

One-Pager: Florida S.B. 264
Last Updated: May 25th, 2023

Background on Land Laws in Florida

Florida was unfortunately the last state to repeal its “alien land law” which did not happen [until 2018](#).¹ The language existed in its state Constitution, and it took decades for local Asian American activists to finally repeal it.

Topline Points

- Just 5 years later, [S.B. 264 was introduced](#).² It took barely 2 months for the bill to pass both chambers of the Florida Congress and signed by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis (R).
- S.B. 264 was enacted to create new restrictions on entities and individuals from 7 “countries of concern:” Russia, China, North Korea, Iran, Syria, Venezuela, and Cuba.
- Among these restrictions include prohibitions on contracting, economic incentives, agricultural land purchases, and real property purchases.
- There are also provisions in the bill which lay out registration and enforcement regulations for land purchases by foreign nationals from the 7 countries.

AAJC analysis

This bill is worse than Texas SB 147. It contains language that applies to all three relevant property types such as agricultural land, critical infrastructure, and real property. Florida has also incorporated procedures for registration and penalties which are a legitimate cause for concern. For example, failure to follow property registration regulations and sign affidavits could lead to civil penalties, misdemeanors, or both.

This is yet another measure which will stoke anti-Chinese and anti-immigrant fears. On May 8th, Governor DeSantis issued a [press release](#) which touted the bills enactment as “following through on our commitment to crack down on Communist China.”³ Most recently, a lawsuit was [filed against the state](#) alleging the bill discriminated against Chinese immigrants.⁴

¹ Deanna Allbrittin, *Florida was last state in US to remove ‘alien land law’ used historically for Asian discrimination*, WFTV (Mar. 25, 2021), <https://www.wftv.com/news/local/florida-was-last-state-us-remove-alien-land-law-used-historically-asian-discrimination/Z5NA45Z5P5F5TN67AOKFLPT3UU/>.

² A bill to be entitled, S.B. 264. (2023).

³ *Governor Ron DeSantis Cracks Down on Communist China*, May 8, 2023, <https://www.flgov.com/2023/05/08/governor-ron-desantis-cracks-down-on-communist-china/>.

⁴ ACLU of Florida, *Chinese Immigrants Sue Florida Over Unconstitutional and Discriminatory Law Banning Them From Buying Land*, May 22, 2023, <https://www.aclu.org/press-releases/chinese-immigrants-sue-florida-over-unconstitutional-and-discriminatory-law-banning-them-from-buying-land>.