**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO SUPPORT THE DEMOCRACY OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN) AND TO ADVOCATE FOR EXPANSION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN TAIWAN AND SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, Taiwan and the United States are longstanding security allies who both staunchly uphold the common values of free and fair trade, freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law; and

Whereas, Taiwan is a beacon of democracy and freedom in the Asia‑Pacific, despite continuous threats from the authoritarian neighbor of China, which has encroached on Taiwan’s security by flying in Taiwan’s air defense identification zone and across the median line of the Taiwan Strait and which does so at an alarming rate and with aggressively increasing numbers of forces; and

Whereas, China has also degraded the freedom and civil liberties of Hong Kong through the 2020 Hong Kong National Security Law and the 2021 “Patriot” Election Law, which will significantly decrease the number of directly‑elected officials in Hong Kong’s legislature, forcing Hong Kong’s government to be loyal to the Chinese Communist Party and bluntly violating the Sino‑British Joint Declaration; and

Whereas, China’s actions to undermine democracy and freedom by threatening Taiwan, eroding Hong Kong’s autonomy, violating human rights in Xinjiang, and expansionist actions in the South and East China seas are detrimental to the stability and security of the Asia‑Pacific region; and

Whereas, in 2021, former Secretary of State Michael Pompeo announced the termination of restrictions on US‑Taiwan official contacts; the Taiwan Invasion Prevention Act has been reintroduced in the United States Congress; Secretary of State Antony Blinken expressed support for Taiwan’s autonomy, democracy, and international participation; the United States State Department’s Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs expressed a “rock‑solid” commitment to Taiwan; China has used its Confucius Institutes to spread soft influence throughout American schools; and the United States has recognized the issue and has begun shutting down Confucius Institutes across the country; and

Whereas, Taiwan has been promoting exchanges between Taiwanese and American teachers and students, both on a state‑by‑state basis and at the federal level, through the signing of the US‑Taiwan Education Initiative; Taiwan aims to be a bilingual nation by 2030, highlighting the opportunities for United States teachers to teach abroad in Taiwan; South Carolina and Taiwan are enlarging the sister‑state in‑state tuition benefits between universities in each; and through South Carolina’s S. 534, South Carolina schools will teach more US‑Taiwan history as part of lessons surrounding the United States’ counter‑communism policies; and

Whereas, Taiwan is South Carolina’s tenth largest export market, with many opportunities for further economic expansion; as China’s unfair business practices and human rights violations, such as in the cases of Huawei, Tiktok, and Xinjiang cotton, are continually exposed, Taiwan provides a safe and trustworthy alternative to China as an economic partner for the United States; Taiwan holds a key role in the global supply chain reshuffling, and many Taiwanese businesses are actively searching for more investments in the United States’ market; Taiwan holds human rights, intellectual property, and reliability across economic collaborations in the highest regard; and Taiwan has taken concrete actions to expand bilateral trade and investment with the United States, including through the importation of more American pork and beef products and the expansion of Taiwanese companies’ operations in the United States; and

Whereas, Taiwan fiercely protects its freedom of media and speech, and is consistently ranked as having one of the freest media environments in Asia, as opposed to China, which is known for censoring media, threatening press, and spreading disinformation; China’s media environment has become so destructive that many journalists located in China have fled to seek protection in other countries; and most recently, the BBC relocated its China correspondent to Taiwan due to ongoing harassment from the Chinese government. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, support the democracy of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and advocate for expansion of relations between Taiwan and South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to Mr. Elliot Wang, Director‑General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Atlanta, to Governor Henry McMaster, and to Secretary of State Mark Hammond.

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