



Board of County Commissioners

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MEDIA ADVISORY

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Hunterdon Commissioners Support Legislation Prohibiting Foreign Ownership Of Farmland

Calling it a critical and necessary response to the threat to food security and national security by hostile governments, Hunterdon County's Board of Commissioners, at its March 7th meeting, endorsed state legislation (S-3534) sponsored by Senator Doug Steinhardt (R-23), that prohibits foreign ownership of New Jersey agricultural lands.

Board of Commissioners Director Zach Rich stated, "It is most concerning that there are reports that the Communist government of China has a stated purpose of owning a wide variety of tangible assets around the world, including agricultural land. According to a Wall Street Journal report in 2021, Chinese interests already own over \$1.8 billion of American farmland.

It, therefore, is a clear national, state and county interest to protect our food sources, as part of the national security effort. New Jersey farmland, including our farms in Hunterdon County, must be protected from encroachment by hostile governments and individuals. Senator Steinhardt's bill, as noted in the resolution, is a critical and necessary response to that threat."

Senator Steinhardt, in a statement in support of his legislation, noted, "According to the United States Department of Agriculture, at the beginning of 2021 foreign investors held a stake in approximately 37.6 million acres of U.S. agricultural land. Acquisitions of this magnitude pose a threat not only to our national security but also to our food security."

Commissioner Susan J. Soloway stated, in support of the resolution, "Like the county devices ban of the China company owned Tik Tok social media app, approved at the last meeting, action is needed to protect our county from threats from hostile governments like Communist China.

New Jersey needs to act now to protect our farmland from foreign actors like China and other nations that are hostile to American security and interests. We are calling on the state legislature to expeditiously enact this legislation."

The legislation has also been endorsed by the Hunterdon County Agricultural Development Board (CADB).