

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 22, 2026

The Honorable Markwayne Mullin
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave, SE
Washington, D.C. 20528

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C St, NW
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Mullin and Secretary Burgum,

We write to express our concern about the United States' visa policy allowing citizens of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to travel to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) for up to 14 days without a visa or a grant of temporary admission. Continuing the Biden-era policy of allowing PRC citizens unchecked access to CNMI threatens America's national security and encourages illegal drug trafficking and birth tourism.

In 2024, the Biden Administration created this loophole, formally known as the CNMI Economic Vitality and Security Travel Authorization Program (EVS-TAP), as a restricted sub-program of the G-CNMI Visa Waiver Program. Under this broader G-CNMI program, PRC citizens and nationals, excluding travelers with ties to Hong Kong, are "not eligible to travel" to these territories."¹ The Biden Administration's codification of the EVS-TAP subprogram allows any PRC nationals to travel to the CNMI without requiring a grant of temporary admission or a visa for up to 14 days.²

The threat posed by the PRC to the United States is no secret. General Secretary Xi Jinping has stated that China "march[es] in confident strides toward the second 100-year goal of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects."³ At the same time, he has sworn that China would "never allow any foreign force to bully, oppress or subjugate" China and that those who do "will find themselves on a collision course with a great wall of steel, forged by the flesh and blood of over 1.4 billion Chinese people[]." ⁴ The foreign force, in the eyes of General Secretary Xi and the Chinese Communist Party, is frequently identified as the United States.⁵

¹ DEP'T OF HOMELAND SEC., PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE GUAM-COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS VISA WAIVER PROGRAM 10 (Jan. 18, 2024), https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/2024-01/24_0118_priv_pia-cbp-079-guam-cnmi-vwp.pdf.

² *Id.*

³ John Feng, *Xi Jinping Says China to Become Dominant World Power Within 30 Years*, NEWSWEEK (Jul. 1, 2021), <http://www.newsweek.com/xi-jinping-says-china-become-dominant-world-power-within-30-years-1605848>.

⁴ Yew Lun Tian & Ryan Woo, *Xi Warns Against Foreign Bullying as China Marks Party Centenary*, REUTERS (Jul. 1, 2021), <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/beijing-set-celebrate-centenary-chinas-communist-party-2021-06-30/>.

⁵ See, e.g., Simone McCarthy, *The US Wants to Push China Out of Latin America. The Panama Canal is the Latest Test*, EGYPT INDEPENDENT (Feb. 5, 2026), https://www.egyptindependent.com/the-us-wants-to-push-china-out-of-latin-america-the-panama-canal-is-the-latest-test/#google_vignette.

These are not just theoretical threats. Chinese nationals have been convicted of trafficking methamphetamines to the CNMI.⁶ Additionally, this policy has enabled birth tourism in the CNMI to continue.⁷ This is concerning given that, under current interpretations of the 14th Amendment, all persons born on American soil are considered citizens of the United States and accrue the benefits guaranteed by the Constitution. While that understanding of the citizenship clause may soon change,⁸ the existing visa waiver policy provides a wide avenue for Communist China to press their advantage.

If Chinese nationals continue to be permitted to enter the CNMI without a visa, they will be a short boat ride away from Guam – another U.S. territory that shares maritime boundaries with the CNMI. U.S. military operations in Guam, and the U.S. servicemembers stationed there, serve to defend American interests in the region and act as a deterrent to China from invading Taiwan. Allowing PRC citizens and nationals to enter the CNMI without a visa, puts the people of the CNMI, Guam, and Taiwan at risk. Chinese nationals entering the CNMI have been accused of illegally transporting other Chinese nationals from the CNMI to Guam, a critical U.S. strategic military node in the Indo-Pacific.⁹ The U.S. government has publicly attributed malicious cyber activity targeting Guam's civilian power grid to PRC-linked operators, underscoring the vulnerability of critical infrastructure that underpins U.S. military operations in the region.¹⁰

