



CHRISTIAN BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP
Ohio's Christian Chamber of Commerce

Written Testimony before the Ohio Senate
Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources in
Support of Legislation Restricting Foreign Adversary
Ownership of Agricultural Land
Monty Lobb

Christian Business Partnership

5/27/2025

Chairwoman Roegner, Vice Chair Gavarone, Ranking Member Blackshear, and Members of the Senate General Government Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of the proposed legislation restricting foreign adversaries' and their affiliates' ownership of agricultural land and other sensitive real estate. I appreciate your attention to this matter, which has significant implications for our national security, economic sovereignty, and the long-term well-being of our rural communities.

It is commendable that this legislation not only prohibits direct ownership by foreign adversarial governments but also extends restrictions to businesses headquartered in those countries, citizens of foreign adversary nations, fiduciaries acting on their behalf, and suspicious shell companies are often used to obscure actual ownership.

This is a vital step. Foreign adversaries could easily circumvent ownership restrictions through intermediaries or subsidiaries without these expansions.

Moreover, if such entities are required to divest land already held, they should not be allowed to profit from those transactions. Doing so would reward behavior our state deems harmful and undermine the intent of the legislation.

More than 20 states have enacted laws restricting or prohibiting foreign adversary ownership of private real property, primarily agricultural land. These include:



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Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

This growing nationwide legislative trend signals the urgency and bipartisan concern.

While Chinese ownership currently represents a small percentage of foreign-owned land in the United States, the concern lies not in the quantity but in the precedent and potential risk.

According to Dr. David Ortega's 2023 report, Chinese entities own approximately 383,934 acres of US agricultural land—less than 1% of all foreign-owned land and about 0.03% of all privately held US farmland.

In Ohio, four known parcels totaling 364 acres are owned by Chinese interests across Franklin (69 acres), Hamilton (5 acres), Hancock (269 acres), and Portage Counties (21 acres).

Though these numbers may seem small, they represent a foothold, however minor, that foreign adversaries can build upon.

The goals of this legislation align with broader national interests. Specifically, the bill aims to:

1. Prohibit all foreign adversary ownership of agricultural land.
2. Prohibit foreign adversary ownership of property near military installations.
3. Prohibit foreign adversary ownership of property near critical infrastructure.

These are not just symbolic measures. During tension or conflict, land ownership near sensitive installations can facilitate surveillance, sabotage, or geopolitical leverage.

Key Reasons for Supporting Restriction of Foreign Adversary Ownership

1. **National Security:** Agricultural land is vital for the food supply and national self-reliance. Control by foreign adversaries raises serious risks related to food production, logistics, and biosecurity.
2. **Economic Control:** Foreign entities gaining substantial landholdings could manipulate local economies, suppress competition, or drive up land prices—displacing generational farmers and small-scale producers.



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3. Land Use Priorities: Foreign owners may prioritize export-driven profits over local needs, threatening the affordability and availability of essential food products.

4. Cultural and Environmental Impact: Foreign owners unfamiliar with local conservation practices or community values could harm ecosystems and disrupt traditional land stewardship.

Specific Benefits to Ohio

The Ohio Private Property Protection Act, or its legislative counterpart, would offer specific benefits:

- **Strengthen Property Rights:** This ensures that land remains under the control of those who live, work, and invest in Ohio's communities.
- **Promote Economic Stability:** Keeps strategic resources in local hands and supports family-owned farms and rural economies.
- **Ensure Fairness:** Prevents manipulation through proxies or shell companies, applying rules evenly across all buyers.
- **Support Local Governance:** Empower Ohio communities to shape their agricultural and land-use future without outside interference.

While foreign investment can play a constructive role in our economy, there must be clear, common-sense limits on strategic and agricultural land. This legislation is not anti-foreign investment—it is pro-security, pro-sovereignty, and pro-farmer.

Thank you for considering this testimony. I respectfully urge you to support the passage of this critical legislation to protect Ohio's farmland, citizens, and long-term interests.