

Durbin, Senate Dems Unveil America Leads Act To Confront The Rise Of China

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Democratic Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL) today joined Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Senate Democrats to introduce the *America Labor, Economic competitiveness, Alliances, Democracy and Security (America LEADS) Act*, Senate Democrats’ proposal for a new U.S.-China policy. The most comprehensive China legislation to date, the *America LEADS Act* seeks to recognize that only when we have a vibrant economy here at home can we truly compete with China abroad.

The legislation provides significant new investments to rebuild the U.S. economy and provide our workers, entrepreneurs, researchers, and manufacturers with the skills and support needed to out-compete China and succeed in the twenty-first century. The proposal includes more than \$350 billion in new funding to synchronize and mobilize all aspects of U.S. national power. This approach is grounded in getting the broader Indo-Pacific strategy “right,” centered on our alliances and partnerships, animated by America’s longstanding values, and driven by the need for a course correction, after almost four years of destruction under President Trump.

“Whether pursuing erratic, poorly thought out trade policies that hurt our farmers, cozying up to yet another dictator, ignoring the threat of COVID-19, or denying climate change, the Trump Administration has demonstrated an utter lack of strategic vision when it comes to China,” Durbin said. “In four short years, our farmers and manufacturers have lost markets for their goods. China has rolled back democracy in Hong Kong and run internment camps for Uyghurs. And China has made diplomatic and economic inroads around the world and on our doorstep. This bill lays out a coherent approach to China — working together where possible, standing up for human rights and democracy, and looking out for the American worker.”

Joining Durbin, Menendez, and Schumer in introducing the *America LEADS Act* were Senators Ron Wyden (D-OR), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Patty Murray (D-WA), Jack Reed (D-RI), Mark Warner (D-VA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH).

The legislation is guided by four pillars: (1) invest in American competitiveness; (2) support American alliances and partners; (3) restore and advance a values-centered foreign policy; and (4) ensure China pays a price for its predatory actions.

The *America LEADS Act* also includes provisions that strengthen America’s diplomatic, economic, military and soft power posture in the Indo-Pacific and around the globe; promote democracy, human rights, and the rule of law; and safeguard our nation’s innovation and creativity from China’s predatory trade and economic practices. Most importantly, the *America LEADS Act* takes significant steps to replenish the sources of our competitiveness at home, with big investments in American workers, education, scientific research, and our nation’s industrial base.

A Summary of the *America LEADS Act* can be found [here](#) and below.

The America LEADS Act

- Invests in American workers and restores United States’ competitiveness in science and technology, manufacturing, global infrastructure, digital technologies, and global clean energy development, by increasing federal funding for research and development, including investment to lead in the development and production of new and emerging technologies like 5G, quantum, and artificial intelligence that will define the twenty-first century, taking action to strengthen domestic supply chains, and providing support for domestic manufacturing industries like semiconductors.
- Confronts China’s education and influence campaigns by requiring new reporting requirements and invests in registered apprenticeships, training, and STEM

education programs with a focus on building a diverse and inclusive innovation and manufacturing workforce for the 21st Century.

- Renews and reorients the United States' diplomatic strategy towards China centered on America's commitment to its allies around the world and in the Indo-Pacific region, including Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Australia, Thailand, and Taiwan, and calls for the United States to reassert its leadership within regional and international organizations, like the World Health Organization and the G7.
- Reaffirms America's strong security commitment in the Indo-Pacific and a forward-deployed posture in the region to ensure that all nations can exercise their rights in the region's international waters and airspace, and directs the United States to provide additional assistance and training to countries under the Indo-Pacific Maritime Security Initiative. The bill also provides regional strategies to confront malign PRC influence in the Western Hemisphere, South and Central Asia, Africa, the Arctic region, and the Middle East and North Africa.
- Invests in our values, authorizing a broad range of efforts to support human rights and civil society measures, especially as they relate to Tibet, the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), and Hong Kong, including allowing certain Hong Kong citizens and residents of Xinjiang to apply for admission to the United States. The bill also directs the President to report foreign persons identified for engaging in and facilitating forced labor in China and to apply sanctions to Chinese officials complicit in human rights violations.
- Focuses on countering and confronting China's predatory international economic behavior, and includes measures to strengthen trade enforcement across a wide range of areas, including intellectual property, supply chains, currency manipulation, and counterfeit goods.