

October 5, 2026

The Honorable Roger Wicker
United States Senate
Chair, Senate Armed Services Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
United States Senate
Ranking Member, Senate Armed Services
Committee
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mike Rogers
U.S. House of Representatives
Chair, House Armed Services Committee
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
U.S. House of Representatives
Armed Services Committee
2264 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Reed, Chairman Rogers, and Ranking Member Smith:

On behalf of the 27 undersigned organizations, we write in support of the inclusion of the Deterrent Act into the conference report for H.R. 8800 - National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2027. This critical national security legislation would help to safeguard U.S. educational institutions from foreign influence campaigns and bring much needed transparency to how foreign adversarial countries are allowed to invest in higher education.

The underlying legislation was passed by the House of Representatives on March 27, 2025, by a vote of [241 to 169](#). The Senate has not yet acted on the legislation. The bill has bipartisan cosponsors in both the House and Senate and amendments containing the provisions of the legislation were offered in both chambers during the floor process for the NDAA. The amendments were not included during debate in the House and were left out of the managers' package in the Senate. It is our belief that if put to a vote in both chambers the underlying bill would pass as it did in the House.

Through its public disclosure provisions, the bill focuses on the national security threat posed by malign foreign actors, investing heavily in U.S. colleges and universities for the purpose of influencing U.S. students, stealing intellectual property, and undermining research partnerships these schools have with the Department of Defense and other sensitive projects.

As part of a larger policy shift, the Department of Education has begun collecting and making publicly available data on foreign money being donated to schools and the counterparties that are providing these funds. In partnership with the State Department, this new data is being evaluated to ensure that these foreign investments are not benefiting authoritarian regimes, like China, Russia, and Iran. Initial disclosures have shown that Billions of dollars are being spent by these adversarial States and additional transparency and reporting measures are necessary to ascertain the true intent of these investments.

New data collected by the Department of Education shows hundreds of millions of dollars in transactions between U.S. universities and entities on the Department of Defense 1286 list, 1260 H list, The Commerce Department Entity list, the OFAC Sanctions list, the NS-CMIC list, the State Department NS-CCMC list, and other lists maintained by the U.S. government. This

illustrates the extent of the problem and the lack of reporting and due diligence being done by certain colleges and universities.

The Deterrent Act would begin to address this issue by lowering reporting thresholds for foreign gifts to U.S. universities. The legislation would also require educational institutions to apply for a waiver to accept gifts from countries of concern defined by the 10 U.S.C. § 4872(d)(2)). The Congressional intent of this legislation is to bring additional data to policy makers and allow the Department of Defense, Treasury, State, and the intelligence community the ability to share information about foreign influence campaigns targeting U.S. educational institutions.

The Department of Defense recently announced audits of 30 U.S. educational institutions with connections to entities included on the Congressionally mandated 1286 list. The Department is reviewing the documents submitted under section 117 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 by these schools and may take additional action if foreign investments and gifts jeopardize joint research projects between the school and the Department.

We ask that you include the language of the amendments submitted for consideration as part of the NDAA process.

Sincerely,

The undersigned organizations:

The Institute for the Study of Global
Antisemitism & Policy

Jewish Institute for National Security

American Muslim Multifaith & Women's
Empowerment Council

Parents Defending Education Action

CLARITy Coalition

American Islamic Forum for Democracy

StandWithUs

The Louis D. Brandeis Center for

Human Rights Under Law

North American Values Institute

FDD Action

Transparency International U.S.

NORPAC

HinduACTION

B'nai B'rith International

Rabbinical Assembly

Project S.A.V.E.

National Jewish Advocacy Center

Chinese American Citizens Alliance of New
York

Jewish Federations of North America

Endowment for Middle East Truth

Israel Economic Forum

Scholars for Peace in the Middle East

Combat Antisemitism Movement

Christians United for Israel

The Orthodox Union

Zionist Organization of America

Hindu American Foundation