

---

---

## HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE, THE DEPARTMENT OF  
HOMELAND SECURITY, AND THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY GENERAL  
TO EASE VISA RESTRICTIONS FOR THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF  
CHINA.

1           WHEREAS, China and the people of China have been a part of  
2 the economy and culture of Hawaii since the first Chinese sugar  
3 plantation laborers arrived in the islands in 1852; and  
4

5           WHEREAS, the first one hundred seventy-five laborers were  
6 from Hong Kong bound for Maui--most of them from depression-torn  
7 Guangdong and Fujian in southern China; and  
8

9           WHEREAS, from 1852 to 1876, nearly four thousand Chinese  
10 laborers migrated to Hawaii and by 1882, these *huaqiao* or  
11 migrants, made up almost forty-nine per cent of plantation  
12 labor, outnumbering Caucasians in the islands; and  
13

14           WHEREAS, the progeny of these humble but determined Chinese  
15 immigrants rose quickly through the ranks of Hawaii's  
16 educational, political, and business communities, and have left  
17 lasting impacts on Hawaii and even the world, the most famous of  
18 whom, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, is referred to as "The Forerunner of the  
19 Revolution"; and  
20

21           WHEREAS, Dr. Sun's education at Iolani School and Oahu  
22 College inspired him to develop the vision of an educated,  
23 strong, and democratic modern-day China that he would dedicate  
24 the rest of his life to building, and would later prompt him to  
25 say that Hawaii was where he "came to know what modern,  
26 civilized governments are like and what they mean"; and  
27

28           WHEREAS, Dr. Sun established the first Chinese  
29 revolutionary party, called *Xing Zhong Hui* or Revive China  
30 Society, and returned to Hawaii five more times, and during  
31 those trips, many Hawaii families contributed financially to his  
32 cause; and  
33



## H.R. NO. 22

1 WHEREAS, the Counties of Hawaii Sister-Cities Summit held  
2 in Honolulu from September 13, 2011, to September 15, 2011,  
3 highlighted the inextricable and historic ties between China and  
4 Hawaii with a particular emphasis on strengthening our  
5 relationships with Honolulu's sister cities of Zhongshan,  
6 Haikou, Qinhuangdao, and Chengdu; and  
7

8 WHEREAS, the summit demonstrated that China will continue  
9 to embrace our open door policy and fortified our understanding  
10 of each other's needs in the areas of cultural exchange,  
11 economic development, trade, tourism, and education; and  
12

13 WHEREAS, recently, members of Hawaii's business and  
14 government communities welcomed two hundred seventy-one  
15 passengers at Honolulu International Airport from China Eastern  
16 Airlines' inaugural direct flight from Shanghai, heralding a new  
17 era for Honolulu's economic growth and forging closer ties  
18 between the United States and China; and  
19

20 WHEREAS, the People's Republic of China, with its  
21 1,300,000,000 people, represents a very large and lucrative pool  
22 of visitors, as the average Chinese tourist to Hawaii is  
23 expected to spend about \$368 per day, compared to \$275 daily for  
24 every Japanese tourist and just \$178 per day, on average, for  
25 all tourists to Hawaii; and  
26

27 WHEREAS, tourism dollars have been identified by the United  
28 States Department of Commerce as an export, and President Barack  
29 Obama's National Export Initiative of May 2010 seeks to double  
30 United State's exports by 2015; and  
31

32 WHEREAS, China has transformed itself from an impoverished  
33 country to the world's second largest economy and, as it grows,  
34 continues to have an impact on Hawaii and the globe; and  
35

36 WHEREAS, China is now a major trade partner with the United  
37 States and a force for stability and peace in Asia, becoming a  
38 world leader in the auto market and the world's largest producer  
39 of energy; and  
40

41 WHEREAS, in spite of the reciprocity between China and  
42 Hawaii, the visa application and approval process for Chinese  
43 business and tourist travelers is an arduous and often lengthy



