

Should the US ban Chinese genomics companies? Fears rise about genetically-targeted 'ethnic' bioweapons

Bipartisan legislation was introduced in both houses of Congress [January 25] that would effectively ban [China](#)'s largest genomics company from doing business in the U.S., after years of warnings from intelligence officials that Beijing is gathering genetic information about Americans and others [in ways that could harm national security](#).

The bills, backed by leaders of the House Select Committee on the Chinese Communist Party and the Senate Homeland Security Committee, target BGI, formerly known as Beijing Genomics Institute, which in 2021 was [blacklisted](#) by the Pentagon as a Chinese military company. Five company affiliates also have been [sanctioned](#) by the Commerce Department, which accused at least two of them of improperly using genetic information against ethnic minorities in [China](#).

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But [retired US counterintelligence official Bill] Evanina and [Wisconsin representative Mike] Gallagher said there is also a concern that China could use genetic data to create targeted bioweapons that would work on one group of people but not another.

"It also ranges up to the threat of bespoke bioweapons that could target either an individual or a class of individuals. And for your [readers] who might think that that's the stuff of science fiction or in the distant future, it's not," Gallagher said. "We know that's ... a technology that the CCP would love to perfect."

[**This is an excerpt. Read the full article here**](#)