

116TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. 249

AN ACT

To direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to regain observer status for Taiwan in the World Health Organization, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. PARTICIPATION OF TAIWAN IN THE WORLD**
2 **HEALTH ORGANIZATION.**

3 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
4 ings:

5 (1) The World Health Organization (WHO) is
6 a specialized agency of the United Nations, charged
7 with coordinating health efforts within the United
8 Nations system. The World Health Assembly
9 (WHA) is the decision-making body of the WHO,
10 which convenes annually in May to set the policies
11 and priorities of the organization. Statehood is not
12 a requirement for attendance at the WHA, and nu-
13 merous observers, including non-members and non-
14 governmental organizations, attended the most re-
15 cent WHA in May 2018.

16 (2) Taiwan began seeking to participate in the
17 WHO as an observer in 1997. In 2009, with strong
18 support from successive United States Administra-
19 tions, Congress, and like-minded WHO Member
20 States, and during a period of improved Cross-Strait
21 relations, Taiwan received an invitation to attend
22 the WHA as an observer under the name “Chinese
23 Taipei”. Taiwan received the same invitation each
24 year until 2016, when following the election of Presi-
25 dent Tsai-Ing Wen of the Democratic Progressive
26 Party, Taiwan’s engagement in the international

1 community began facing increased resistance from
2 the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Taiwan’s in-
3 vitation to the 2016 WHA was received late and in-
4 cluded new language conditioning Taiwan’s partici-
5 pation on the PRC’s “one China principle”. In 2017
6 and 2018, Taiwan did not receive an invitation to
7 the WHA.

8 (3) Taiwan remains a model contributor to
9 world health, having provided financial and technical
10 assistance to respond to numerous global health
11 challenges. Taiwan has invested over
12 \$6,000,000,000 in international medical and human-
13 itarian aid efforts impacting over 80 countries since
14 1996. In 2014, Taiwan responded to the Ebola crisis
15 by donating \$1,000,000 and providing 100,000 sets
16 of personal protective equipment. Through the Glob-
17 al Cooperation and Training Framework, the United
18 States and Taiwan have jointly conducted training
19 programs for experts to combat MERS, Dengue
20 Fever, and Zika. These diseases know no borders,
21 and Taiwan’s needless exclusion from global health
22 cooperation increases the dangers presented by glob-
23 al pandemics.

24 (4) Taiwan’s international engagement has
25 faced increased resistance from the PRC. Taiwan

1 was not invited to the 2016 Assembly of the Inter-
2 national Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), despite
3 participating as a guest at the organization's prior
4 summit in 2013. Taiwan's requests to participate in
5 the General Assembly of the International Criminal
6 Police Organization (INTERPOL) have also been
7 rejected. In May 2017, PRC delegates disrupted a
8 meeting of the Kimberley Process on conflict dia-
9 monds held in Perth, Australia, until delegates from
10 Taiwan were asked to leave. Since 2016, the Demo-
11 cratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, the Re-
12 public of Panama, the Solomon Islands, the Republic
13 of Kiribati, the Dominican Republic, Burkina Faso,
14 and the Republic of El Salvador have terminated
15 longstanding diplomatic relationships with Taiwan
16 and granted diplomatic recognition to the PRC.

17 (5) Congress has established a policy of support
18 for Taiwan's participation in international bodies
19 that address shared transnational challenges, par-
20 ticularly in the WHO. Congress passed H.R. 1794
21 in the 106th Congress, H.R. 428 in the 107th Con-
22 gress, and S. 2092 in the 108th Congress to direct
23 the Secretary of State to establish a strategy for,
24 and to report annually to Congress on, efforts to ob-
25 tain observer status for Taiwan at the WHA. Con-

1 gress also passed H.R. 1151 in the 113th Congress,
2 directing the Secretary to report on a strategy to
3 gain observer status for Taiwan at the ICAO Assem-
4 bly, and H.R. 1853 in the 114th Congress, directing
5 the Secretary to report on a strategy to gain ob-
6 server status for Taiwan at the INTERPOL Assem-
7 bly. However, since 2016 Taiwan has not received
8 an invitation to attend any of these events as an ob-
9 server.

10 (b) AUGMENTATION OF REPORT CONCERNING THE
11 PARTICIPATION OF TAIWAN IN THE WORLD HEALTH OR-
12 GANIZATION.—

13 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (c) of section 1
14 of Public Law 108–235 (118 Stat. 656) is amended
15 by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

16 “(3) An account of the changes and improve-
17 ments the Secretary of State has made to the
18 United States plan to endorse and obtain observer
19 status for Taiwan at the World Health Assembly,
20 following any annual meetings of the World Health
21 Assembly at which Taiwan did not obtain observer
22 status.”.

23 (2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made
24 by paragraph (1) shall take effect and apply begin-
25 ning with the first report required under subsection

1 (c) of section 1 of Public Law 108–235 that is sub-
2 mitted after the date of the enactment of this Act.

3 **SEC. 2. BRIEFING ON UNITED STATES STRATEGY REGARD-**
4 **ING TAIWAN'S INTERNATIONAL RECOGNI-**
5 **TION.**

6 (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after the
7 date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days
8 thereafter for three years, the Secretary of State, or the
9 Secretary's designee, shall provide to the appropriate con-
10 gressional committees a briefing on actions taken by the
11 United States to reaffirm and strengthen Taiwan's official
12 and unofficial diplomatic relationships.

13 (b) ELEMENTS.—The briefing required by subsection
14 (a) shall include the following elements:

15 (1) A description of the actions taken by the
16 United States commencing May 20, 2016, to consult
17 with governments around the world, including the
18 governments that maintain official diplomatic rela-
19 tions with Taiwan, with the purpose of inducing
20 those governments to maintain official diplomatic re-
21 lations with Taiwan or otherwise strengthen unoffi-
22 cial relations with Taiwan.

23 (2) An enumeration of specific countries of con-
24 cern, if any, and a description of the actions taken,
25 or actions anticipated, by those governments, com-

1 mencing May 20, 2016, to alter the formal diplo-
2 matic ties with Taiwan or to otherwise downgrade
3 official or unofficial relations.

4 (3) A plan of action to engage with the govern-
5 ments of the countries identified in paragraphs (1)
6 and (2) and increase cooperation with respect to
7 Taiwan.

8 (c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—
9 In this section, the term “appropriate congressional com-
10 mittees” means—

11 (1) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the
12 Senate; and

13 (2) the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the
14 House of Representatives.

15 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF**
16 **THE ASIA REASSURANCE INITIATIVE ACT.**

17 It is the sense of Congress that the full and timely
18 implementation of section 209 of the Asia Reassurance
19 Initiative Act (Public Law 115–409), which reiterates

- 1 longstanding bipartisan United States policy, is critical to
- 2 demonstrate United States support for Taiwan.

Passed the Senate May 11, 2020.

Attest:

Secretary.

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