

Military, Law Enforcement News, and More...

# Hagerty, Rubio, colleagues warn of Communist China-linked batteries at U.S. military bases

WASHINGTON—United States Senator Bill Hagerty (R-TN), a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, joined Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL), along with eight other Senate Republican colleagues, in sending a letter to Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin demanding the U.S. Department of Defense immediately reverse the decision to install CATL batteries at Camp Lejeune. The letter also calls for a full assessment of whether CATL systems have been installed at other U.S. military bases.

Contemporary Amperex Technology Co. Ltd. (CATL), a company directly funded and supported by the Chinese Communist Party, continues to pose national security risks to the United States. This past spring, CATL batteries were installed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. “CATL, the world’s largest manufacturer of lithium-ion batteries and a dominant actor in the global electric vehicle (EV) market, is closely linked to the highest levels of the CCP, including General Secretary Xi Jinping, who praised CATL’s growth this March 2023,” the Senators wrote.

“The growing presence of CATL and other Chinese products in U.S. infrastructure is concerning, but it is inexcusable on U.S. military installations...The CCP’s pattern of espionage leaves little room for doubt that CATL products pose a threat to national security at any base where they are installed,” the Senators continued.



Sen. Bill Hagerty

A copy of the letter can be found below.

**Dear Secretary Austin:**

We write out of concern with regards to the installation of a battery and solar array by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)-aligned Contemporary Amperex Technology Co. Ltd. (CATL), at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina as part of a new Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). A CCP-funded and supported firm should have no role or presence on a U.S. military installation, especially one that trains U.S. Marines for a potential conflict with China. The presence of CATL’s system at Camp Lejeune also raises the question of whether CATL, or other CCP-affiliated companies, operate similar energy projects on other U.S. military installations. We urge the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to immediately reverse the decision to install CATL batteries at Camp Lejeune, as well as conduct a full assessment on all installations.

CATL, the world’s largest manufacturer of lithium-ion batteries and a dominant actor in the global electric vehicle (EV) mar-

ket, is closely linked to the highest levels of the CCP, including General Secretary Xi Jinping, who praised CATL’s growth this March 2023. CATL is an important component of the CCP’s military-civil fusion (MCF) strategy. Moreover, CCP industrial policies have steered business towards CATL, placing the company in a position to influence supply chains globally and increasingly in the United States, where CATL operates in several states. In turn, the CCP has benefitted from CATL’s record revenues and immense growth. The People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) may soon power its conventional submarine fleet with lithium-ion batteries provided by CATL and other Chinese companies. The CCP is well aware of how China’s commercial EV industry, CATL included, benefits its military. Further, Beijing dropped a government safety test from its inspections after a CATL rival found that the test showed CATL battery cells exploding, demonstrating its insistence to bolster CATL as its battery champion.

CATL has striking similarities to other Chinese firms that have been deemed serious national-security threats and banned from U.S. government use. A recent report by the Foundation for Defense of Democracies (FDD) made clear that CATL’s “parallels to Huawei are not difficult to see.” Huawei, like CATL, was built as a champion for the CCP, and Beijing acted to support its success. Like Huawei, the presence of CATL in U.S. energy in-

frastructure raises alarms about the known security risks associated with Chinese technology produced by companies operating under the direction or influence of Beijing. CATL could introduce malware into large-scale power storage stations, threatening the U.S. energy grid. Further, the significant known cyber risks to BESS systems more broadly, such as security limitations that prevent regular updates and gaps in reviewing vulnerabilities, raise several concerns that a malicious actor, or government, could seek to exploit.

The growing presence of CATL and other Chinese products in U.S. infrastructure is concerning, but it is inexcusable on U.S. military installations. On April 14, 2023, the U.S. Marine Corps held a ribbon cutting for its new BESS, featuring CATL batteries, at Camp Lejeune. Less than two weeks later, the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) held an exercise at Camp Lejeune to practice extracting noncombatants from conflict zones. Units such as the 26th MEU, which are trained to conduct amphibious operations in crisis response situation, will be vital in a potential conflict with China over Taiwan. Our military cannot afford to subsidize the PRC’s national champions by installing them on bases. The CCP’s pattern of espionage leaves little room for doubt that CATL products pose a threat to national security at any base where they are installed.

