

MY TURN

■ Wayne Chan



An idea I thought had come and gone, is apparently back

Home for sale — three bedrooms, two baths, located in Ocala, Florida, in a great school district, with parks and walking trails nearby. A wonderful home for a new family in a neighborhood close to everything you'd ever need. If interested, please inquire!

Oh, one thing — Chinese citizens not welcome.

For those of you who haven't heard, Florida governor Ron DeSantis signed a law last year, Senate Bill 264, which makes it a crime for Chinese nationals to purchase property in the state.

As for the real estate listing noted above, I didn't make that up. I'm actually selling a home there. I own a couple of homes in Florida. When I'm not writing columns, I spend my time building and investing in real estate all over the country.

I decided to sell this home for a number of reasons, some financial (there are other areas that I think would be a better fit), but partly because of this law and some of the apparent consequences that have come from it.

There are plenty of examples about how this law has affected buyers and sellers of real estate in Florida.

Many Chinese nationals have given up on the thought of even buying a home in Florida because of the stiff penalties — a felony charge and possible prison time.

As for sellers, which would include homeowners and their realtors, they face penalties and up to a year in jail as well. Many have complained that the law forces them to racially profile potential clients, which makes all potential Asian homebuyers subject to scrutiny.

As much as I find this law abhorrent and against everything I believe in, what really gets me is the unavoidable realization of what was behind the creation of this law.

In a statement last year, governor DeSantis said,

"Florida is taking action to stand against the United States' greatest geopolitical threat — the Chinese Communist Party."



From what I've gleaned from the lawmakers who put this bill together, this initiative aims to prevent China from acquiring U.S. computer chips and other technology.

I had no idea how brilliant these lawmakers were in crafting this bill. Their solution to keep U.S. technology out of the hands of the Chinese government is by keeping any Chinese citizen or national from owning a home in the state of Florida. How they figured out

that the Chinese government would never rent a home or stay in a hotel to accomplish their dastardly deeds is simply a leap of genius deduction.

All right, I admit I'm being a tad facetious.

Many of the complaints regarding this bill have to do with the "fuzziness" of its directives. The bill restricts "any person who is domiciled in the People's Republic of China and who is not a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States."

What does "domiciled" really mean? What does it mean if you're a green card holder? Who is responsible to verify these things? Border patrol? The realtor?

It all leads me to wonder — why would anyone put together a poorly crafted bill that doesn't effectively address the problem they're trying to solve? What other reason could there be to create a rule that keeps Chinese citizens and practically threatens all Asians from Florida?

I can only think of one answer, and that's why I'm selling my home in Ocala.

Humor writer Wayne Chan lives in the San Diego area; cartoonist Wayne Chan is based in the Bay Area.



STUCK IN SPACE. In this photo provided by NASA, Boeing Crew Flight Test astronauts Suni Williams, right, and Butch Wilmore, left, pose for a portrait inside the vestibule between the forward port on the International Space Station's Harmony module and Boeing's Starliner spacecraft on June 13, 2024. (NASA via AP, File)

Stuck-in-space astronauts reflect on being left behind and adjusting to life in orbit

By Marcia Dunn
The Associated Press

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. — Stuck-in-space astronauts Suni Williams and Butch Wilmore last month said it has been tough dealing with their Boeing ride leaving without them and the prospect of spending several extra months in orbit.

It was their first public comments since the return of the Boeing Starliner capsule that took them to the International Space Station in June. They remained behind after NASA determined the problem-plagued capsule posed too much risk for them to ride back in. Their eight-day mission is now expected to last more than eight months.

"It was trying at times. There were some tough times all the way through," Wilmore said from 260 miles up. As spacecraft pilots, "you don't want to see it go off without you, but that's where we wound up."

While they never expected to be up there nearly a year, as Starliner's first test pilots, they knew there could be problems that might delay their return. "That's how

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