

By: Senator J. Woods

SENATE RESOLUTION

TO COMMEND TAIWAN AND THE STATE OF ARKANSAS FOR THEIR
SISTER-STATE RELATIONSHIP AND TO ENCOURAGE ITS
FURTHER ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Subtitle

TO COMMEND TAIWAN AND THE STATE OF
ARKANSAS FOR THEIR SISTER-STATE
RELATIONSHIP AND TO ENCOURAGE ITS FURTHER
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

WHEREAS, the Republic of China, commonly known as "Taiwan", is a full-fledged democracy characterized by stability and social order; and Taiwan is the world's 21st largest economy, 20th largest exporter, 18th largest importer, and the 5th largest holder of foreign exchange reserves with over \$426 billion; and

WHEREAS, 2015 marks the 32nd anniversary of the sister-state relationship between Taiwan and Arkansas, as well as the 32nd anniversary of the sister-city relationship between the City of Kaohsiung and the City of Little Rock; and

WHEREAS, on average, 425,000 people from Taiwan visit the United States each year, and Taiwan's national carriers, China Airlines and EVA Air, currently have over 70 flights destined for the United States weekly, carrying more than 5,000 passengers daily for business, tourism, study and observation, and visits to friends and family; and



WHEREAS, in May 2014, the Department of Finance and Administration and Taiwan streamlined the exchange of valid noncommercial driver's licenses for an Arkansas applicant in Taiwan and an applicant from Taiwan living in the State of Arkansas; and

WHEREAS, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Finance and Administration and Taiwan acknowledges and permits a mutual recognition of driver's licenses; and the Memorandum of Understanding requires adherence to state and federal privacy laws with regard to any information obtained when exchanging a driver's license, including the Driver's Privacy Protection Act of 1994, 18 U.S.C. § 2721 et seq., and personal information protection laws; and

WHEREAS, the Arkansas Economic Development Commission and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Houston, Texas, desire to establish an Arkansas Trade Office in Taipei in 2015; and this office would facilitate investment and trade opportunities between the State of Arkansas and Taiwan and further strengthen the relationship between the State of Arkansas and Taiwan; and

WHEREAS, the United States and Taiwan engage in robust bilateral trade; and the United States ranks as Taiwan's 3rd largest trading partner, and Taiwan is the 10th largest trading partner of the United States; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan is a member of the World Trade Organization and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum seeking to promote free trade and economic cooperation throughout the Asia-Pacific region; and

WHEREAS, a bilateral free trade agreement between Taiwan and the United States and a regional free trade agreement that includes Taiwan would substantially reduce or eliminate most import quotas, duties, and other trade barriers and expand market opportunities for the State of Arkansas and the entire United States; and

WHEREAS, the Trans-Pacific Partnership is a proposed trade agreement to enhance trade and investment among member countries and to promote

innovation, economic growth and development, and the creation and retention of jobs; and

WHEREAS, the Trans-Pacific Partnership represents a high-standard, ambitious, comprehensive, and forward-looking pathway for achieving an eventual free trade area within the Asia-Pacific region; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan's inclusion in the Trans-Pacific Partnership could result in an overall economic gain of nearly \$78 billion in social welfare for the United States and other member countries; and

WHEREAS, the United States and the State of Arkansas will benefit from closer economic relationships with Taiwan by negotiating a free trade agreement and a bilateral investment agreement between Taiwan and the United States and by supporting Taiwan's membership in the Trans-Pacific Partnership,

NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE NINETIETH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

THAT the Senate:

- (1) Encourages the sister-state relationship between the State of Arkansas and Taiwan initially formed in 1983;
- (2) Recognizes the May 2014 Memorandum of Understanding between Taiwan, through the Ministry of Transportation and Communications, and the Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration regarding the mutual recognition of driver's licenses;
- (3) Supports the establishment of an Arkansas Trade Office in Taipei;
- (4) Encourages closer economic relationships between Taiwan and the United States through negotiation of a free trade agreement, bilateral investment agreement (BIA), and Taiwan's membership in the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP); and
- (5) Supports Taiwan's participation in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the United Nations Framework Convention on

Climate Change (UNFCCC).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption of this resolution, an appropriate copy shall be provided to Mr. Louis Min-Jing Huang, Director General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Houston, Texas, by the Secretary of the Senate.