

**I wish my name to be kept confidential**

Manager  
International Investment and Trade Unit  
Foreign Investment and Trade Policy Division  
The Treasury  
Langton Crescent  
PARKES ACT 2600

**Submission to the government's proposed reforms to strengthen Australia's foreign investment framework, particularly around residential real estate and agriculture.  
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It is good to see the government is reviewing Australia's foreign investment framework, but I believe the proposed reforms are too weak. Foreign investment rules must be further strengthened to protect Australian assets for current and future generations of Australian citizens.

**Lease, not sell**

I am a members of the Victorian Farmers Federation and do not support the sale of Australian farms to foreign investment.

It is possible to have greater investment in our farming with lease arrangements without having foreign ownership. Australian farms should be protected to assure Australians have control of commodity prices and an assured food source for the future.

A set percentage of farms could be leased or rented for ten year periods with the option of another ten (not long term 25 or 99 year leases) to foreign investors but must remain owned by Australian citizens.

A percentage of real estate could also be leased (10 year with possible option of extending). There should be no ownership rights to non-Australian citizens. Many houses are being bought by non-Australian citizens as investments, some left empty, which it is making it impossible for young Australians to ever own a home.

Foreign investment may create a few short-term jobs for builders and real estate people, but it is putting at risk the general welfare of the greater Australian population.

**Impact on Australians, social values, and ultimately economic values**

The Australian government has a duty of care to protect Australian assets for current and future Australians. The proposed reforms will not adequately protect Australian interests, or Australian assets, social values or social structures for current or future generations.

Selling off Australia has the potential to significantly change the social demographics and values of Australian rural and urban communities.

If farms are sold to foreign investors, Australians will incrementally lose control of the prices charged, the destination of the product, foreign workers will be increasingly employed, Australian unemployment will rise, prices and the Australian economy will become destabilised, and Australian citizens will lose out.

Likewise, real estate must be kept in Australian citizens' ownership. Young Australian citizens are struggling to purchase a home because foreign investment is raising the prices and cutting them out of the market.

### **Duty of Care & Australian Security**

The Australian government has a duty of care to protect Australian assets for current and future Australian citizens. Our fathers and grandfathers fought to keep Australia Australian – and yet now the Australian government is selling it off.

In this time of increasing terrorism, the government has enough problems keeping Australians safe, without letting further foreigner ownership of Australia. Selling Australia to foreign investors potentially increases security risks. There is a lack of scrutiny of investors and their links.

The Age newspaper noted 'A Russian woman who in recent months has invested \$13 million in Melbourne property has established connections with a major bikie gang' (16 March 2015 p.1). This may be the tip of the iceberg.

The Age referred to "Brokers 'picking off' Australia" (23 March 2015. P.25 Business). This must be stopped.

Foreign investors are only here to profit. Australians need to get smarter and protect their National Sovereignty, as does (and will increasingly) other countries, to ensure its assets, industry, real estate and farms remain Australian, otherwise one day we may end up second rate citizens.

Thank you for allowing me to make comment.

Yours sincerely,  
[name withheld]