

House Committee on International Affairs
Monday, March 14, 2008 at 9:30 A.M. – CR 329
In Support of SCR 53 –Entering into a Free Trade Agreement
with Taiwan

Aloha Chair Cabanilla and members of the committee:

My name is Billy Chou, Chairman of Honolulu Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce.

As commercial and trade advocates, we believe that the United States should promote free trade with all nations, including Taiwan, provided that it is mutually beneficial.

Why will a United States-Taiwan Free Trade Agreement (FTA) benefit both the U.S. and Taiwan? Here are some current statistics I would like to share with you:

1. Taiwan is the 9th largest trading partner, 11th largest export market and 5th largest farm products market for the U.S. In particular, Taiwan is a leading destination for U.S. exports of electrical machinery, optical instruments and parts, aircraft and parts, organic chemicals, plastics and agricultural products. The U.S. is one of Taiwan's leading sources of imports, second only to Japan.
2. In 2006, the trade flow between the United States and Taiwan reached \$61.2 billion. The United States is the largest source of foreign investment in Taiwan. In 2006, the cumulative U.S. investment in Taiwan exceeded \$15 billion.
3. The FTA opens up many opportunities for U.S. companies to expand their business in the Taiwanese market, such as agriculture, telecommunications, services, tourism and education.
4. An FTA between the U.S. and Taiwan would also enable U.S. firms to leverage Taiwan's role as a gateway to Asia, providing a platform from which to export goods and services into the greater China region and Southeast Asia.

We believe that entering into a Free Trade Agreement will benefit both the U.S. and Taiwan and enhance the strong relationship between the two democratic countries by expanding trade, providing new opportunities for investment and the development of new technologies, promoting security, and expanding economic ties. Thus, we seek your support for this resolution.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify.

List of persons wishing to testify in the hearing of House Committee on International Affairs, Monday, March 17, 2008 at 9:30AM – CR329

SCR 52 (Expand the visa waiver program to include Taiwan)

1. Mr. Marvin Chang, President of Ilima Tours
2. Ms. Selene Wang, Executive Vice President of Dragon Tours & Travel (808-224-1220)
3. Mr Edward Pei, President of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii (808-844-3188) (Mr. Pei's testimony will be submitted by himself)

SCR 53 (Entering into a Free Trade Agreement between the U.S. and Taiwan)

1. Mr. Edward Pei, President of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii (808-844-3188) (Mr. Pei's testimony will be submitted by himself)
2. Mr. Billy Chou, Chairman of Hawaii Chamber, the Taiwanese Chambers of Commerce of North America (808-221-3878)