

**No. R-192. Joint resolution offering congratulations on the centennial anniversary of the Republic of China and supporting Taiwan's being granted observer or participation status in certain travel and tourism organizations.**

(J.R.S.30)

By Senator Ayer,

*Whereas*, the United States, especially the state of Vermont, and Taiwan share an historically close relationship marked by strong bilateral trade, educational and cultural exchange, scientific and technological interests, and tourism, and

*Whereas*, the United States and Taiwan engage in robust bilateral trade; the United States ranks as Taiwan's third largest trading partner; and Taiwan is the ninth largest trading partner of the United States, and

*Whereas*, in 2010, bilateral trade reached \$62 billion with exports to Taiwan totaling \$26 billion, and Vermont exports a significant amount to Taiwan annually, including machinery, computer and electronic products, and chemicals, and

*Whereas*, Vermont and Taiwan—the first full-fledged democracy in Chinese history—share the common values of freedom, democracy, human rights, and rule of law, and

*Whereas*, since 1999, the Vermont–Taiwan sister relationship has resulted in significant political, economic, educational, and cultural exchanges, and

*Whereas*, Taiwanese President Ma Ying-jeou has worked tirelessly to uphold democratic principles in Taiwan, ensure the prosperity of the

Taiwanese people, promote Taiwan's international standing as a responsible member of the international community, increase participation in international organizations, dispatch humanitarian missions abroad, and further improve relations between the United States and Taiwan, and

*Whereas*, a large volume of travel and tourism exists between the United States and Taiwan, with the number of outbound air departures in 2009 from Taiwan to the United States totaling 477,500, and United States' arrivals in Taiwan totaling in excess of 369,000, and

*Whereas*, it remains in the mutual interest of Vermont and Taiwan that Taiwan be allowed to observe the meetings and activities of international organizations, in particular the International Civil Aviation Organization, so as to ensure the safety of the traveling public, and

*Whereas*, Taiwan is a key transport hub in the Asia-Pacific region, and the Taipei Flight Information Region under Taiwan's jurisdiction covers an area of 176 square nautical miles with 1.35 million controlled flights passing through annually, and

*Whereas*, Taiwan's participation in the United States Visa Waiver Program (VWP), enabling Taiwanese to travel to the United States for tourism or business purposes for stays of 90 days or less without being required to obtain a visa, would increase tourism and business between Taiwan and the United States, particularly Vermont, and

*Whereas*, Taiwan presents a low immigration risk for the United States, being a full-fledged democracy characterized by stability and social order, and Taiwanese present few, if any, criminal or public security issues in the United States, and illegal immigration or visa overstays remain few, with rejection rates of United States' visas at only 2.2 percent, well below the VWP three-percent requirement, and

*Whereas*, Taiwan, in the spirit of reciprocity, has extended visa waivers to United States' citizens since 1993, and 100 nations currently grant Taiwanese visa waivers, among them the members of the European Union, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, Canada, and the United States territory of Guam, and

*Whereas*, Vermont and Taiwan look forward to an even stronger friendship over the next century, *now therefore be it*

***Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:***

That the General Assembly offers its congratulations on the centennial anniversary of the founding of the Republic of China, *and be it further*

***Resolved:*** That the General Assembly supports Taiwan's participation as an observer in the meetings and activities of the International Civil Aviation Organization and participation in the United States Visa Waiver Program, *and be it further*

***Resolved:*** That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to President Ma Ying-jeou of Taiwan, President Barack Obama,

Director-General Anne Hung of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in  
Boston, the Vermont Congressional Delegation, and Governor Peter Shumlin.