

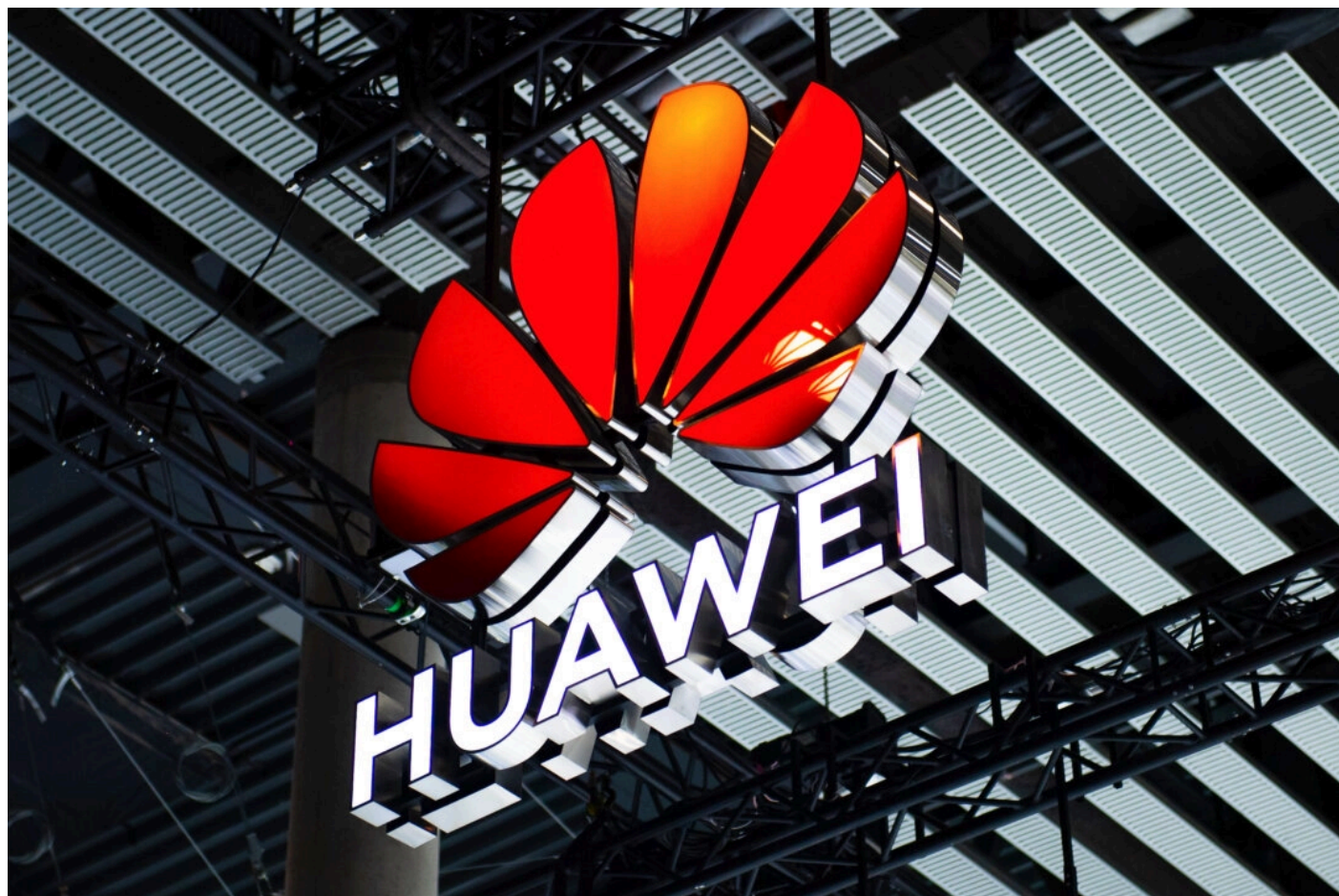
# House to Vote on \$3 Billion in Funding to Remove Chinese Telecom Equipment From US Networks

American telecom networks made headlines recently as intelligence officials confirmed ongoing Chinese state-backed hacking activities targeting the networks.

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By Catherine Yang

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The House of Representatives is set to vote this week on an annual defense bill, which includes \$3 billion to remove Chinese telecom equipment from American wireless networks.

The 1,800-[page](#) update to the National Defense Authorization Act was published on the evening of Dec. 7, increasing funding for networks' reimbursement under the Secure and Trusted Communications Networks Act from \$1.9 billion to \$4.98 billion, matching an estimate provided by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).



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Originally passed in [2019](#), the act prohibits equipment and services that pose a national security risk from entering U.S. networks—chiefly targeting technology by Chinese companies Huawei and ZTE. It included the reimbursement fund to “rip and replace” technology made by the prohibited companies.

On Nov. 26, FCC Chair Jessica Rosenworcel [urged](#) Congress to provide the additional funding, writing that 126 carriers in the United States face a \$3.08 billion shortfall to replace the insecure technology.

As of Nov. 20, the agency has received more than 35,000 reimbursement claims and 30 final certifications of applications stating all replacement work had been completed, Rosenworcel wrote.

The networks face a June 21, 2025, deadline to complete this work, but will be granted extensions based on delayed reimbursements. The agency has already granted 118 such extensions.

Rosenworcel wrote that 72 percent of status updates indicated that lack of funding is an obstacle to the “removal, replacement, and disposal” of the banned technology, and 50 percent of networks reported they cannot complete this work without additional funding.

The FCC chair said the funding shortfall impacts rural communities more significantly, and some have expressed concern they may have to shut down portions of their network and withdraw from the process without removing the banned technology.

“Any shut down of network facilities could remove the only provider available,” Rosenworcel wrote, adding that this would pose a continued national security concern.

Competitive Carriers Association CEO Tim Donovan on Dec. 7 praised the announcement, saying, “Funding is desperately needed to fulfill the mandate to remove and replace covered equipment and services while maintaining connectivity for tens of millions of Americans.”

American telecom networks made headlines recently as intelligence officials confirmed the ongoing presence of Chinese state-backed hackers on American networks.

Anne Neuberger, deputy national security adviser for cyber and emerging technologies, recently revealed that Chinese state-sponsored hackers have compromised [at least eight](#) American telecommunications companies.

The telecoms that were breached have responded, but none “have fully removed the Chinese actors from these networks,” Neuberger said. “So there is a risk of ongoing compromises to communications, [and] until U.S. companies address the cybersecurity gaps, the Chinese are likely to maintain their access.”

Days later, she said at a press conference in Bahrain that officials believe the [hackers were after](#) senior politicians’ communications.

“The purpose of the operation was more focused,” Neuberger said. “We believe ... the actual number of calls that they took, recorded and took, was really more focused on very senior political individuals.”

A Chinese hacker group, “Salt Typhoon,” is being investigated by the FBI and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency. The agencies said in November that the hackers have conducted a “broad

and significant cyber espionage campaign” aimed at stealing data from individuals working in government and politics.

*Epoch Times reporter Frank Fang and Reuters contributed to this report.*

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