

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 14, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Mullin,

We write regarding reports concerning China COSCO SHIPPING Corporation Limited (COSCO) vessels conducting espionage operations near U.S. coastlines and their potential enrollment in the U.S. Coast Guard's Quality Shipping for the 21st Century (Qualship 21) program administered by the Port State Control Division of the Office of Commercial Vessel Compliance.

According to recent public reporting, COSCO vessels use sophisticated, concealed onboard equipment to intercept "military communications technologies and encryption developments" off our coast, presenting a serious counterintelligence threat.¹ Reporting further indicates this is part of a longstanding espionage partnership with the People's Republic of China (PRC) spanning decades.²

These actions warrant particular attention considering COSCO's January 2025 addition to the Department of War's 1260H Chinese Military Companies list.³ Within its designation, the Department cited direct ownership and control by the State-owned Assets Supervision and Administration Commission (SASAC), official acts on behalf of the People's Liberation Army (PLA), indirect affiliation with the State Administration of Science, Technology, and Industry for National Defense (SASTIND), and active contributions to military-civil fusion development of the Chinese defense industrial base.

Against this backdrop, the House Select Committee on China has been informed that at least 10 COSCO vessels listed below were enrolled in the Qualship 21 program as of July 15, 2026, where enrollees receive certain benefits upon arrival, including reduced Port State Control examination frequency.⁴

¹ Reuters, "Chinese Shipper COSCO Collects Intel for Beijing with Concealed Equipment, US Officials Say," September 1, 2026.

² Ibid.

³ Department of War, "Entities Identified as Chinese Military Companies Operating in the United States in Accordance with Section 1260H of the William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116-283, Section 1260H, as amended (codified at 10 U.S.C. § 113, note))", June 8, 2026.

⁴ U.S. Coast Guard, "Vessels Enrolled in Qualship 21," July 15, 2026.

Vessels Enrolled in Qualship 21

15-Jul-26

Certificate Number	Ship Name	IMO Number	Expiration Date
14962	COSCO DEVELOPMENT	9472139	8/12/2027
13277	COSCO FAITH	9472141	8/21/2026
13278	COSCO FORTUNE	9472127	8/21/2026
14963	COSCO HARMONY	9472177	8/12/2027
11876	COSCO HELLAS	9308510	12/7/2025
13279	COSCO HOPE	9472165	8/21/2026
14964	COSCO MALAYSIA	9448774	8/12/2027
13280	COSCO PHILIPPINES	9448762	8/21/2026
13281	COSCO PRIDE	9472153	8/21/2026
14965	COSCO THAILAND	9448798	8/12/2027
13282	COSCO VIETNAM	9448815	8/21/2026

State-owned commercial vessels engaging in espionage is an expected breach of trust we regularly anticipate from the Chinese Communist Party. We therefore ask that the Department expediently revoke enrollment of COSCO vessels from this privileged list, refuse renewal, and apply added scrutiny to similar companies that conduct acts on behalf of the PLA and operate as part of the Chinese industrial base.

Additionally, we ask that the Department provide the following information:

1. Whether the Coast Guard, including Coast Guard Intelligence, received intelligence data or other information from the Department of War, the Intelligence Community, or other federal agencies concerning counterintelligence or national security risks associated with COSCO, its vessels, or their operations prior to September 1, 2026; and, if so, whether such information was provided to or otherwise considered by the Office of Commercial Vessel Compliance in determining the continued eligibility of COSCO vessels for Qualship 21;
2. Whether the Coast Guard has received similar intelligence from the Intelligence Community regarding other vessels owned or operated by Chinese or Hong Kong based companies that are currently listed or have previously applied for Qualship 21 enrollment;
3. Whether the Coast Guard prompted a review of the continued eligibility of COSCO-owned or operated vessels for Qualship 21 following the Department of War's designation of COSCO on the 1260H list on January 31, 2026;

4. Whether a section 1260H designation, or comparable national security designation, is currently considered when determining initial or continued Qualship 21 eligibility;
5. Whether the Coast Guard has conducted, or intends to conduct, additional boardings and examinations of COSCO vessels within U.S. jurisdictions utilizing its authorities other than Port State Control to counter reported surveillance activity;
6. Whether the Coast Guard has considered removing Hong Kong's "Qualified Flag Administrations" pursuant to the Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act and other relevant authorities, given Hong Kong's lack of meaningful autonomy from the PRC;
7. Whether the Coast Guard has sufficient statutory authority to counter any surveillance activity from COSCO vessels within the United States and whether additional coordination with the Department or other Federal authorities is necessary;
8. What analytic efforts are underway to identify COSCO crew complicit in intelligence tasking and operational activities who have operated in U.S. waters to include U.S. territories; and
9. What analytic efforts are underway to evaluate historical COSCO vessel tracks in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), to include of the U.S. territories, to identify additional anomalous tracks indicative of possible intelligence collection or operational activities.

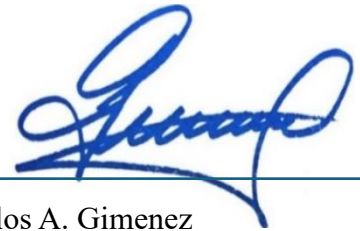
Sincerely,



John Moolenaar
Chairman, Select Committee on the
CCP



Eric A. "Rick" Crawford
Chairman, Permanent Select
Committee on Intelligence



Carlos A. Gimenez
Committee on Homeland Security
Chairman, Subcommittee on
Transportation and Maritime
Security

CC: The Honorable Jay Clayton, Director of National Intelligence;
The Honorable Admiral Kevin E. Lunday, Commandant, U.S. Coast Guard