theater. This foundational requirement — logistics at scale — is precisely what China is preparing to attack.

China already operates with impunity in cyberspace and space. It actively exploits U.S. vulnerabilities in soft infrastructure — military movements, commercial industry, logistics networks, utilities, and transportation nodes. From cyber intrusions into supply chains to mapping critical chokepoints in America's mobility architecture, China is executing a deliberate, global campaign to blunt U.S. power projection at speed and scale. They will strike early. They will strike simultaneously. And they will target logistics first.

Beijing understands what every warfighter knows: logistics wins wars. That is why China is investing in long-range fires; cyber capabilities; space-based intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR); and electromagnetic disruption — tools designed not only to destroy forward forces but also to collapse the flow of fuel, munitions, equipment, and reinforcements before they ever arrive.

Even without enemy interference, the U.S. logistics enterprise is under stress. In the air, America lacks both the capacity and the capability in aerial refueling and airlift. Our tanker fleet is aging, too small, and behind in connectivity, survivability, and readiness. Airlift is similarly overtasked and increasingly vulnerable in contested environments. At sea, the United States faces a growing crisis in sealift: not enough hulls, not enough mariners, and not enough surge capacity. On land, the Army's fuel storage, distribution systems, and hardened command-and-control nodes are limited and exposed. Every one of these shortfalls — every unaddressed gap — is exactly what China plans to exploit. The next fight will not allow for a slow buildup or an uncontested flow. The margin for error is gone.

If America wants to deter — and if necessary, decisively defeat — China, we must build the capacity and capability to operate in a contested environment. If we want to win, we must maneuver under fire. That starts by investing now in the logistics and mobility enterprise required for war in the Pacific.

Enhance U.S. ability to fight and win.

19. Invest in low-cost anti-ship weapons to disrupt a cross-strait invasion. In nearly every wargame I participate in, a key finding is that the ability of U.S. forces to destroy the Chinese

Navy operating East of Taiwan requires a mix of submarine-launched torpedoes and long-range strike weapons launched from air, ground, and naval platforms. This is a principal factor in both winning the conflict and reducing U.S. casualties. Fortunately, congressional and DoD actions in 2023 and 2024 have begun to address the shortfall in critical (but expensive) weapon systems such as the Long Range Anti-Ship Missile (LRASM).

A similar challenge exists with destroying the potentially thousands of Chinese amphibious forces, Coast Guard vessels, maritime militia, and cargo ships operating West of Taiwan in the Taiwan Straits. A mix of unmanned air systems (UAS) and unmanned surface vessels (USVs), combined with ground- and air-launched strike weapons, is necessary to create the "hellscape" effect envisioned by Adm. Sam Paparo. However, to sustain the volume of fires needed in the Taiwan Strait, the cost per shot of these weapons must be in the tens to low hundreds of thousands — not millions — of dollars. Potential weapon systems that could meet this need include Magura USVs employed by Ukraine in the Black Sea, marinized versions of the long-range strike (Kamikaze), and the Lyutyi, also utilized by Ukraine. One promising air-launched candidate to put any non-air defense warship out of action is a "Powered JDAM with Quick Sink." This combines a JDAM and a booster rocket with a Quick Sink seeker head — a weapon that could cost less than $100,000 per unit. U.S. aircraft will be able to fire these in relative safety — from ranges in excess of 200 nautical miles. Offensive mining can also play a key role, especially in the shallow water approaches to beach landing areas and ports.

The weapons mentioned above should be assessed, tested, and procured by the United States, Taiwan, and Japan such that they can be delivered by any element of the joint force and should be stored in the WRSA-T facilities recommended previously.

20. Create an independent cyber service. A standalone cyber service will maximize force generation capability and allow U.S. Cyber Command to compete with China's exploding cyber capabilities. Over the past decade, Congress has provided extensive guidance and oversight to the development and employment of U.S. cyber forces. Despite this congressional attention and persistent efforts by U.S. Cyber Command, U.S. cyber forces have been unable to raise their readiness for a number of years, and the size of each service's contribution to the Cyber Mission Force has not appreciably changed since the original agreements a decade ago despite significant changes in the cyber threat. Indeed, China created a single military cyber component in its Cyber Support Force back in 2016, resulting in improved capabilities and a larger capacity than similar U.S. forces. In the United States, by contrast, the responsibility for recruiting, training, and equipping cyber forces is fragmented across the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps — and soon, Space Force. There is no common understanding of core competencies and expertise. Accordingly, there are extraordinary inconsistencies, inefficiencies, and shortfalls in the proficiency and readiness of personnel provided to U.S. Cyber Command. In short, the United States is not optimized for conflict with a Chinese adversary. Congress should encourage the administration to create a single cyber service.

