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S. CON. RES. 140

Expressing the sense of Congress regarding high-level visits by Taiwanese officials to the United States.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 28 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 22), 2000

Mr. LOTT (for himself, Mr. HELMS, Mr. MURKOWSKI, Mr. KYL, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire, Mr. BENNETT, and Mr. HUTCHINSON), submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress regarding high-level visits by Taiwanese officials to the United States.

Whereas Taiwan is the seventh largest trading partner of the United States and plays an important role in the economy of the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas Taiwan routinely holds free and fair elections in a multiparty system, as evidenced most recently by Taiwan's second democratic presidential election of March 18, 2000, in which Mr. Chen Shui-bian was elected as president of the 23,000,000 people of Taiwan;

Whereas Members of Congress, unlike executive branch officials, have long had the freedom to meet with leaders of governments with which the United States does not have

formal relations—meetings which provide a vital opportunity to discuss issues of mutual concern that directly affect United States national interests;

Whereas several Members of Congress expressed interest in meeting with President Chen Shui-bian during his 16-hour layover in Los Angeles, California, en route to Latin America and Africa on August 13, 2000;

Whereas the meeting with President Chen did not take place because of pressure from Washington and Beijing;

Whereas Congress thereby lost the opportunity to communicate directly with President Chen about developments in the Asia-Pacific region and key elements of the relationship between the United States and Taiwan when he visited Los Angeles;

Whereas there could not be a more important time to find opportunities to talk to Taiwan's new leaders given the enormous economic, security, and political interests we share with both Taiwan and the People's Republic of China, as well as the results of the recent election in Taiwan which provided for the first party leadership change in Taiwan's history;

Whereas Congress must continue to play an independent oversight role on United States policy toward Taiwan, and try to find ways to reduce the threat of war between Taiwan and the People's Republic of China, and in particular, to counteract China's buildup of missiles pointed at Taiwan;

Whereas the United States continues to cling to its policy of more than 20 years, which prohibits high-ranking Taiwan leaders from making official visits to the United States, forcing Members of Congress to choose whether to rely

solely upon indirect assessments provided by the administration or to travel to Taiwan to obtain this information firsthand, and denying Taiwan's democratically elected officials the respect they deserve;

Whereas by bestowing upon President Chen the respect his office deserves, the United States would have demonstrated to the people of both Taiwan and the People's Republic of China United States support for democracy; and

Whereas the Immigration and Nationality Technical Corrections Act of 1994 (Public Law 103-416) provides that the President of Taiwan shall be welcome in the United States at any time to discuss a host of important issues: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives*
2 *concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—*

3 (1) it is in the interest of Congress and the ex-
4 ecutive branch of the United States to communicate
5 directly with elected and appointed top officials of
6 Taiwan, including its democratically elected presi-
7 dent; and

8 (2) the United States should end restrictions on
9 high-level visits by officials of Taiwan to the United
10 States.

