**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO COMMEND AND SUPPORT THE TAIWAN’S DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT, ITS CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES, AND THE NATION’S MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION IN THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION, AND THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE, AS WELL AS OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.

Whereas, in the year of 2012, Taiwan held its fifth direct presidential election and again demonstrated the strength and vitality of its democratic system, paving the way for Taiwan as a beacon of democracy in Asia and beyond; and

Whereas, under President Ma Ying‑jeou’s administration, Taiwan has committed to achieving peace and co‑prosperity with mainland China since 2008 and serves the best interests of the Asia‑Pacific region in the continuation of stability and growth; and

Whereas, Taiwan and the United States are longstanding allies who both deeply cherish the common values of freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law; and

Whereas, the State of South Carolina and Taiwan have enjoyed long, cordial, and mutually beneficial sister‑state relations since 1981, a friendship that continues to strengthen with each passing year; and

Whereas, Taiwan is the United States’ tenth‑largest trading partner, and the United States is Taiwan’s third‑largest trading partner; and

Whereas, with the designation of Taiwan into the United States’ Visa Waiver Program in November 2012, Taiwanese passport holders may now visit the United States for business or tourism for stays up to ninety days without obtaining a visa, which is a significant step to draw travelers from Taiwan choosing the United States as their destination for trade, investment, and sightseeing; and

Whereas, Taiwan is an active member in the international community with a long history of commitment to international health and humanitarian aid, as well as environmental protection. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina, by this resolution, commend and support Taiwan’s democratic system of government, its close relationship with the United States, and the nation’s meaningful participation in the World Health Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as well as other international organizations.

Be it further resolved that the House of Representatives welcomes all opportunities for an even closer economic partnership with Taiwan, such as the signing of a US‑Taiwan Bilateral Investment Agreement and a Free Trade Agreement and the inclusion of Taiwan in the Trans‑Pacific Partnership, to enhance the special sister‑state bond between South Carolina and Taiwan, and encourages further cultural, educational, and business exchanges between the citizens of South Carolina and Taiwan.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Ms. Anna A. Kao, Director General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Atlanta.

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