



The Honorable Cory Gardner
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

JUN 21 2018

Dear Senator Gardner:

We write to express our appreciation for your support to sustain and enhance United States leadership in the Indo-Pacific region. As discussed two weeks ago in Singapore, United States is an Indo-Pacific nation. The continued bipartisan support of Congress is vital to our efforts to buttress American interests in the region.

In this spirit, we welcome S.2736, the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (ARIA). As we finalize our Departments' Indo-Pacific strategy, we value the ARIA legislation's reaffirmation of United States security commitments to our Indo-Pacific allies and partners. Furthermore, ARIA's focus on promoting stronger regional economic engagement -- and its support for democracy, the rule of law, and the development of civil society -- is especially welcome as part of a diplomatically-led whole-of-government approach to the Indo-Pacific region.

We are jointly committed to strengthening our diplomatic stance by maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific. The State Department and the Department of Defense look forward to working with you and your staff as the legislative process moves forward to strengthen the measure, including to ensure adequate flexibility, such as by adding a national security interest waiver. Thank you for your leadership on this significant issue.

Sincerely,

James Mattis
Secretary of the Defense

Michael Pompeo
Secretary of State

Cc:

The Honorable Bob Corker
The Honorable Edward J. Markey
The Honorable Marco Rubio
The Honorable Ben Cardin