

Congress Seeks to End Chinese Ownership of US Farmland

A bipartisan group of House lawmakers is set to introduce legislation Thursday that would require federal review of farmland purchases near military bases and critical infrastructure, targeting foreign adversaries including China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea.

The bill is led by Rep. John Moolenaar (R-MI), chairman of the House Select Committee on China, and co-sponsored by more than a dozen members from both parties. It's called the Protecting U.S. Farmland and Sensitive Sites from Foreign Adversaries Act.

Chinese buyers currently own roughly 300,000 acres of American farmland. In 1980, that number was 2,000 acres.



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The legislation would close what sponsors describe as "dangerous loopholes" allowing foreign adversaries to purchase land near military installations and intelligence facilities without triggering federal oversight. It gives the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, known as CFIUS, explicit jurisdiction over such deals.

That fix addresses a real gap. In 2022, CFIUS declined to review a Chinese food manufacturer's purchase of farmland in Grand Forks, North Dakota, even though the property sat near Grand Forks Air Force Base and Cavalier Space Force Station. The agency ruled the transaction wasn't within its authority to review.

"Food security is national security, and we cannot allow foreign adversaries like China to buy up American farmland

near our most sensitive military and critical infrastructure sites,” Moolenaar said.

The bill covers not just farmland but ports and telecommunications infrastructure as well. Purchases involving any of those categories near military or intelligence facilities would require mandatory review under CFIUS before they could proceed.

Cosponsors include Reps. Ashley Hinson (R-IA), Neal Dunn (R-FL), Dusty Johnson (R-SD), and a handful of Democrats including Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ) and Julia Brownley (D-CA).

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