We therefore implore you to address the national-security con-

cerns with CATL’s presence at Camp Lejeune and potentially other U.S. military installations. We request a full accounting of CATL batteries and other products by CCP-aligned companies on U.S. military installations. In addition, we wish to know the following:

1. When did DoD become aware that Duke Energy would be purchasing batteries manufactured in China by CATL for installation on the grounds of Camp Lejeune?
2. At the time, were the contracting officers aware of CATL’s close ties with the CCP?
3. Did Duke Energy, or the DoD, consider utilizing batteries manufactured by an American company, or any allied or partner country of the United States, for this project?
4. Has DoD conducted an analysis of vulnerabilities in this system that the PRC could exploit, especially during time of war?
5. Will CATL employees perform maintenance on the batteries? Will maintenance require granting base access to CATL employees, who may be CCP members or Chinese nationals?
6. Will CATL systems installed in Camp Lejeune require any data connections to CATL-operated servers in the People’s Republic of China?
7. Have CATL systems been installed on or at any joint DoD-National Security Agency facilities or locations?

We appreciate your prompt response and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



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# ‘Dear Ilion... See Ya!’ An examination of what happened to Remington Outdoor Company

By Jim Shepherd  
The Shooting Wire.com

The long storied history between the company formerly known as Remington (this latest version is RemArms) is almost inextricably interwoven in the history of the Village of Ilion, New York. Viewed through the long lens of history, it’s safe to say the relationship has, at best, been checkered.

The nearly one-million square foot facility at 14 Hoefer Avenue in Ilion has been open, closed, bankrupt, bought, and sold more than once since it began making firearms in 1816.

The most recent failure occurred in 2020 when Remington Outdoor Company filed for bankruptcy, laying off nearly 600 employees and halting Ilion operations.

That fall, the Roundhill Group purchased the Remington-branded gun making businesses for \$13 million. The business included the shuttered facilities in



Ilion and barrel making facilities in Lenoir City, Tennessee. In May 2021, RemArms (the newest version of Remington) put around 230 workers back on the lines in Ilion, making Model 870 shotguns and Model 700 rifles. Another 2021 announcement told of a planned expansion of RemArms’ and construction of “global headquarters and an advanced manufacturing facility.” The new facilities, however, would be built in Georgia, not New York.

But as has been the case for two centuries, Remington workers in Ilion continued. For many of them, the work was generational. Their fathers, grandfathers and forefathers had worked for Remington.

On or about March 4, 2024, barring something “unforeseen” history will write its final chapter for Ilion.

Last Thursday, RemArms (described as the “current version of Remington Arms” by The Utica Observer-Dispatch) sent a letter to union officials with a short message: “RemArms, LLC (“the Company”) has decided to close its entire operation at 14 Hoefer Avenue, Ilion, New York 13357 (“the Ilion Facility”).

The letter goes on to tell the union “The Company expects that operations at the Ilion Facility will conclude on or about March 4, 2024.”

It’s bitter consolation for the 270 or so employees that the announcement adds “The Company

did not arrive at this decision lightly.”

For the Ilion employees, it’s a message everyone has dreaded, but few likely doubted would one day arrive.

That doesn’t mean there weren’t the usual angry responses from both Herkimer County and Village of Ilion’s elected officials and the United Mine Workers.

The chairman of the Herkimer County Legislature, Vincent Bono, told the Observer-Dispatch the loss of revenues to the entire community “will have concerning effects going forward for the progress of Ilion and Herkimer County.”

UMW International President Cecil E. Roberts called the closure announcement “disappointing” and the timing before the holidays “a slap in the face.”

“Workers in Ilion,” Roberts’ statement said, “enabled RemArms to rise from the ashes of Remington Arms bankruptcy in 2020-21. Without these workers...this company simply

Republican legislators in the area were quick to point that out, releasing a statement that said: “Unfortunately, like we have seen all too often in New York, burdensome regulations, crippling taxes and problematic energy and other policies continue to force businesses and companies to flee the state, taking jobs and livelihoods with them. We will continue to communicate with state and federal officials and work to help and assist the company’s employees and their families during this difficult times.”

would not exist.”

That might be true. But Roberts ignores a political climate in New York that’s neither welcoming nor conducive to locating any firearms-related company there.

Republican legislators in the area

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