



House Education Funding Committee

February 13, 2026

HB 1561-FN, prohibiting nationals of the People's Republic of China from attending state institutions of higher education.

Testimony of Lauren Banker, Senior Director of Government Relations, University System of New Hampshire

The proposed legislation would prohibit nationals of the People's Republic of China from enrollment, employment, research participation, and access to campus facilities, beyond public events, at any NH state institution of higher education. While increased scrutiny of students from adversarial nations may be warranted, we believe that a blanket prohibition on students from a single nation is overreach and may violate state and federal antidiscrimination laws. We have several other concerns with the bill and respectfully request that HB 1561-FN be voted inexpedient to legislate.

Firstly, the bill would require institutions to obtain notarized affidavits from all applicants and current students attesting they are not a PRC national. At USNH institutions approximately 45,000 applicants apply each year, and roughly 22,000 undergraduate and graduate students are enrolled in our programs at one time. This legislation would warrant a considerable amount of data management to assure that each person has attested that they are not a PRC national, regardless of their standing as a U.S. citizen. The notarized documents would also have to be filed with the NH Department of Education within 5 business days of receipt. This protocol would require an immense administrative burden at a time when our institutions are working to reduce costs and create efficiencies.

USNH also anticipates an indeterminable increase in expense to support the recordkeeping systems needed to acquire (with follow-up) and retain affidavits from all students, applicants, and entities engaged with the university system and to manage and recruit for positions vacated by PRC citizens and/or by those who fail to provide an affidavit. There is potential for increased legal expenses to sever research contracts and to defend against complaints of noncompliance.

Finally, within 90 days of passage, the bill will have far reaching implications on the tuition revenue across our institutions as USNH would require all PRC citizens to separate from enrollment and termination of any faculty or researchers with H1B visas from the PRC. We respectfully request that HB 1561-FN be voted inexpedient to legislate.

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