

HJR81 INTRODUCED



1 HJR81

2 8RK422F-1

3 By Representatives Shaw, Underwood, Wadsworth, Lee, Shaver,
4 Lipscomb, Garrett, Holk-Jones, Givens, Lomax, Rigsby

5 RFD: RULES

6 First Read: 29-Feb-24



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HJR___ ESTABLISHING THE ALABAMA-JAPAN LEGISLATIVE EXCHANGE GROUP.

WHEREAS, The State of Alabama and the Nation of Japan are established partners in the global economy, with mutual trade in 2022 between Alabama and Japan reaching nearly two billion dollars; and

WHEREAS, the extent of goods and services exchanged between Alabama and Japan is wide-ranging, including mineral, fuel, aircraft, spacecraft, vehicles, wood pulp, paper, organic and inorganic chemicals, machinery, computers, media equipment, ammunition, pharmaceuticals, and financial services; and

WHEREAS, Japanese confidence in the initiative and reliability of Alabama workers is attested to by the Honda Manufacturing Plant in Lincoln and the Mazda Toyota Manufacturing Plant near Huntsville, which together employ over 8,000 of our residents, while nearly 9,000 more Alabamians work for approximately 90 other Japanese companies; and

WHEREAS, Alabama's relationship with Japan transcends purely economic endeavors, with friendship expressed through sister city relationships between Birmingham and Hitachi, Anniston and Tatsuno, Tuscaloosa and Narachino, Dothan and Sakado, Mobile and Ichara, and Montevallo and Echizen; and



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29 WHEREAS, the Japanese Garden in the Birmingham
30 Botanical Gardens is recognized by the government of Japan
31 as an official Japanese Cultural Center, and many Alabamians
32 take a lively interest in Japanese culture through
33 organizations such as Bonsai and garden societies,
34 exhibitions, events such as the Sakura festival in
35 Tuscaloosa, and the Japan-America Society of Alabama (JASA);
36 and

37 WHEREAS, students at Alabama universities and
38 colleges have been enriched by visits to Japan for study,
39 including students from Birmingham-Southern College, Samford
40 University, University of West Alabama, The University of
41 Alabama at Birmingham, The University of Alabama, Auburn
42 University, The University of Alabama in Huntsville, Troy
43 University, Talladega College, and Miles College; and

44 WHEREAS, Japan is a bulwark of democracy in a region
45 overshadowed by China and threatened by North Korea, hosting
46 approximately 55,000 American military personnel on more
47 than 80 bases; and

48 WHEREAS, in addition to being a regional ally, Japan
49 is a key partner of the United States on the international
50 stage, collaborating with our nation in many critical areas
51 that include global security, development assistance,
52 environmental protection, new energy technologies,
53 supercomputing, critical materials, and space; now
54 therefore,

55 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, BOTH
56 HOUSES THEREOF CONCURRING, That the Alabama-Japan



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57 Legislative Exchange Group is created to pursue friendship
58 and cooperation with the people, institutions, and
59 businesses of Japan through exchanges and programs.

60 (a) The Alabama-Japan Legislative Exchange Group
61 shall be comprised of the following members:

62 (1) A majority member and a minority member of the
63 Senate, to be appointed by the President Pro Tempore of the
64 Senate, one of which shall be the senator sponsoring this
65 joint resolution.

66 (2) A majority member and a minority member of the
67 House of Representatives, to be appointed by the Speaker of
68 the House of Representatives, one of which shall be the
69 representative sponsoring this joint resolution.

70 (3) Any member of the Senate or the House of
71 Representatives who desires to strengthen relations between
72 Alabama and Japan.

73 (4) A member to act as liaison between the exchange
74 group and the Office of the Governor, to be appointed by the
75 Governor.

76 (b) In order for the legislative exchange group to
77 credibly represent the people of Alabama, the racial,
78 gender, geographic, urban, rural, and economic diversity of
79 this state shall be encouraged and reflected among its
80 membership.

81 (c) (1) The initial meeting of the Alabama-Japan
82 Legislative Exchange Group shall be called by the senior
83 Senate member no later than December 1, 2024.



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84 a. The members shall elect a chair and a vice chair
85 from the legislative membership, neither of which shall be
86 from the same house.

87 b. The members may elect a secretary and such other
88 officers as may be needed to conduct the work of the
89 legislative exchange group.

90 (2) The chair shall convene meetings of the
91 legislative exchange group as often as is expedient. After
92 the organizational meeting, the legislative exchange group
93 may meet by electronic means.

94 (3) A quorum for a meeting shall be a majority of the
95 members.

96 (d) The work of the legislative exchange group may
97 include, but not be limited to, any of the following in
98 pursuit of its goals:

99 (1) Any member may propose any economic, educational,
100 cultural, or governmental initiative to pursue on behalf of
101 the State of Alabama with Japan.

102 (2) The chair may assign study topics and reporting
103 responsibilities to different members.

104 (3) Nonprofit organizations, including the
105 Japan-America Society of Alabama, may be invited to share
106 knowledge and expertise, especially on establishing ties
107 with Japanese companies and organizations.

108 (4) The Consul General of Japan in Atlanta and any
109 honorary consul appointed by Japan in Alabama may be
110 informed of the group's work on a periodic basis.



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111 (e) (1) The legislative exchange group shall annually
112 report to the President Pro Tempore of the Senate and the
113 Speaker of the House of Representatives no later the tenth
114 day of the Regular Session of the Legislature on the number
115 of times it met during the preceding 12 months, and shall
116 include minutes of its meetings, with any interim
117 recommendations or requests that may assist its work.

118 (2) The legislative exchange group shall submit a
119 final report on its findings and recommendations to the
120 Governor no later than the conclusion of the 2026 Regular
121 Session of the Legislature.

122 (3) Upon submission of its final report, the
123 Alabama-Japan Legislative Exchange Group shall dissolve.

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