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By:  Miller H.R. No. 23

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The longstanding bonds of friendship between the United States and Taiwan, embodied in the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979, continue to yield important economic, strategic, and cultural benefits; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan ranks as our nation's 11th largest trading partner, and in 2017, bilateral trade in goods and services reached $68.2 billion; a particularly important market for farmers, Taiwan imports more U.S. agricultural products on a per capita basis than any other nation, and its biennial agricultural procurement missions result in multibillion-dollar supply deals; and

WHEREAS, Since 1988, Texas and Taiwan have maintained a sister-state relationship, and they enjoy particularly close economic ties, enhanced in recent years by the tireless efforts of Peter Chen as the director general of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Houston; Taiwan is one of our top 10 foreign markets, and in 2017, it imported nearly $4.7 billion in commodities from Texas, including computers and electronics, industrial machinery equipment, chemicals, and foodstuffs; in turn, Texas imported over $2.8 billion in Taiwanese goods, primarily computers, electronics, metal products, transportation equipment, and industrial machinery; and

WHEREAS, Taiwanese firms have invested more than $10 billion in a wide range of Texas businesses, from petrochemicals and automotive parts to electronics, banking, and hospitality; the current president of Taiwan, Tsai Ing-wen, has traveled to Houston twice since her election in 2016, and during her most recent visit, in August 2018, Taiwan's CPC Corporation signed a $25 billion, 25-year purchase agreement for liquefied natural gas with Houston-headquartered Cheniere and Formosa Plastics confirmed in detail its $12.7 billion accumulated investment at Point Comfort; and

WHEREAS, In June 2015, Taiwan's EVA Air launched a direct Taipei-Houston route; travel between Taiwan and the United States has increased by more than 50 percent since 2012, when Taiwan commenced participation in the U.S. Visa Waiver Program; it joined the U.S. Global Entry program five years later, further enhancing commercial, investment, and tourism opportunities; moreover, in 2018, President Trump signed the Taiwan Travel Act, which encourages government officials to meet with their counterparts in each other's countries; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan is committed to helping address global challenges, from humanitarian crises to nontraditional security threats; it has coordinated with the United States to combat Ebola and other infectious diseases, and it has provided disaster relief in many locations around the world; moreover, it has taken a prominent role in environmental protection, and the U.S.-Taiwan International Environmental Partnership was launched in 2014 to collaborate in the training of experts in the field from Asia, Africa, and Latin America; Taiwanese officials and civil society groups partner with the United States on a range of issues through the American Institute in Taiwan, and the AIT joined with the U.S.-based Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office to establish the Global Cooperation and Training Framework, which advances Taiwanese leadership in such arenas as democratization, human rights, women's empowerment, and public health; and

WHEREAS, Texas and the United States have benefited immeasurably through decades of unwavering friendship with Taiwan, and the wider world is sure to reap tremendous rewards as Taiwan works to enhance its presence in the international community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas Legislature hereby express its support for the strengthening of our partnership with Taiwan and for the expansion of Taiwan's role on the global stage; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives hereby:

(a)  express support for a bilateral trade agreement between the United States and Taiwan;

(b)  express support for Taiwan's meaningful participation in the International Criminal Police Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the World Health Assembly;

(c)  commend the inclusion of Taiwan in the U.S. Global Entry and Visa Waiver Program;

(d)  honor Peter Chen for his outstanding endeavors as director general of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Houston; and

(e)  celebrate the 40th anniversary of the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act and the 31st anniversary of the sister-state relationship between the State of Texas and Taiwan; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Houston as an expression of the sentiment of the Texas House of Representatives.