

US Congress passes bill funding 'rip and replace' for Huawei gear

February 28 2020



Some US telecom services will get funds to "rip and replace" Huawei equipment under legislation approved by lawmakers amid concerns of possible spying by the Chinese tech giant

US lawmakers have passed legislation offering \$1 billion to help telecom

carriers "rip and replace" equipment from Chinese tech firms Huawei and ZTE amid national security concerns.

The Senate approved the measure late Thursday, following earlier House passage, which sends the measure to the White House for an expected signature from President Donald Trump.

The bill also bars the use of federal funds for the purchase or maintenance of telecom equipment from "untrusted" suppliers, codifying a ban ordered last year by the Federal Communications Commission.

To allay concerns over the impact for small telecom carriers, the bill provides funds to subsidize the removal of equipment "that poses a [national security](#) risk" for firms with fewer than two million customers, according to the text.

"Telecommunications equipment from certain foreign adversaries poses a significant threat to our national security, [economic prosperity](#), and the future of US leadership in advanced wireless technology," said Senator Roger Wicker, a sponsor of the measure.

"By establishing a 'rip and replace' program, this legislation will provide meaningful safeguards for our communications networks and more secure connections for Americans."

The move comes amid US-China tensions over trade and Washington's accusations of Huawei's links to Chinese intelligence, a charge long denied by the company.

In early February, US officials unsealed a criminal indictment alleging the Chinese tech giant engaged in a "decades-long" effort to steal trade secrets from American companies.

Huawei, one of the largest global tech firms and a major telecom equipment maker, has also been banned from receiving exports of many US technology products and services.

ZTE, which is also accused of potential ties to the Chinese government, has been fined for violating US sanctions by exporting tech products to Iran and North Korea.

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Citation: US Congress passes bill funding 'rip and replace' for Huawei gear (2020, February 28)
retrieved 27 April 2024 from

<https://techxplore.com/news/2020-02-congress-bill-funding-rip-huawei.html>

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