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AFIDA Improvements Act (H.R. 4362/S. 1969)

Currently, foreign entities hold an interest in over 43 million acres of U.S. agricultural land, an amount that is larger than the state of Florida and greater than the total land area of twenty-nine U.S. States. According to the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), Chinese ownership of American agricultural land increased from 13,720 acres to 383,935 acres from 2010 and 2021.

The Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act (AFIDA), passed in 1978. was created to establish a nationwide system for the collection of information pertaining to foreign ownership in U.S. agricultural land. But a study conducted by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) found the AFIDA was ill-equipped to combat foreign ownership of American agricultural land. These inadequacies have left the door open for foreign entities to take advantage of our slow, unreliable system to grab large amounts of American land.

The *AFIDA Improvements Act (H.R. 4362/S. 1969),* bipartisan legislation introduced by Senator Pete Ricketts (R-NE) and Representative Don Bacon (R-NE) would make the necessary changes to provide transparency and protection for our agricultural lands.

Eagle Forum supports this legislation and encourages Members from across the aisle to pass this legislation either as a standalone bill or in another "must pass" bills such as Appropriations or the Farm Bill.

The *AFIDA Improvements Act:*

- Will codify all recommendations from the GAO report to improve the law.
- Directs the Secretary of Agriculture to establish more timely protocols and accurate data reporting. Currently, the Committee on Foreign Investments only receives information on such purchases once a year.
- Requires updates to the AFIDA's handbook and establishes a deadline for USDA to set up an online AFIDA system.
- Requires reporting on all foreign nationals who hold more than one-percent interest in U.S. agricultural land.