

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

GREG GIANFORTE
GOVERNOR



KRISTEN JURAS
LT. GOVERNOR

February 3, 2023

The Honorable Lloyd Austin
Secretary
U.S. Department of Defense
1000 Defense Pentagon
Washington, D.C. 20301

Dear Secretary Austin:

On behalf of the people of Montana, I write to demand answers on the Chinese Communist Party's spy balloon which has infiltrated United States airspace, flown over the State of Montana, and continues to traverse our airspace.

With disruptions to civilian aircraft in Montana, America's national security assets in Montana, and Montanans' concern for the lack of forthcoming information from the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) and the administration, it is critical for DoD and the administration to be forthright and answer the following questions I raise on behalf of Montanans:

1. When did the CCP's spy balloon infiltrate U.S. airspace? How long has it been occupying U.S. and Montana airspace?
2. How long has the CCP's spy balloon been surveilling Montana? How long has the CCP's spy balloon been surveilling the United States?
3. What has the CCP's spy balloon path been, and what does DoD expect its path to be?
4. With Malmstrom Air Force Base and United States' intercontinental ballistic missile fields in Montana, what intelligence does DoD believe the CCP's spy balloon is gathering, and what threat does the CCP's spy balloon pose to our national security?
5. Before the CCP's spy balloon entered U.S. airspace and since its occupation, what steps has DoD and the administration taken to protect Americans and Montanans against this provocation?
6. What actions are being taken by DoD and the administration to take down the CCP's spy balloon? If there are none, why not?

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These are only some of the questions Montanans and I have about this national security threat from a hostile adversary, and I look forward to receiving full, prompt answers.

The Montana Air and Army National Guard remains ready to assist with operations to defend our country and protect our people from nefarious actors who threaten our national security and way of life.

Ultimately, the chief responsibility of government is to ensure the safety and security of the American people. The people of the United States and Montana deserve full, prompt answers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Greg Gianforte". The signature is stylized and cursive, with a large, prominent "G" and "A".

Greg Gianforte
Governor