INITIATIVE TO SUPPORT PROTECTION OF NATIONAL SECURITY ACADEMIC RESEARCHERS FROM UNDUE INFLUENCE AND OTHER SECURITY THREATS


"(a) Initiative Required.-The Secretary of Defense shall, in consultation with other appropriate government organizations, establish an initiative to work with institutions of higher education who perform defense research and engineering activities-

"(1) to support protection of intellectual property, controlled information, key personnel, and information about critical technologies relevant to national security;

"(2) to limit undue influence, including through foreign talent programs, by countries to exploit United States technology within the Department of Defense research, science and technology, and innovation enterprise; and

"(3) to support efforts toward development of domestic talent in relevant scientific and engineering fields.

"(b) Institutions and Organizations.-The initiative required by subsection (a) shall be developed and executed to the maximum extent practicable with academic research institutions and other educational and research organizations.

"(c) Requirements.-The initiative required by subsection (a) shall include development of the following:

"(1) Information exchange forum and information repositories to enable awareness of security threats and influence operations being executed against the United States research, technology, and innovation enterprise.

"(2) Training developed and delivered in consultation with institutions of higher education and appropriate Government agencies, and other support to institutions of higher education, to promote security and limit undue influence on institutions of higher education and personnel, including Department of Defense financial support to carry out such activities, that-

"(A) emphasizes best practices for protection of sensitive national security information;

"(B) includes the dissemination of unclassified materials and resources for identifying and protecting against emerging threats to institutions of higher education, including specific counterintelligence information and advice developed specifically for faculty and academic researchers based on actual identified threats; and

"(C) includes requirements for appropriate senior officials of institutions of higher education to receive from appropriate Government agencies updated and periodic briefings that describe the espionage risks to academic institutions and associated personnel posed by technical intelligence gathering activities of near-peer strategic competitors.

"(3) The capacity of Government agencies and institutions of higher education to assess whether individuals affiliated with Department of Defense programs have participated in or are currently participating in foreign talent programs or expert recruitment programs.

"(4) Opportunities to collaborate with defense researchers and research organizations in secure facilities to promote protection of critical information and strengthen defense against foreign intelligence services.
(5) Regulations and procedures—

(A) for Government agencies and academic organizations and personnel to support the goals of the initiative; and

(B) that are consistent with policies that protect open and scientific exchange in fundamental research.

(6) Policies to limit or prohibit funding provided by the Department of Defense for institutions or individual researchers who knowingly violate regulations developed under the initiative, including regulations relating to foreign talent programs.

(7) Initiatives to support the transition of the results of institution of higher education research programs into defense capabilities.

(8)(A) A list of academic institutions of the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, and other countries that—

(i) have a history of improper technology transfer, intellectual property theft, or cyber or human espionage;

(ii) operate under the direction of the military forces or intelligence agency of the applicable country;

(iii) are known—

(I) to recruit foreign individuals for the purpose of transferring knowledge to advance military or intelligence efforts; or

(II) to provide misleading information or otherwise attempt to conceal the connections of an individual or institution to a defense or an intelligence agency of the applicable country; or

(iv) pose a serious risk of improper technology transfer of data, technology, or research that is not published or publicly available.

(B) The list described in subparagraph (A) shall be developed and continuously updated in consultation with the Bureau of Industry and Security of the Department of Commerce, the Director of National Intelligence, United States institutions of higher education that conduct significant Department of Defense research or engineering activities, and other appropriate individuals and organizations.

(9)(A) A list, developed and continuously updated in consultation with the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine and the appropriate Government agencies, of foreign talent programs that pose a threat to the national security interests of the United States, as determined by the Secretary.

(B) In developing and updating such list, the Secretary shall consider—

(i) the extent to which a foreign talent program—

(I) poses a threat to research funded by the Department of Defense; and

(II) engages in, or facilitates, cyber attacks, theft, espionage, attempts to gain ownership of or influence over companies, or otherwise interferes in the affairs of the United States; and

(ii) any other factor the Secretary considers appropriate.

