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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2015

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JOINT RESOLUTION

REAFFIRMING THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND  
TAIWAN, ENHANCING BILATERAL TRADE RELATIONS, AND SUPPORTING TAIWAN  
IN THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

Introduced By: Senators Picard, Crowley, Cote, and Lombardo

Date Introduced: January 22, 2015

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1           WHEREAS, The United States and the Republic of China (Taiwan) share a most  
2 important relationship supported by our common values of freedom, democracy, rule of law, and  
3 a free market economy; and

4           WHEREAS, President Ma Ying-jeou has worked tirelessly to uphold democratic  
5 principles in Taiwan, ensure the prosperity of Taiwan's 23 million people, promote Taiwan's  
6 international standing, and further improve relations between the United States and Taiwan; and

7           WHEREAS, Taiwan and the United States share the common goal of peace in the East  
8 China Sea, and Taiwan proposed an East China Sea Peace Initiative on August 5, 2012, urging all  
9 parties concerned to exercise restraint, avoid actions that could escalate confrontation in the  
10 region, shelve disputes, not abandon dialogue, and observe international law to resolve disputes in  
11 a peaceful manner; and

12           WHEREAS, The United States and Taiwan, and especially Rhode Island, share a  
13 historically close relationship, marked by strong bilateral trade, educational and cultural  
14 exchange, scientific and technological interests, and tourism; and

15           WHEREAS, Taiwan has been a member of the United States Visa Waiver Program since  
16 November 1, 2012, reflecting the friendship, trust, and cooperation shared between our two  
17 countries, and making travel between Taiwan and the United States for business and tourism even  
18 more convenient; and

19           WHEREAS, The United States ranks as Taiwan's 3rd largest trading partner, and Taiwan

1 is the 10th largest trading partner of the United States with bilateral trade in goods and services  
2 from January to November, 2014, between the United States and Taiwan amounting to \$61.8  
3 billion. New England exported \$1 billion in goods to Taiwan of which Rhode Island exported \$81  
4 million in goods, mostly primary metal manufacturing, manufactured commodities, machinery,  
5 and chemicals and Taiwan is Rhode Island's 2<sup>nd</sup> largest export market in Asia, and 6<sup>th</sup> largest  
6 export market in the world; and

7 WHEREAS, Talks on the Taiwan-United States Trade and Investment Framework  
8 Agreement (TIFA) resumed on March 10, 2013, and negotiations for a Bilateral Investment  
9 Agreement (BIA) between Taiwan and the United States is an important step towards  
10 strengthening bilateral trade and paving the way for entering into a Free Trade Agreement (FTA)  
11 between our countries, thereby increasing Rhode Island's exports to Taiwan and creating greater  
12 bilateral investment and technical collaboration; and

13 WHEREAS, The Asia-Pacific is the largest market in the world for United States exports  
14 and the share of Rhode Island exported goods bound for Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP)  
15 countries is 40 percent, and Rhode Island jobs supported by trade with TPP countries is estimated  
16 to be 51,200, with 1,694 companies exporting goods from Rhode Island in 2012, and 15 TPP  
17 companies having investments in Rhode Island; and

18 WHEREAS, Taiwan has attended the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)  
19 Assembly as a special guest since 2013, and it remains in the interest of the traveling public that  
20 Taiwan be included in the ICAO because Taiwan is a key transport hub in the Asia-Pacific region  
21 and the Taipei Flight Information Region (TAIPEI FIR) under Taiwan's jurisdiction covers an  
22 area of 176,000 square nautical miles with 1.35 million controlled flights with over 40 million  
23 travelers passing through annually, and Taiwan reiterates its commitment to ICAO standards and  
24 seeks to expand its meaningful participation in the ICAO, including attending technical and  
25 regional meetings, and related activities; and

26 WHEREAS, The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)  
27 is the world's key instrument to deal with climate change and a concerted global effort to combat  
28 the challenges posed by climate change requires that Taiwan also be included in the work of the  
29 UNFCCC, and Taiwan has expressed a keen interest to participate in the global effort to address  
30 climate change; now, therefore be it

31 RESOLVED, That this General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island and Providence  
32 Plantations hereby reaffirms the friendship between Rhode Island and the Republic of China  
33 (Taiwan), and commends Taiwan's role as peacemaker in the East China Sea. We furthermore  
34 urge the signing of a United States-Taiwan Bilateral Investment Agreement (BIA) and Free Trade

1 Agreement so as to further strengthen Rhode Island-Taiwan trade relations, and support Taiwan's  
2 participation in international organizations and agreements, including the United Nations  
3 Framework Convention on Climate Change, the ICAO, and the Trans-Pacific Partnership; and be  
4 it further

5 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
6 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the  
7 United States; the Rhode Island Congressional Delegation; Governor Gina Raimondo; President  
8 Ma Ying-jeou, on behalf of the 23 million citizens of Taiwan; and Scott Lai, Director-General of  
9 the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Boston.

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