

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

January 25, 2024

The Honorable Mike Aylesworth  
Chairman  
House Committee on Agriculture and  
Rural Development

The Honorable Maureen Bauer  
Ranking Minority Member  
House Committee on Agriculture and  
Rural Development

The Honorable Jean Leising  
Chairwoman  
Senate Committee on Agriculture

The Honorable Jean Breaux  
Ranking Minority Member  
Senate Committee on Agriculture

Dear Chairman Aylesworth, Chairwoman Leising, Ranking Minority Member Bauer, and Ranking Minority Member Breaux:

As elected officials representing Hoosiers in Congress, we write in full support of HB 1183, legislation introduced to the Indiana General Assembly by State Representative Kendell Culp.

Over the last decade, foreign investors have expanded their acquisition of American agricultural land. While foreign ownership increased modestly between 2009 and 2015 by approximately 800,000 acres per year, this figure has more than quadrupled since 2015. In fact, since 2017, foreign investors have purchased an average of 2.9 million acres of American agricultural land every year – an amount of land, in total, nearly as large as the State of Indiana.

In the State of Indiana, foreign investors own or lease 401,747 acres of agricultural land, about two percent of our total. Of Indiana’s foreign-owned or -controlled agricultural land, nearly 80 percent is cropland, 16 percent is pasture, and 3 percent is forestland.

While most foreign investors do not pose a threat to our national security, the federal government maintains a list of foreign adversaries, including China, Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Russia, and the Maduro Regime in Venezuela, who are considered to “have engaged in a long-term pattern or serious instances of conduct significantly adverse to the national security of the United States.”<sup>1</sup>

While China is listed as a foreign adversary, the current legal regime has enabled Chinese individuals or entities to acquire American agricultural land. In fact, between 2010 and 2021, individuals or entities affiliated with China increased their ownership of American agricultural land from 13,720 to 383,935 acres. The increased interest of foreign adversaries like China in American agricultural land is gravely concerning and threatens our national security.

During the same time that individuals and entities from China increased their ownership of American agricultural land, China also invested heavily in foreign energy and transportation infrastructure through its Belt and Road Initiative, stole and reversed engineered agricultural intellectual property, and leveraged corrupt influence over the international community. We are

---

<sup>1</sup> 15 CFR § 7.4

seriously concerned with China's threat to American agriculture and believe that federal and state legislators share a responsibility to respond swiftly and seriously.

We believe that HB 1183 provides the serious response needed to protect Hoosier agricultural land. Representative Culp's bill creates a blanket prohibition against individuals or entities affiliated with any foreign adversary (as defined by 15 CFR § 7.4) from owning or leasing agricultural land. The bill also bans these individuals or entities from owning or leasing mineral rights, water rights, and riparian rights on agricultural land. Finally, HB 1183 includes language to prevent foreign adversaries from acquiring agricultural land by falsely and temporarily transitioning it out of agricultural use.

We encourage the General Assembly to pass Representative Culp's legislation without delay. Thank you in advance for your consideration. If you have any questions related to our support, please contact Adam Battalio in Senator Braun's office at [adam\\_battalio@braun.senate.gov](mailto:adam_battalio@braun.senate.gov) or George Pulizzi in Representative Banks' office at [george.pulizzi@mail.house.gov](mailto:george.pulizzi@mail.house.gov).

Sincerely,



Mike Braun  
U.S. Senator



Jim Banks  
Member of Congress



Todd Young  
U.S. Senator



Rudy Yakym  
Member of Congress



James R. Baird  
Member of Congress



Victoria Spartz  
Member of Congress



Greg Pence  
Member of Congress



Larry Bucshon, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Erin Houchin  
Member of Congress