Conclusion

Resilience has a deterrent power all its own. The Chinese Communist Party's aggression against the United States and Taiwan will not cease until both countries' capabilities — in both the cyber

and physical realms — stop the Chinese dead in their tracks. The United States and Taiwan are quickly losing their ability to deter and defeat CCP aggression, but it is not too late to reverse this trend. It is hard to conduct a cross-strait invasion, it is hard to enforce a comprehensive blockade, and it is hard to compel a society to bend to your will. With help from the United States and its allies and partners, Taiwan can indeed overcome the threat of a modernized Chinese military force and persistent CEEW campaigning. Building up Taiwan's offensive and defensive capabilities, societal resilience, and cyber capacity, coupled with targeted investments in U.S. critical infrastructure security and cyber and missile defense, can and will strengthen America and Taiwan's ability to fight and win against China.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I look forward to your questions.

Appendix: Recommended Military Force Structure Changes for Taiwan

Taiwan's defense establishment should accelerate these acquisitions to attain desired operational capabilities over the next five years:[20]

Ground Systems

1. ANTI-ARMOR 10,000+ man-portable anti-armor missiles, suitable for employment against landing craft (e.g., Javelin).

2. LAND STRIKE 50+ mobile rocket launchers (e.g., HIMARS, RT-2000) with 5,000+ rounds of precision munitions for beach defense (e.g., GMLRS) and 1,000+ rounds of precision munitions for mainland counterforce targeting (e.g., ATACMS, PrSM).

3. ARTILLERY Stockpile 1.1 million of a mix of 105mm, 155mm, and 203mm artillery shells. Using Ukraine's use rate of 6,000 shells per day as a planning guide, Taiwan will need 1.1 million shells to stockpile that will last six months.

4. RADIOS — SINCGARS (or equivalent) Purchase approximately 30,000* RT-1702F radios. Allow equipping of active and reserve battalions with roughly 100 radios each, which should be sufficient to field them at the platoon level.

5. SOLDIER KIT 300,000 plus sets of uniforms, protective gear, rifles, pistols, and ammunition such that each member of the military, reserves, and civil defense force has emergency access to a personal weapon that is routinely function-checked and fired.

6. MINELAYER 14 Additional Volcano Scattering Mine layers (on top of 14).

Air Defense Systems

1. MANPAD 5,000+ man-portable air defense missiles (e.g., Stinger).

2. SHORAD 200+ mobile short-range air defense vehicles, with 2 to 3x missile reloads (e.g., MADIS, Avenger/Stinger, Antelope/TC-1).

3. C-UAS 40+ counter-UAS, counter-rocket, artillery, mortar systems, with 10x missile reloads (e.g., MRIC/SkyHunter, Iron Dome/Tamir, Coyote).

4. AIR DEFENSE 200+ mobile medium-range anti-air missile vehicles, with 5x missile reloads (e.g., NASAMS High-Mobility Launcher/AMRAAM, mobile TC-2).

5. DIRIGIBLES Aerostat radar systems for low-altitude air surveillance.

[20] The witness would like to acknowledge Matt Pottinger for his expertise in the development of these specific weapon systems recommendations. This list is modified from the original in his book, *The Boiling Moat*.

Air Systems

1. FIGHTERS Up to 200 fighter aircraft with anti-ship and anti-air identification and targeting capabilities (e.g., F-16 Viper).

2. LARGE UAV 25+ medium-altitude, long-endurance maritime surveillance UAS (e.g., MQ-9 Reaper).

3. POV UAS 500,000 POV Small one-way and surveillance UAVs (capacity to build).

4. LONG-RANGE STRIKE 500+ long-range air-to-surface and anti-ship cruise missiles held by U.S. forces outside the First Island Chain, for use by redeployed Taiwanese fighters (e.g., JASSM and Harpoon stored in Guam).

Maritime Systems

1. ASCMs 200+ mobile coastal defense cruise missile vehicles, with 2 to 3x missile reloads (e.g., HCDS, NMESIS, HF-2) — total of up to 2,400 missiles.

2. MARITIME UAS 10,000+ small, expendable, intelligent, and attack autonomous UAS to assist in finding and identifying and attacking priority naval troop transport targets.

3. MARITIME USV 1,000+ small, expendable, autonomous surface/undersea drones for targeting amphibious shipping, both in PRC ports and in transit.

4. FACG 60 (30 now) 200-ton class fast-attack missile craft (e.g., Kuanghua FACG).

5. CORVETTE 30 (15 now) 600-ton class guided-missile patrol craft (e.g., Tuojiang, Anping PGG).

6. MINELAYER Additional 4 Min Jiang 400t Minelaying ship (4 already).

Other Systems

1. Satellite surveillance data subscriptions Maxar, etc.

2. LEO internet communications subscriptions Starshield, Amazon Kuiper, OneWeb, etc.

3. GROUND TRAINING CONUS space to support heel-to-toe small-unit Live Fire and Maneuver (LFAM) training: Taiwan should set aside funding to lease/rent training space at a U.S. Reserve or Army National Guard base to support LFAM training (and money to cover the cost of that training). Setting aside a distinct line item to cover training space and training costs sends a clear signal that training is as important as platforms and munitions. It will also be transparently transactional so as to blunt potential criticisms that space “given” to Taiwanese units for training is space that cannot be used for U.S. (guard and reserve) training.