



By: TA | AP Insight

America is preparing massive funding to counter China's influence around the world



The Trump administration is preparing to ramp up funding by hundreds of millions of dollars for programs designed to counter **China's growing influence** around the world, after it had put a halt to many of those initiatives last year during a flurry of budget and personnel cuts.

The administration notified Congress late last week that it intends to spend \$175.8 million to replace outdated and aging undersea telecommunications cables in the Caribbean and Central America to **prevent China** from moving in.

The Associated Press obtained a copy of the notification on Monday.

The administration has expressed deep concern about **China's activities** in the Americas, pushing back on Chinese ownership of ports at either end of the Panama Canal, infrastructure projects funded by China's Belt and Road initiative in the region, and Chinese investment in the **telecommunications sector**.

A State Department official said China's economic activities in the Western Hemisphere pose risks to U.S. national security and prosperity.

The official, who was not authorized to speak publicly to the subject and spoke on condition of anonymity, said China's offerings may seem cheaper but in the end wind up being more expensive due to cost overruns, hidden maintenance fees and poor performance.

The underseas cable funding appears to be part of a broader push to restore support for initiatives aimed at blunting Chinese influence globally that would cost many hundreds of millions of dollars more.

That is even as President Donald Trump and Chinese leader Xi Jinping put on a show of cooperation and Xi prepares to **visit the U.S. this fall**.

US weighs wider spending to counter China globally

The State Department is considering spending nearly half a billion dollars more on programs aimed at **China throughout the Western Hemisphere**, Africa and Asia, according to an internal State Department document obtained by AP.

"The United States must respond to the CCP's growing economic, technological, and diplomatic leverage around the world which undermines our national interests," the document says, using the acronym for the Chinese Communist Party.

Many of those proposed programs are designed to reclaim diplomatic leverage through investments in areas where the U.S. had previously been spending money

Many of those proposed programs are designed to "reclaim diplomatic leverage" through investments in areas where the U.S. had previously been spending money but stopped as the Elon Musk-led Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE, carried out deep cuts to government budgets and personnel last year.

Those cuts, which dismantled the **U.S. Agency for International Development** and eliminated several hundred diplomatic posts worldwide, also affected previously approved projects, including some aimed at countering China.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian said that China's cooperation with other regions "is not about wooing or rivaling anyone, but about safeguarding world peace, promoting global development, upholding international order and building a community with a shared future for humanity."

A senior U.S. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss future administration plans, confirmed the Trump administration's intent to boost funding on countering China but could not speak to specifics.

The official acknowledged discussions of large-

scale projects but said many were still in the discussion phase.

Congress told about undersea cable project to keep China away

The program described to Congress on Friday is called the “Countering CCP Control of Caribbean and Central America Undersea Cables project.”

It will “fund the installation of strategically selected undersea cable infrastructure” and support foreign governments in partnering with private sector undersea cable installers, according to the notification.

The money will “support replacement of outdated undersea telecommunications cables in the Caribbean and Central America region with secure, U.S. and trusted alternatives,” it said.

Even as it pursues the war with Iran and peace efforts in Gaza and Lebanon, the Trump administration has put a focus on the Western Hemisphere, capturing Venezuelan leader Nicolás Maduro earlier this year, ramping up pressure on Cuba’s socialist government in the months since and imposing severe sanctions on the government in Nicaragua.

Funding is anticipated to be given to or in support of undersea cable projects benefiting El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Haiti

Under the new program, funding is anticipated to be given to or in support of undersea cable projects benefiting El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Haiti, the document said. The U.S. has tenuous ties with Nicaragua and would not be working with the government there.

Lin said undersea cables benefit people

globally and that China is ready to work with the rest of the world to promote their construction and protection.

“Turning it into a political or security issue will only disrupt international market rules and threaten global digital connectivity and cybersecurity, which serves no one’s interests,” he said in Beijing.

Other anti-China efforts could focus on cyber and critical minerals

At the same time, the administration has drawn up plans to spend more than \$340 million for over 50 specific anti-China projects around the world, including many in the Western Hemisphere, according to the internal State Department document outlining various proposals.

The administration notified Congress in May that it had spent several hundred million dollars in counter-China funding from the 2024 budget that was approved by the Biden administration. However, many other projects funded for 2024 and 2025 had been put on hold.



Secretary of State Marco Rubio met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi last week at a regional security conference in the Philippines

Among the plans to be resurrected are the creation of security operations centers in Argentina and Belize to monitor Chinese threats to critical infrastructure and cyber

platforms throughout the region.

Also coming back would be initiatives to protect Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay from alleged Chinese attempts to infiltrate port operations and illegally exploit offshore fishing and critical minerals extraction.

More broadly, the proposal, which is still under consideration, would work against Chinese influence in the selection of a successor to the Dalai Lama “by developing proprietary technology to ensure secure communications and information collection.”

It also would go after international support for China’s space program and push back against Chinese firms seeking to export surveillance and censorship technology.

The document did not describe the initiatives in detail.

Trump is expected to meet with Xi in September around the time of the annual U.N. General Assembly gathering of world leaders in New York.

To prepare for that meeting, Secretary of State Marco Rubio met with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi last week at a regional security conference in the Philippines.

Trump has oscillated between anger and elation with Xi, whom the U.S. leader has sought to cultivate as an ally even while China pursues goals antithetical to many of his administration's.

The ultimate impact of the proposed new programs won't be known for many months or years.