Separately, the CNMI and Guam are only approximately 1,700 miles away from Taiwan. This visa loophole provides China a way to chip away at the presence of the United States in the region as it steadies its sights on Taiwan. Additionally, China has made it painstakingly obvious that it intends to seize Taiwan. In a speech last year, General Secretary Xi stated that “[t]he people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait are one family” and that China and Taiwan “should be bound by a common sense of purpose and share in the glory and rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.”¹¹ Taiwan disagrees.¹²

We strongly urge the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to end the CNMI Economic Vitality and Security Travel Authorization Program – a benefit that should not be afforded to a recalcitrant country like Communist China. We further encourage, in alignment with previous

⁶ See, e.g., *Press Release: Chinese National Sentenced to 51 Months in Prison for Meth Trafficking on the Island of Saipan*, U.S. DEP'T OF JUSTICE (Sept. 28, 2023), <https://www.justice.gov/usao-gu/pr/chinese-national-sentenced-51-months-prison-meth-trafficking-island-saipan>.

⁷ See Chris Casquejo, *VOA Asia Weekly: Saipan Birth Tourism for Chinese Mothers*, VOA NEWS (Feb. 20, 2025), <https://www.voanews.com/a/7982518.html>.

⁸ *Trump v. Barbara*, No. 25-365 (to be argued Apr. 1, 2026).

⁹ See, e.g., Jerick Sablan, *Chinese National Accused of Illegally Bringing 12 Other 'Illegals' to Guam by Boat Sent Back to CNMI*, GUAM PACIFIC DAILY NEWS (Feb. 18, 2025), https://www.guampdn.com/news/chinese-national-accused-of-illegally-bringing-12-other-illegals-to-guam-by-boat-sent-back/article_f6faf5c8-ed11-11ef-87f5-ef4a0b040c01.html.

¹⁰ Katrina Manson, *Hackers Terrify US Intelligence After Infiltrating Guam*, BLOOMBERG (Jan. 3, 2025), <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/features/2025-01-03/chinese-cyber-hackers-terrify-us-intelligence-after-infiltrating-guam>.

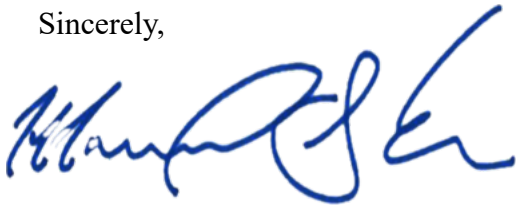
¹¹ *China's Xi says 'reunification' with Taiwan is inevitable*, REUTERS (Jan. 1, 2024), <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/china-calls-taiwan-president-frontrunner-destroyer-peace-2023-12-31/>.

¹² See Kat Devlin & Christine Huang, *In Taiwan, Views of Mainland China Mostly Negative*, PEW RESEARCH CTR. (May 12, 2020), <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2020/05/12/in-taiwan-views-of-mainland-china-mostly-negative/>.

Congressional requests, the termination of Hong Kong's participation in the broader G-CNMI visa waiver program.¹³

Thank you for your leadership in securing the homeland and preventing Chinese nationals from gaining additional footholds and influence in American territories. We look forward to your response.

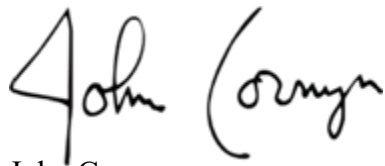
Sincerely,



Michael S. Lee
United States Senator



Rick Scott
United States Senator



John Cornyn
United States Senator



Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator

¹³ Rick Scott, Jim Banks & Markwayne Mullin, *Sens. Rick Scott, Banks, Mullin Send Letter to Secs. Noem and Burgum Urging Closure of Visa Program Allowing Communist Chinese Birth Tourism*, U.S. Senator Rick Scott (Jan. 21, 2026), <https://www.rickscott.senate.gov/2026/1/sens-rick-scott-banks-mullin-send-letter-to-secs-noem-and-burgum-urging-closure-of-visa-program-allowing-communist-chinese-birth-tourism>.