

News : ANS warns Congress against US-China nuclear cooperation ban

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The **American Nuclear** Society has urged Congress to oppose any amendments to a House foreign policy bill that would prohibit **US nuclear energy** cooperation with **China** .

ANS warned that a blanket ban would “undermine global **nuclear** safety standards and inflict significant harm to the **US nuclear energy** industry and supply chain — without providing any benefits.”

The Ensuring **American** Global Leadership and Engagement Act, debated by the House Foreign Affairs Committee in a June 30 markup, aims to boost **US** competitiveness and counter the policy challenges posed by **China** . The Senate passed similar legislation on June 8 — the Endless Frontiers Act — which bars the federal government from engaging in **nuclear** cooperation activities with **China** or its state-owned companies.

“Some in Congress have called for a total cessation of bilateral **nuclear** cooperation between **China** and the U.S.,” said ANS CEO and Executive Director Craig Piercy in the letter. “Politically seductive though it may be, such a policy approach would ultimately do significant harm to America’s ability to influence international **nuclear** safety and nonproliferation norms.”

ANS said existing policies, such as the 2018 U.S Policy Framework on Civil **Nuclear** Cooperation with **China** , already prevent the transfer of most civil **nuclear** products and technologies to **China** .

Some **Chinese nuclear energy** companies also face separate federal scrutiny. In 2019, the **US Department of Commerce** expanded restrictions on **China General Nuclear** , the largest **Chinese nuclear** company by capacity. Commerce alleged in a Federal Register notice that **CGN** “engaged in or enabled efforts to acquire advanced **US nuclear** technology and material for diversion to military uses in **China** .”

With 50 operating reactors and plans to double that number by 2033, **China** has the fastest growing **nuclear** sector in the world. ANS noted that curbing **US -China nuclear** engagement would harm the **US nuclear** supply chain and limit future business prospects.

“The bill could shut **US** suppliers out of the **Chinese** market and third countries where **Chinese** entities are increasingly present, harming **US** national security and economic interests, and **American** workers,” the letter said.

“**China** represents a multi-billion-dollar opportunity for a wide variety of **US** firms,” including those in the supply chain of the **Westinghouse** AP1000 reactor design. In 2007, **Westinghouse** agreed to supply four AP1000 reactors to **China** as part of a deal in which **China** gained some intellectual property rights. The program formed part of **Beijing** ’s **nuclear power** expansion plan. Recently, the country has shifted focus on deploying its domestically designed Hualong One technology.

The Foreign Affairs Committee agreed to delay voting on the comprehensive foreign policy bill until the week of July 12, an ANS spokesman said July 2.

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