

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 720

WHEREAS, Taiwan is Texas' fifth-largest foreign market, and the agriculture and manufacturing sectors of the Texas economy, most notably the computer and electronic products, chemicals, and machinery industries, would benefit significantly if the United States enacted a free trade agreement with Taiwan; and

WHEREAS, A free trade agreement between the United States and Taiwan would substantially reduce or eliminate most import quotas, duties, and other trade barriers and expand market opportunities for manufactured goods and agricultural products from Texas and the entire United States; and

WHEREAS, The United States has completed or is in the process of negotiating free trade agreements with several countries and regions; reasons for pursuing a free trade agreement with Taiwan include its status as the United States' eighth-largest trading partner, its robust economy, and its long-standing educational and cultural ties with the United States; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan was admitted to the World Trade Organization on January 1, 2001; a free trade agreement between the United States and Taiwan would extend the coverage of World Trade Organization agreements to products, sectors, and conditions of trade that are now not adequately covered, and it would provide a platform to address issues such as Taiwan's 15.2 percent average tariff rate on agricultural imports from the United States; and

WHEREAS, Public Law 107-210, the Trade Act of 2002, gives the president the authority to enter into trade agreements with foreign countries whenever the president determines that one or more existing duties or other import restrictions of any foreign country or the United States are unduly burdening and restricting the foreign trade of the United States; and

WHEREAS, President George W. Bush, speaking before the historic signing of the United States-Australia Free Trade Agreement in 2004, emphasized that he supports free and open trade because "it has the power to create new wealth for whole nations and new opportunities for millions of people" and "has a record of creating jobs, raising living standards, and lowering consumer prices"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 79th Legislature, hereby respectfully encourage the president of the United States to extend the benefits of free trade by enacting a free trade agreement between the United States and Taiwan; and, be it further

S.R. No. 720

RESOLVED, That the secretary of the senate forward official copies of this Resolution to the president of the United States, to the speaker of the house of representatives and the president of the senate of the United States Congress, and to all the members of the Texas delegation to the congress.

Armbrister

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on April 29, 2005.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate