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LOIS W. KOLKHORST

STATE SENATOR
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KOLKHORST TAKES AIM AT FOREIGN OWNERSHIP OF TEXAS LANDS

Bill Prohibits Purchase or Acquisition of Title to Real Property by Certain Aliens or Foreign Entities.

AUSTIN – Senator Lois W. Kolkhorst (R-Brenham) has filed Senate Bill 147 to address growing concerns in protecting Texas land against foreign government ownership.

The past several years have seen more Texans alarmed by the increased acquisition of land by primarily Chinese interests. Examples include the purchase in 2021 of over 130,000 acres in South Texas by a Chinese-controlled firm. The massive parcel of land near Laughlin Air Force Base in Del Rio is now owned by a former member of the Chinese communist army.

Further examples of foreign purchases of land are occurring all over the United States in states like Florida and North Dakota. In Florida, a Chinese-backed corporation purchased 1,400 acres in Levy County for a primate research facility. Concerned with this purchase, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis has taken executive action to curb the future purchase of any property near military bases and other agriculture properties across the state.

In North Dakota, another company backed by the Chinese government purchased 300 acres this past spring – just miles from Grand Forks Air Force Base.

Kolkhorst's Senate Bill 147 builds on SB 2116 which passed the Texas Legislature unanimously in 2021 and protects critical infrastructure against contracts with certain countries. Mirroring that legislation, Senate Bill 147 also names China, Iran, North Korea and Russia as countries prohibited from future purchases of Texas lands.

If SB 147 were to pass, it would prohibit any future purchase of or otherwise acquiring title to real property in the state of Texas by governments or entities affiliated with these countries or their citizens.

"The growing ownership of Texas land by some foreign entities is highly disturbing and raises red flags for many Texans," said Senator Kolkhorst. "By comparison, as an American go try to buy land near a Chinese military base and see how it works out for you. It would never happen there and it shouldn't happen here. Passing this law delivers some basic safeguards to ensure Texans remain in control of Texas land."

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