

# Congress of the United States

## Washington, DC 20515

September 26, 2022

The Honorable Lloyd Austin  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Defense  
1000 Defense Pentagon  
Washington, D.C. 20301

The Honorable Janet Yellen  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20220

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Austin, Yellen, and Vilsack,

The recent acquisition of property north of Grand Forks, North Dakota, by the Fufeng Group, a Chinese-based manufacturer with close links to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), is an alarming development for our national security.<sup>1</sup> According to the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission, the Grand Forks Air Force Base has exceptional intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities, making the recently purchased land the ideal location to closely monitor and intercept military activity. The presence of a CCP-affiliated corporation near a military installation potentially undermines the integrity of our high-capability military bases, jeopardizing our strategic interests.

This CCP-tied entity will have potential advantageous opportunities to perpetrate espionage, including actions and activities carried out under commercial cover or auspices. We are concerned about the precedent this land purchase will set and its ability to serve as the model for our adversaries to encroach on American security, particularly through purchases of farmland in our congressional districts housing several military installations, such as mine—Homestead Air Reserve Base (HARB). HARB currently houses Special Operations Command South in South Florida and is home to the 482<sup>nd</sup> Fighter Wing with combat-ready capabilities, supporting operations for the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) Maritime Safety and Security Team, and the air and maritime branch under U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

At a time when the United States is engaged in great power competition with China, we must utilize every tool at our disposal to protect and defend the integrity of our military and national security, maintain military dominance, and maximize our global military readiness.

Acquisitions of this magnitude pose a threat not only to our national security but also to our food security. According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), at the beginning of 2021 foreign investors held a stake in approximately 37.6 million acres of U.S. agricultural land.<sup>2</sup> This trend is expected to increase over the next few years, raising concerns about the negative potential implications it will have on domestic food production and national food security. This, coupled with USDA's absence from permanent membership on the Committee on Foreign

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<sup>1</sup>[https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/Chinas\\_Interests\\_in\\_U.S.\\_Agriculture.pdf](https://www.uscc.gov/sites/default/files/2022-05/Chinas_Interests_in_U.S._Agriculture.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/EPAS/PDF/2020\\_afida\\_annual\\_report.pdf](https://www.fsa.usda.gov/Assets/USDA-FSA-Public/usdafiles/EPAS/PDF/2020_afida_annual_report.pdf)

Investment in the United States (CFIUS), is concerning, as the Department should have some jurisdiction over the review of agricultural land acquisitions that raise national security concerns.

In light of these concerns to U.S. national security, we urge your departments to take effective action in addressing the potential national security risks that appear to arise from this transaction and what it means for the future of our national security. We appreciate your response to the specific questions and concerns raised below as they will guide oversight of this pending matter.

1. Are there any areas identified by the Department of the Treasury (Treasury), USDA, or the Department of Defense (DoD) in which the CFIUS statute, regulations, or agency interpretations are overly prescribed in ways that prevent U.S. national security agencies from effectively protecting U.S. national security and addressing risks that arise from farmland and real estate transactions?
2. How is the DoD addressing the potential national security risks and vulnerabilities of this acquisition and future ones by a CCP-affiliated entities so close to a sensitive military base?
3. Has Treasury and other agency co-leads established jurisdiction to act on this transaction and address the national security risks it poses? Has CFIUS prioritized the review of this transaction?
4. Increasing public examples of Chinese-based companies' acquisition of farmland, including land close to military facilities, are merit for USDA to be added to CFIUS as a full member rather than only joining certain cases on an ad hoc basis. Was USDA requested to participate in an initial review? If not, what was the justification?
5. What actions are being taken by the DoD in cooperation with the U.S. military services and military base commands to understand and assess potential risks with foreign investments in close proximity to U.S. military bases and other facilities?

Please submit responses to the following questions within 60 days of receiving this letter. We look forward to hearing from you on this issue and working with each of your departments.

Sincerely,



Carlos A. Gimenez  
Member of Congress



Michael Waltz  
Member of Congress



Scott Franklin  
Member of Congress



Virginia Foxx  
Member of Congress



Brian Mast  
Member of Congress



Mike Bost  
Member of Congress



Jeff Van Drew  
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Dan Newhouse  
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Eric A. "Rick" Crawford  
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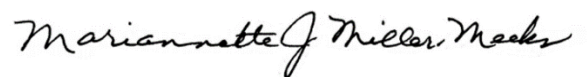
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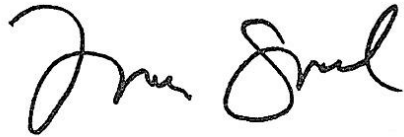
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Member of Congress



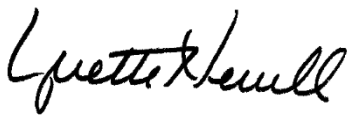
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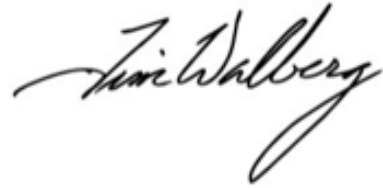
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