

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-5201**

February 3, 2025

The Honorable Scott Bessent  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Bessent,

Congratulations on your confirmation as Secretary of the U.S. Department of the Treasury. The responsibilities ahead for both your Department and our country are significant, but with your experience, knowledge, and dedication to advancing our economy, I am confident in the leadership you will bring to this critical role.

I write to urge you to take further action to safeguard the economic and national security interests of the United States in my district, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). As the closest U.S. territory to the Asian continent, the CNMI has long been shaped by foreign investment, which has played a vital role in our economic development. I take great pride in our ability to showcase the opportunities of the American economic system to international corporations and individuals. However, as geopolitical tensions rise in the region and economic competition with the People's Republic of China intensifies, it is imperative that we ensure foreign investments in the CNMI align with U.S. national security priorities.

Specifically, I urge the Department of the Treasury, in its capacity as Chair of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS), to expand oversight and review of foreign investments in the CNMI to prevent potential national security risks. CFIUS has unique authority to review private foreign investments in the United States and determine whether they present threats to our national security. This authority was expanded by the *Foreign Investment Risk Review Modernization Act (FIRRMA)* in 2018 to include the review of real estate transactions near military installations,<sup>1</sup> a provision of particular relevance to the CNMI.

The U.S. government maintains a long-term lease on the island of Tinian in my district, where two-thirds of the island is designated for U.S. military use. This lease is anticipated to support expanded training operations and additional installations in the region, including the ongoing construction of a divert airfield for the U.S. Air Force—a project critical to ensuring operational flexibility should Andersen Air Force Base in Guam become unavailable. Given these developments, it is essential that federal agencies take a proactive approach to assessing the security risks associated with foreign investments in the CNMI.

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<sup>1</sup> *Foreign Investment Risk Review Modernization Act*. Pub. L. No. 115-232, Title XVII.



In recent years, concerns have emerged about the potential impact of foreign ownership on the strategic interests of the United States in the region. In response to undefined security concerns, some within the CNMI have advocated local policies that have adversely affected our critical tourism industry. However, I firmly believe that the appropriate entity to assess national security risks is the federal government, not local authorities. The CNMI does not possess the classified intelligence, resources, or security expertise necessary to unilaterally determine geopolitical threats. Instead, the federal government—through CFIUS—has the established mechanisms to conduct such reviews and take action where necessary.

To that end, I urge you to review the regulatory framework of CFIUS and institute a process to formally extend its oversight to include foreign investments in the CNMI. This will ensure that any foreign transactions posing a legitimate security threat are subject to rigorous scrutiny and, if necessary, prevented. By taking this step, the Department of the Treasury would fulfill its responsibility to safeguard U.S. national security interests while providing clarity and confidence to the people of the CNMI and prospective investors alike.

The CNMI joined the American political family through the Covenant Agreement, in which we entrusted the United States with responsibility for our defense and national security.<sup>2</sup> As such, it is incumbent upon the federal government—not the CNMI government—to make determinations about geopolitical risks and take decisive action when necessary. I urge you to utilize the full authority of CFIUS to ensure that foreign investments in the CNMI serve, rather than undermine, the interests of the United States.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to working with you to strengthen national security and economic stability in the CNMI and across the Pacific region.

Sincerely,



KIMBERLYN KING-HINDS  
Member of Congress

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<sup>2</sup> Section 104 of the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America (1975), *reprinted in* 48 U.S.C. § 1801.