

AUVSI CEO Testifies in Support of the GUARD Act to Counter China's Robotics Playbook

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, July 22, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) today told Congress that the People's Republic of China (PRC) is running the same market-capture strategy in robotics that allowed it to flood and overwhelm the U.S. drone market, and urged lawmakers to act now, before that strategy succeeds again with robotics.

Testifying before the House Committee on Energy and Commerce's Subcommittee on Communications and Technology, AUVSI President and CEO Michael Robbins urged Congress to advance the Guarding the U.S. Against Adversarial Robotics Dominance (GUARD) Act, warning that the window to act at low cost is open but closing fast.

"Drone technology was invented in America," said Robbins. "The scaling, however, took place in China. Over a decade, Chinese manufacturers came to dominate American skies as the PRC leveraged massive state subsidies, IP-theft, and deliberate market-dumping to drive many American drone manufacturers out of business, or to keep their share of the market small, by flooding the global market with artificially cheap systems."

"The same strategy is being applied again — crucially, before it has succeeded," said Robbins. "The cost of restricting an adversary's technology scales with its installed base, and that base only grows. The GUARD Act is the chance to act on time."

Robbins told lawmakers that a single subsidized PRC drone maker came to account for 96 percent of the uncrewed aircraft detected in U.S. airspace before meaningful restrictions arrived, and that Beijing is now applying the same subsidize-saturate-export playbook to robotics. Chinese manufacturers shipped roughly 90 percent of the world's humanoid robots in 2025, backed by more than \$20 billion in Chinese robotics subsidies in 2024-25 and a roughly \$137 billion national AI and robotics fund.

"A compromised laptop exposes data," Robbins said. "A compromised robot can expose data and also move, map, surveil, or physically disrupt operations in the real world."

Robbins cited documented security research, including an undocumented backdoor found in a Chinese quadruped platform and Chinese humanoid robots transmitting data to servers in China, as well as the Department of Defense's recent designation of Unitree Robotics on its

Section 1260H list of Chinese Military Companies.

The testimony emphasized that the GUARD Act's near-term impact on U.S. industry would be minimal — China supplies only about 4 percent of U.S. industrial robotics imports, roughly \$30 million in 2024 — because the bill targets finished adversary systems and control software rather than components. The testimony also emphasized AUVSI's support for the bill's express protection of NATO allies and Major Non-NATO Allies.

AUVSI offered the Committee several refinements to strengthen the bill, urging Congress to:

- Add the Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security to the review process required by the bill.
- Extend allied protections across any future robotics-related Covered List action.
- Address adjacent autonomous mobile ground robots that present similar national security risks.
- Pair risk-based restrictions with affirmative measures, including the National Commission on Robotics Act, as well as domestic investment-focused measures such as the Magnets Value Chain Support Act and the Make More in America Act.

"Risk-based national security restrictions are necessary; they are not sufficient," Robbins testified. "The second prong of the strategy — and the half that determines whether America wins rather than merely defends — is a serious national commitment to American robotics capacity."

AUVSI urged the Subcommittee to advance the GUARD Act and Congress to pass it, alongside a broader agenda of investment in American robotics manufacturing, supply chains, and workforce.

[Read Robbins' full written testimony.](#)

[Watch the full hearing.](#)

About AUVSI

The Association for Uncrewed Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI) is the world's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the uncrewed systems, autonomy, and robotics industry. AUVSI advocates for policy, education, and innovation that support safe and productive use of uncrewed systems.

About the Partnership for Robotics Competitiveness

The Partnership for Robotics Competitiveness is a coalition of innovators, manufacturers, end users, and policymakers working to secure America's leadership of a resilient, trusted robotics ecosystem. The Partnership is built on a simple premise: that a stronger robotics industry is better for everyone. Coordinated action now will ensure the United States leads in the decades ahead.

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