

Trump Looks to Nationalize 5G

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Trump apparently wants to control 5G in a ‘state-run’ socialist twist to American capitalism—and now there are indications that it could become part of the 2020 election campaign.

Over the weekend, President Donald Trump’s 2020 campaign team renewed its controversial pitch on nationalizing the country’s 5G network. In other words, the government would have control of 5G airwaves and lease access to private wireless providers.

Kayleigh McEnany, a Trump 2020 campaign spokeswoman, told [Politico](#) that a wholesale 5G market would drive down costs and provide access to millions of Americans who are currently underserved.

“This is in line with President Trump’s agenda to benefit all Americans, regardless of geography,” McEnany said. Trump’s 2020 campaign manager, Brad Parscale, has been also [pushing](#) for a plan that would involve a nationwide 5G network.

Last month, President Trump himself [wrote](#) on social media about 5G, saying that

“American companies must step up their efforts, or get left behind.”

“I want 5G, and even 6G, technology in the United States as soon as possible. It is far more powerful, faster, and smarter than the current standard,” he tweeted. (We’ll let the fact that there is no such thing as 6G technology slide for the sake of election campaigning).

Not everyone’s on board the nationalization train, though. There are some in the White House who would prefer the industry lead this game. White House economic adviser Larry Kudlow, for one, believes wireless companies should [manage](#) the build-out of 5G. Feeling the heat over this talk of nationalization, even McEnany and Parscale later walked back their calls for government control of 5G, saying they were expressing their own personal opinions—not Trump’s.

The idea of a wholesale network is being pushed by little known wireless company [Rivada Networks](#). However, it should be noted that Peter Thiel and Karl Rove, who both have close ties to the Republican party and are strong President Trump supporters, have invested in Rivada.

While this new campaign is ostensibly aimed at reducing costs and providing rural residents with fast internet, motives aren't always what they appear to be.

We heard about this plan last year, too, when the administration thought it would test the waters and gauge public sentiment. It's wasn't very successful, taking a lot of heat from critics in the industry and from the Federal Communication Commission (FCC). It also got crushed by lawmakers on both sides of the gaping political divide. It was quickly shoved under the rug.

But China keeps coming back around.

A memo from a National Security Council official, obtained by [Axios](#), insisted that a strong, government-controlled 5G network is necessary as a bulwark against Chinese threats to America's economy and cyber security.

"China has achieved a dominant position in the manufacture and operation of network infrastructure...China is the dominant malicious actor in the Information Domain," the memo read.

In the meantime, U.S. mobile providers such as AT&T, Verizon and T-Mobile, for example, are investing heavily in this area and have [promised](#) to make 5G a reality later this year.

However, they are still lagging behind Chinese companies, [Huawei](#) primarily, one of the biggest phone makers and telecommunications kit providers in the world and the company that has been the target of U.S. lobbying over national security and [economy](#) concerns.

The US administration has recently announced it is considered [barring](#) American companies from using equipment from Chinese companies and called on its [allies](#) to do the same.

So, the elephant in the 5G room is China—not "underserved" American farmers—however, nice that might sound for the 2020 campaign. Much of China's power comes from the fact that the government controls everything. But the suggestion is that if America wants to beat China, it has to become China, and nationalization is the first step.

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