1 process that deters many potential visitors to Hawaii and the  
2 United States; and

3  
4 WHEREAS, a Chinese citizen who wishes to visit the United  
5 States must appear in person before a United States consular  
6 official to obtain the visa, but there are only five United  
7 States consulates in the entire People's Republic of China; and

8  
9 WHEREAS, due to the small number of consulates and staff to  
10 handle the in-person interviews necessary for entry visas, the  
11 average wait times for those interviews in China far exceed  
12 those wait times in other countries; and

13  
14 WHEREAS, one solution to ease this problem is for a country  
15 to be admitted to the United States State Department's Visa  
16 Waiver Program, which allows nationals from foreign countries to  
17 enter the United States for tourism- or business-related  
18 purposes for as long as ninety days without obtaining a visa;  
19 and

20  
21 WHEREAS, both the citizens of Japan and South Korea qualify  
22 for visa waivers; and

23  
24 WHEREAS, when South Korea became one of the thirty-six  
25 countries in the United States State Department's Visa Waiver  
26 Program in November of 2008, it boosted tourism to Hawaii from  
27 that country; and

28  
29 WHEREAS, in order for a country to qualify for the Visa  
30 Waiver Program, the country must satisfy certain conditions,  
31 with the United States government retaining the ultimate  
32 discretion to admit the country to the program; and

33  
34 WHEREAS, one condition for entry into the waiver program is  
35 the rate of refusal of a country's visa applicants, which must  
36 be three per cent or lower; and

37  
38 WHEREAS, the refusal rate for Chinese visa applicants was  
39 13.3 per cent as of 2010; and

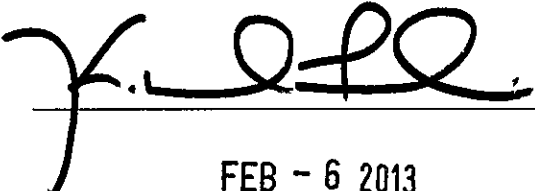
40  
41 WHEREAS, the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, a newly  
42 created industry group appointed by the United States Secretary  
43 of Commerce, recommended measures that can be taken to increase  
44 travel to the United States from China, which include:



- 1
- 2 (1) Raising the visa refusal rate from three to ten per
- 3 cent;
- 4
- 5 (2) Establishing a maximum wait time for in-person visa
- 6 interviews of five days;
- 7
- 8 (3) Adding four to six visa processing locations and
- 9 several hundred consular officers to process visas;
- 10 and
- 11
- 12 (4) Allowing non-immigrant visas to last ten years for
- 13 Chinese visitors, which is permitted in other
- 14 countries; now, therefore,
- 15

16 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
 17 Twenty-seventh Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular  
 18 Session of 2013, that this body urges the United States  
 19 Department of State, the Department of Homeland Security, and  
 20 the United States Attorney General to include the People's  
 21 Republic of China in the Visa Waiver Program and support the  
 22 recommendations of the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board to ease  
 23 visa restrictions and the visa application and approval process  
 24 for business and tourist travelers from the People's Republic of  
 25 China; and

26  
 27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
 28 Resolution be transmitted to Secretary John Kerry, United States  
 29 Department of State; Secretary Janet Napolitano, Department of  
 30 Homeland Security; United States Attorney General Eric H.  
 31 Holder, Jr.; Acting Secretary Rebecca Blank, United States  
 32 Department of Commerce; China's Ambassador to the United States,  
 33 the members of Hawaii's congressional delegation; the Hawaii  
 34 Tourism Authority; the Director of Business, Economic  
 35 Development, and Tourism; the Asian American Institute; the  
 36 Organization of Chinese Americans; the President of the Hawaii  
 37 State Association of Counties; and the Mayors of the Counties of  
 38 Kauai, Hawaii, Honolulu, and Maui.

39  
 40  
 41 OFFERED BY: 

FEB - 6 2013