

THE FLORIDA SENATE
2023 SUMMARY OF LEGISLATION PASSED
Committee on Judiciary

CS/CS/SB 264 — Interests of Foreign Countries

by Rules Committee; Judiciary Committee; and Senators Collins and Avila

The bill (Chapter 2023-33, L.O.F.) generally restricts the issuance of government contracts or economic development incentives to, or real property ownership by, foreign principals, which are certain individuals and entities associated with foreign countries of concern. Foreign countries of concern include the People’s Republic of China, the Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, the Republic of Cuba, the Venezuelan regime of Nicolás Maduro, and the Syrian Arab Republic.

With respect to conveyances of real property in this state, the bill generally:

- Prohibits foreign principals from owning or acquiring agricultural land in the state.
- Prohibits foreign principals from owning or acquiring any interest in real property within 10 miles of any military installation or critical infrastructure in the state.
- Prohibits China, Chinese Communist Party or other Chinese political party officials or members, Chinese business organizations, and persons domiciled in China, but who are not citizens or lawful permanent residents of the U.S., from purchasing or acquiring any interest in real property in the state.
- Provides limited exceptions from the ownership restrictions for the purchase of one residential property that is not on or within 5 miles of any military installation in the state.

The bill also amends:

- The Florida Electronic Health Records Act, to require that the offsite storage of certain personal medical information be physically maintained in the continental U.S., U.S. territories, or Canada.
- The Health Care Licensing Procedures Act, to require licensees to sign affidavits attesting that all patient information stored by them is being physically maintained in the continental U.S., U.S. territories, or Canada.

Finally, the bill amends the statute criminalizing threats and extortion, to provide that a person who commits a violation of the statute, and at the time is acting as a foreign agent with the intent of benefitting a foreign country of concern, commits a first degree felony.

These provisions were approved by the Governor and take effect July 1, 2023.

Vote: Senate 31-8; House 95-17