

Huawei and ZTE Deny Claims That They Present a Security Threat to the United States

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Chinese telecommunications companies Huawei and ZTE have pushed back against accusations that they present a national security threat to the United States. The United States House Intelligence Committee released a report on the issue last week. Committee chairman, Republican Congressman Mike Rogers, spoke about the year-long investigation that led to the report.

“The investigation concluded that the risks associated with these companies providing equipment and services to U.S. critical infrastructure undermines the core U.S. national security interests.”

Dutch Ruppersberger, a Democrat, is a ranking member of the house committee.

“We already know the Chinese are aggressively hacking into our nation's networks, threatening our critical infrastructure, and stealing millions of dollars' worth of trade secrets and other sensitive information from American companies.”

The report warned American companies against doing business with Huawei and ZTE. It also called on The Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States to block any purchases, takeovers, or mergers involving the two companies. And it advised officials in the United States to ban the use of equipment from these companies in their systems.

Both Huawei and ZTE released statements last week denying the reports' claims. They said the report is an attempt to prevent Chinese companies from competing in the American market.

Chinese officials also reacted to the report. An official from China's Commerce Ministry called the accusations groundless and untrue. He said the action by the United States violated its long-held free-market principles. And he said it would harm cooperation and development between the two countries.

Marc Maiffret is chief technology officer with Beyond Trust, a security and threat prevention company in the United States. He says the House Committee's report may appear to be somewhat of a protectionist move. But, he says, China shares some responsibility in the matter.

"The complaints coming from them about the recent report, while maybe valid in some regards, come from a country that continues to have a large number of cyber-attacks, a large number of targeted attacks for intellectual property. And I think in general it's very hard to kind of make accusations against the U.S. or anybody when as a country yourself you have so many things that are happening from a cyber-security perspective."

William Plummer is Huawei's United States' vice president of external relations. He said during an interview with the television program "60 Minutes" that "Huawei is a business in the business of doing business." He said seventy percent of the company's business comes from outside China. And he said Huawei is not going to "jeopardize its commercial success for any government."