(d) Procedures for Enhanced Information Sharing.—

(1) Collection of information.—

(A) Defense research and development activities.—Not later than October 1, 2020, for the purpose of maintaining appropriate security controls over research activities, technical information, and intellectual property, the Secretary, in conjunction with
appropriate public and private entities, shall establish streamlined procedures to collect appropriate information relating to individuals, including United States citizens and foreign nationals, who participate in defense research and development activities.

"(B) Fundamental research programs.-With respect to fundamental research programs, the academic liaison designated under subsection (g) shall establish policies and procedures to collect, consistent with the best practices of Government agencies that fund academic research, appropriate information relating to individuals who participate in fundamental research programs.

"(2) Protection from release.-The procedures required by paragraph (1) shall include procedures to protect such information from release, consistent with applicable regulations.

"(3) Reporting to government information systems and repositories.-The procedures required by paragraph (1) may include procedures developed, in coordination with appropriate public and private entities, to report such information to existing Government information systems and repositories.

"(e) Annual Report.-

"(1) In general.-Not later than April 30, 2020, and annually thereafter, the Secretary, acting through appropriate Government officials (including the Under Secretary for Research and Engineering), shall submit to the congressional defense committees [Committees on Armed Services and Appropriations of the Senate and the House of Representatives] a report on the activities carried out under the initiative required by subsection (a).

"(2) Contents.-The report required by paragraph (1) shall include the following:

"(A) A description of the activities conducted and the progress made under the initiative.

"(B) The findings of the Secretary with respect to the initiative.

"(C) Such recommendations as the Secretary may have for legislative or administrative action relating to the matters described in subsection (a), including actions related to foreign talent programs.

"(D) Identification and discussion of the gaps in legal authorities that need to be improved to enhance the security of research institutions of higher education performing defense research.

"(E) A description of the actions taken by such institutions to comply with such best practices and guidelines as may be established by under the initiative.

"(F) Identification of any incident relating to undue influence to security threats to academic research activities funded by the Department of Defense, including theft of property or intellectual property relating to a project funded by the Department at an institution of higher education.

"(3) Form.-The report submitted under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in both unclassified and classified formats, as appropriate.

"(f) Publication of Updated Lists.-

"(1) Submittal to congress.-Not later than January 1, 2021, and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall submit to the congressional defense committees the most recently updated lists described in paragraphs (8) and (9) of subsection (c).

"(2) Form.-Each list submitted under paragraph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.
**(3)** Public availability.-Each list submitted under paragraph (1) shall be published on a publicly accessible internet website of the Department of Defense in a searchable format.

**(4)** Intervening submittal and publication.-The Secretary may submit and publish an updated list described in paragraph (1) more frequently than required by that paragraph, as the Secretary considers necessary.

**(g)** Designation of Academic Liaison.-

**(1)** In general.-Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 [Pub. L. 116–283; approved Jan. 1, 2021], the Secretary, acting through the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, shall designate an academic liaison with principal responsibility for working with the academic and research communities to protect Department-sponsored academic research of concern from undue foreign influence and threats.

**(2)** Qualification.-The Secretary shall designate an individual under paragraph (1) who is an official of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering.

**(3)** Duties.-The duties of the academic liaison designated under paragraph (1) shall be as follows:

**(A)** To serve as the liaison of the Department with the academic and research communities.

**(B)** To execute initiatives of the Department related to the protection of Department-sponsored academic research of concern from undue foreign influence and threats, including the initiative required by subsection (a).

**(C)** To conduct outreach and education activities for the academic and research communities on undue foreign influence and threats to Department-sponsored academic research of concern.

**(D)** To coordinate and align academic security policies with Department component agencies, the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the intelligence community, and appropriate Federal agencies.

**(E)** To the extent practicable, to coordinate with the intelligence community to share, not less frequently than annually, with the academic and research communities unclassified information, including counterintelligence information, on threats from undue foreign influence.

**(F)** Any other related responsibility, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering.

**(h)** Institution of Higher Education Defined.-The term 'institution of higher education' has the meaning given such term in section 101 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).