

ANN WAGNER

2ND DISTRICT, MISSOURI

2350 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-1621

301 SOVEREIGN COURT
SUITE 201
BALLWIN, MO 63011
(636) 779-5449

wagner.house.gov

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2502

VICE RANKING MEMBER
COMMITTEE ON
FINANCIAL SERVICES

RANKING MEMBER
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY AND
INCLUSION

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTOR PROTECTION,
ENTREPRENEURSHIP,
AND CAPITAL MARKETS

VICE RANKING MEMBER
COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN AFFAIRS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE, EURASIA,
ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

SUBCOMMITTEE ON ASIA, THE PACIFIC,
AND NONPROLIFERATION

August 19, 2021

The Honorable Kamala Harris
Vice President of the United States
The White House
Office of the Vice President
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Vice President Harris,

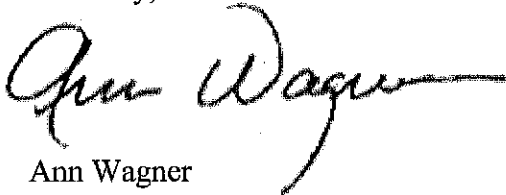
I am pleased by the news that you will be visiting our allies in Southeast Asia, specifically Singapore and Vietnam. As Vice Ranking Member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the co-chair of the ASEAN Caucus, I am acutely aware of the vital role that the Indo-Pacific region plays in protecting and advancing American interests abroad.

Fostering strong and mutually beneficial partnerships with Southeast Asian nations is integral to our national security and economic stability. ASEAN member states are vital to the prosperity of the U.S. economy and collectively generate hundreds of thousands of U.S. jobs, investing more in our economy than China and India combined. To date, the U.S. has never articulated a comprehensive strategy for the region. In the House of Representatives, I have crafted and passed strong, bipartisan legislation to bolster our nation's engagement and cooperation with the region. The *Southeast Asia Strategy Act*, which passed the House unanimously on April 19, 2021, would require the State Department to develop and submit to Congress a coherent regional strategy that addresses all aspects of our multinational relationship, from establishing goals and benchmarks for trade and humanitarian initiatives to coordinating effective diplomatic partnerships and resilient security arrangements. I would welcome your Administration's support of this important legislation.

The increasingly adversarial and combative actions of the People's Republic of China and the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in the South China Sea and surrounding Taiwan is perhaps one of the gravest threats facing our national security. The CCP continues to aggressively expand its power and malign influence throughout the region, implementing predatory trade policies and erecting illegal military installations. While Southeast Asian nations are gravely concerned by these actions, the CCP coerces smaller countries into accepting its destabilizing agenda through pervasive disinformation campaigns. With the recent catastrophic collapse of Afghanistan and evacuation of U.S. military forces, we must unequivocally assure our allies in Southeast Asia of our nation's firm and unwavering commitment to ensuring their security and providing the resources and intelligence necessary to repel Chinese aggression. It is my sincere hope that you are able to communicate this assurance in no uncertain terms.

As new challenges and opportunities arise in Southeast Asia, I stand ready and able to provide guidance and expertise in these delicate yet essential diplomatic matters. We must take advantage of this opportunity to build regional partnerships and encourage close cooperation on the rule of law, freedom of navigation, and free and fair trade. I look forward to working with you to further our commitment to our Indo-Pacific allies.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ann Wagner", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ann Wagner

Member of Congress