Center for Strategic and International Studies

TRANSCRIPT

Event

"China's Power: Up for Debate 2026 Public Debate Kickoff"

DATE

Thursday, October 29, 2026 at 9:20 p.m. ET

FEATURING

Senator Steve Daines (R-MT)

Member, Senate Foreign Relations Committee

CSIS EXPERTS

Bonny Lin

Director, China Power Project and Senior Adviser, CSIS

Transcript By
Superior Transcriptions LLC
www.superiortranscriptions.com

CSIS | CENTER FOR STRATEGIC & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Bonny Lin: OK, well, good morning and thank you for coming back for the second day of the China Power Conference. For the second day, we will – we have the following agenda. We'll still – we'll first have a very short keynote speech by Senator Daines, followed by three different debates. The first debate will focus on China's military power. The second debate will focus on China-Japan relations. And the final debate will look at China's relationship with the developing world, which we talked a bit about yesterday.

What I will say is what I heard from my team is the metro is experiencing some delays, so there will be folks coming in a little bit later. So please excuse that. But let me start now with the opening remarks by Senator Daines. So, very quickly, Senator Daines, who is a U.S. senator from Montana and serves on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He's been very active in shaping U.S. policy on national security towards China. So we're very grateful for him in terms of his support of our program and our conference. So let me turn the floor. We're going to play his remarks virtually. He recorded this in advance. Thank you.

Senator Steve Daines: Hi. Senator Steve Daines here. And a big thank you for inviting me to share a few words at the 10th annual Center for Strategic and International Studies China Power Conference.

The strategic relationship between the United States and China is one of the vital relationships in the world. It is truly too big to fail. I'm very grateful for the leadership and the engagement from both nations as we navigate both our challenges as well as opportunities for better cooperation and innovation. Just recently, President Trump and Xi Jinping concluded a historic summit in Washington. And this visit came just four months after President Trump's visit to Beijing. The increase in engagement on both sides is a good thing and will lead to strategic stability for both nations.

As many as you might know, I lived in Guangzhou for six years back in the 1990s, where I launched American products for Procter & Gamble. And in my time as a U.S. senator, I've been fortunate enough to lead eight CODELs to China, and the most recent being just last month. And I'm deeply grateful for the opportunity to engage and work on so many important issues facing the U.S., China, and the rest of the world.

And I look forward to an increased partnership in many sectors, particularly tech and trade, while ensuring, at the same time, that the U.S. continues to maintain leadership and innovation in that very important AI race. Thank you for all you do, the hard work you do, in nurturing this critical relationship. I look forward to seeing these important dialogues continue. And enjoy the rest of your conference. (Applause.)

(END.)