

May 5, 2021

**Testimony of Congressman Tony Gonzales (TX-23)
House Armed Services Committee
Fiscal Year 2022 National Defense Authorization Act**

Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Rogers:

Thank you for this opportunity to share my top national security priorities that I urge the committee to consider as it prepares the Fiscal Year 2022 National Defense Authorization Act. My district, Texas's 23rd Congressional District, is home to Laughlin Air Force Base, the U.S. Air Force's largest training base. Laughlin trains and develops the military's finest pilots at a rate of 300 graduates per year.

Laughlin is threatened by our greatest competitor, China. GH America Energy, a subsidiary of China's Guanghe Energy Company, purchased 130,000 acres near Laughlin Air Force Base to develop a wind farm. Guanghe Energy Company is owned by Sun Guangxin, a former member of the People's Liberation Army and the wealthiest person in Xinjiang province. As this Committee is well-aware, individuals cannot conduct business or accrue wealth in China without swearing fealty to the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). If they are not already, the CCP can use this site to gather intelligence or interfere with Air Force pilot training. I am extremely concerned by the national security threat of a company with overt ties to the CCP in such close proximity to a vital U.S. military base.

Unfortunately, this threat isn't limited to my district. Another example is in Wichita Falls, Texas, near Sheppard Air Force Base, where there have been instances of foreign owned entities trying to purchase real estate. Allowing our adversaries to own property in such close proximity would be a national security threat for Sheppard and its critical military training routes. If a foreign entity chooses to use wind farms or other alternative energy projects as a front for their malign espionage efforts, this would not only allow them to steal our military's secrets, but it would directly hurt our readiness levels by negatively impacting our pilot's ability to fly military training routes.

These are just two key examples that I can speak to, however my colleagues and I have heard of this threat existing across the Department of Defense. That is why my colleagues on the House Armed Services Committee, Representatives Ronny Jackson and Pat Fallon, and I introduced the *Protecting Military Installations and Ranges Act* (H.R. 2728). This legislation would restrict any efforts by China, Russia, Iran, or North Korea to buy U.S. land within 100 miles of a U.S. military installation, or 50 miles from military operations areas. It would also allow the Department of Defense to prevent construction on any site under Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States investigation and require the mandatory notification of lawmakers of affected states and congressional districts.

As our foreign enemies continue their aggression, protecting our military installations should be a top priority. I respectfully request that this legislation be included in the Fiscal Year 2022

National Defense Authorization Act. It is unacceptable to allow our adversaries to have a platform to spy on or disrupt operations at military installations and training ranges on U.S. soil. This commonsense legislation provides the necessary protection to ensure our adversaries cannot purchase strategically important real estate near our military installations and training routes. Not including this legislation as part of the FY22 NDAA would jeopardize our readiness levels and severely hinder the Department of Defense's ability to implement the National Defense Strategy.

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit written testimony and I look forward to working with you as you craft the Fiscal Year 2022 National Defense Authorization Act.