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LOIS W. KOLKHORST

STATE SENATOR

DISTRICT 18

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**KOLKHORST LAND PROTECTION BILL
PASSES SENATE WITH BIPARTISAN SUPPORT**

Prevents Hostile Nations from Purchasing Certain Texas Property

(AUSTIN, TX) — This week, the Texas Senate approved sweeping state and national security protections with the passage of Senate Bill 147 by Senator Lois W. Kolkhorst (R-Brenham).

By an overwhelming vote of 19-12, the legislation aims to curtail the purchase of Texas' strategic assets — farmland, oil and gas, timber and rare earth materials — by foreign entities classified as hostile by the Director of US National Intelligence for three consecutive reports. These nations currently include China, Russia, North Korea and Iran.

“I’m proud of the support for this important next step in strengthening our state and national security,” said Senator Kolkhorst. “With this legislation we can protect our Texas food supply and energy resources as well.”

The legislation builds on last session’s unanimous passage of SB 2116 which prevented hostile nations from doing critical infrastructure business in Texas. The issue was prompted when a Chinese company with connections to the Chinese Communist Party purchased 140,000 acres near Laughlin Air Force Base in Val Verde County.

The bill also clarifies its prohibitions do not apply to lawful permanent residents, as well as United States citizens and dual citizens.

One of the bill's supporters, Sen. Juan Hinojosa, D-McAllen emphasized "...these nations are a threat to our security."

Similar sentiments of support for SB 147 have been provided by Texas Congressman Michael McCaul, chair of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

"It's no secret that America's adversaries are growing more aggressive by the day. As the spy balloon revealed, the Chinese Communist Party knows no bounds when it comes to espionage," said McCaul.

The bill now moves to the Texas House for consideration.

During the debate that lasted for over three hours on the senate floor, Kolkhorst said, "Texas is rich in its natural resources and is home to twenty-five invaluable strategic military bases and installations. Ceding control of our agriculture, energy deposits and rare earth materials to authoritarian nations listed in the National Threat Assessment would cause grave consequences for our state and national security."

Similar bills are being proposed throughout the nation in states like Florida and California, with Utah most recently signing a prohibition last month. Twenty-two states already have prohibitions on foreign land purchases with another five requiring reporting. Texas currently is one of the states without restrictions.

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