Wyden and Neal ask Commerce to keep records on Nvidia AI chip sales to China

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November 12, 2026

Wyden and Neal Begin to Investigate Administration Scheme to Take Cut of Nvidia AI Chip Sales to Chinese Companies; Trump and Commerce Department Reportedly Ignored Warnings About Former CEO’s Relationship with Alleged Chinese Spy

Top Democrats on House and Senate Trade Committees Request Commerce Department Retain All Relevant Records Regarding Nvidia Chip Sale Decisions

Read the full letter here

Washington, D.C. – Senate Finance Committee Ranking Member Ron Wyden, D-Ore., and House Ways and Means Committee Ranking Member Richard E. Neal, D-Mass., today demanded the Trump Administration retain all records relating to its scheme to allow—and take a cut of—the sale of advanced Nvidia AI chips to Chinese companies with links to the Chinese government and military, using a trade law intended to protect U.S. national security.

Wyden and Neal launched their investigation amid reports that former Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang engaged in a relationship with an alleged Chinese intelligence asset, leading to Huang’s resignation on Thursday. According to press reports , both Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and Donald Trump were briefed about Huang’s relationship, but granted approval to export advanced AI chips to China.

“The Trump Administration’s ostensible attempt to mask an unconstitutional export tax as a national security tariff action—benefitting both Nvidia and the Chinese government—raises serious concerns within our Committees’ jurisdiction over matters relating to taxation and tariffs,” Wyden and Neal wrote. “Congress wrote Section 232 to give the President a tool to take action against imports he has determined to pose a national security threat; Trump’s use of the statute appears to have done the opposite, undermining U.S. national security and putting Americans at risk.”

Under the scheme, Nvidia chips manufactured in Taiwan could be sold to Chinese companies if they were first imported into the United States for a security review, which would require payment of a 25% tariff under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, a trade law designed to address imports that threaten national security.

Then the Commerce Department would grant Nvidia an export license to sell the chips to Chinese companies.

According to reports, the Commerce Department suspended its investigation into suspected smuggling into China of certain Nvidia chips following outreach from the company. Nvidia and Huang donated at least $26 million to Trump's pet projects.

Wyden and Neal requested the Commerce Department preserve all records related to:

the Commerce Department's investigation under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962 into imports of semiconductors and resulting actions, including tariffs;

The Department's consideration and approval of export license applications submitted by Nvidia; and

the Department's communications with and regarding Nvidia, Jensen Huang, or any of their agents or representatives.

The full letter is here .

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