

February 8, 2022

John Holloway
Office of the President
Rutgers University
7 College Avenue, 2nd Floor
New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Dear President Holloway:

I write to urge you to terminate your existing academic and research partnerships with universities located in the People's Republic of China (PRC) that have been overtly tasked by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to support Beijing's military-industrial complex.

In a speech last year in Beijing, CCP General Secretary Xi Jinping said that the PRC would "exhaust all means" to recruit intelligent and innovative professionals from around the world to support the technological development of the CCP's military, known as the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Such efforts, which include the PRC's Thousand Talents Program and its Double First-Class University Plan, are unambiguously geared towards advancing military-civil fusion (MCF), a national strategy of the CCP aimed at acquiring and developing the world's cutting-edge technology, including through theft, to achieve economic and military dominance.

In recent months, the PRC's increasingly aggressive tactics have also ensnared several notable U.S. academics and jeopardized the standing of their university patrons. This includes once-acclaimed Harvard University professor Charles Lieber, who in December 2021 was convicted in federal court on charges stemming from his illicit relationship with the PRC government. Lieber's case, and other similar convictions, raise important questions about how the United States assesses risk to its national security within its broader research enterprise. The PRC is fully integrating Chinese private industry and the PRC's civilian universities into their MCF strategy. To that end, nearly 70 Chinese civilian universities have been officially designated as part of the PRC's defense enterprise by the State Administration of Science, Technology and Industry for National Defense (SASTIND), the civilian agency responsible for funding commercial and academic research in support of the PLA's requirements. That list of 70 PLA-linked civilian universities includes at least one of your current academic partners in the PRC.

For decades, Beijing has openly exploited the expertise of Chinese students and scholars studying or conducting research in the United States to accelerate the PRC's economic and military development. For example, according to one study conducted between 2007 and 2017, the PLA reportedly sent more than 2,500 of its own scientists abroad to study and work at foreign universities. Some of these scientists travelled abroad under civilian cover so as to obfuscate their military affiliations. After completing their studies, these scientists returned to the

PRC to support the country's military-industrial complex, including its nuclear weapons program and cyber-espionage platforms. Increasingly, Beijing has also come to rely on its civilian students and researchers to enable such nefarious work. This includes formal sponsorship of promising Chinese scholars in science, technology, engineering, and math to study at American and other foreign universities, after which time they are expected to return to the PRC to provide the technological know-how and talent needed to support its defense industry.

Information available in open sources indicates that Rutgers currently maintains at least one partnership agreement with Jilin University, with whom it previously jointly operated a Confucius Institute. Even though Rutgers shuttered its Confucius Institute, the university elected to maintain its partnership with Jilin, which, according to public records, actively supports Beijing's military-industrial complex. More specifically, Rutgers' partnership with Jilin, per a general cooperation agreement between the two universities, includes multiple sub-agreements in MCF-related fields, including biomedical and health sciences, as well as dual-degree programs in business, environmental science, and biological science. Jilin University is known for high-level defense research and for supporting Beijing's nuclear weapons program. Jilin has been supervised by the Chinese Ministry of Education and SASTIND since 2016 and is directly involved in classified Chinese defense research. In 2017, SASTIND designated eight fields of research at Jilin to fulfill 'national defense disciplines,' including aviation, aerospace, electronics, nuclear technology, armament science and technology, and shipbuilding.

Jilin's National Defense Science and Technology Research Institute works to "actively serve the integration of military and civilian development and contribute to the realization of the Chinese dream and the dream of strengthening the military." Jilin's State Key Laboratory of Super-hard Materials works closely with China Academy of Engineering Physics (CAEP), which is the PRC's entity responsible for conducting the research, development, and testing of nuclear weapons and related science. CAEP is also listed on the U.S. Commerce Department Bureau of Industry and Security's Entity List, which restricts the exportation of sensitive items to designated entities and individuals. Lastly, Jilin's College of Computer Science and Technology hosts the Chinese Ministry of Education's Key Laboratory of Attack and Defense Simulation Technology for Naval Warfare, whose researchers conduct classified cybersecurity research for the PLA Navy.

I remain deeply concerned by the PLA's aggressive campaign to infiltrate America's research enterprise. I respectfully urge you to terminate the above outlined partnership agreement, and to take steps to thoroughly vet your other academic partners in the PRC for similar risks involving the misappropriation of academic research. Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Rubio', written in a cursive style.

Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator