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Author: Ms. Maya Nasr
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), United States, mayanasr@mit.edu

Ms. Lihui Lydia Zhang
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), United States, lydzhang@mit.edu
Prof. Dava J. Newman
Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), United States, dneuman@mit.edu

THE US-CHINA RELATIONSHIP IN THE SPACE SECTOR

Abstract

The relationship between the United States and China in the space sector over years is complex. Initial collaborations between the two countries took the form of Chinese launch services for US communications satellites in the 1980s. However, entering the 2000s, the United States Congress has announced multiple bans against scientific and civil space collaboration with China due to various sources of concerns. One defining incident that affected the US-China space relationship is the "Wolf Amendment" that was introduced to the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies (CJS) bill in 2011. In this paper, we outline the history of the US-China relationship in the civilian space sector, and address the "Wolf Amendment" with its impacts on the US, China and global space community. We also explore future policy recommendations in order to promote a more collaborative and less conflicting US-China space relations atmosphere in the civil space exploration sector. These policy recommendations range from revision to the Wolf Amendment for collaborations in certain fields, new bilateral agreement between the two countries, US Congressional champions, and enhancement of academic exchange.