

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 73

BY SENATORS RISER, MARTINY, MIZELL, THOMPSON, WALSWORTH AND
WHITE

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the Department of Economic Development to encourage further economic ties between the state of Louisiana and the Republic of China, also known as Taiwan.

WHEREAS, for decades the United States and the Republic of China, also known as Taiwan, have fostered a close relationship of enormous mutual economic, cultural, and strategic benefit; and

WHEREAS, bilateral trade between the U.S. and Taiwan reached just over sixty-eight billion dollars in 2017, making Taiwan the eleventh largest trading partner of the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan's economic revitalization program, the five-plus-two innovative industries initiative, is boosting U.S.-Taiwan exchanges and, with an eye to further expand that exchange, Taiwan's new Southbound Policy seeks to forge regional links with Southeast Asian nations; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. exports to Taiwan combined with Taiwan's direct investment in the U.S. support over three hundred thirty thousand American jobs, and both nations are anticipating realizing further economic gains through the establishment of a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA), as well as by enhancing the platforms of the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA), and the Digital Economy Forum (DEF); and

WHEREAS, Taiwan made a momentous transition to democracy and a capitalist economic system beginning in the late 1980s, and has for years been a beacon of democracy in Asia; and

WHEREAS, Freedom House, an organization that tracks freedom in countries around the world and rates those countries according to the vibrancy of democracy in each country, has rated Taiwan as "free" for twenty years in a row and currently rates Taiwan with a score

of ninety-three out of a possible one hundred and specifically highlights three peaceful transfers of power between rival parties held in the country since 2000, as well as robust protections for civil liberties, generally, an inspiring accomplishment for any peace-loving nation in the world; and

WHEREAS, the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979 continues to be the cornerstone of U.S.-Taiwan relations, contributing to continued peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region and the U.S.-Taiwan Global Cooperation and Training Framework (GCTF) established in June 2015 helps address global challenges such as international humanitarian assistance and public health; and

WHEREAS, 2018 marks thirty-three years of the sister-state relationship between Louisiana and Taiwan, a bond nurtured through mutually beneficial exchanges, including forty-three hundred Louisiana jobs supported by Taiwan-affiliated companies and Louisiana's nearly four hundred million dollars of trade in goods to Taiwan in 2017, which makes Taiwan the fifth largest trading market for Louisiana in Asia; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan's recognition of valid, noncommercial driver's licenses between Louisiana and Taiwan is part of efforts to promote a business-friendly environment between the two countries in order to advance mutual trade and investment; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan should be commended on the introduction of reciprocal U.S. and Taiwan trusted traveler programs, the U.S. Global Entry program, and the Taiwan e-Gate program, which specifically encourages two-way tourism between the two countries; and

WHEREAS, at a time of continuing tensions in Asia, specific threats by China through its actions in the South China Sea, and threats by North Korea regarding the use of nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula and beyond, closer economic ties between Louisiana and Taiwan are fostered by Bilateral Trade Agreements, and Taiwan's meaningful participation in numerous worldwide organizations, such as the International Criminal Police Organization, known as INTERPOL, and the World Health Assembly; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Peter C. Y. Chen, Director General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Texas is recognized for his efforts and contributions in enhancing cooperation between Taiwan and the state of Louisiana.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the Department of Economic Development to encourage further economic ties between the state of Louisiana and the Republic of China, also known as Taiwan.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Don Pierson, secretary of the Department of Economic Development and to Mr. Peter C. Y. Chen, Director General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Houston, Texas.

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE