

JAN 24 2013

SENATE CONCURRENT 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
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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
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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
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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
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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
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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



1 those trips, many Hawaii families contributed financially to his
2 cause; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



1 WHEREAS, in spite of the reciprocity between China and
2 Hawaii, the visa application and approval process for Chinese
3 business and tourist travelers is an arduous and often lengthy
4 process that deters many potential visitors to Hawaii and the
5 United States; and

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

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

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

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24 WHEREAS, both the citizens of Japan and South Korea qualify
25 for visa waivers; and

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

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

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

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41 WHEREAS, the refusal rate for Chinese visa applicants was
42 13.3 per cent as of 2010; and

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1 WHEREAS, the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, a newly
2 created industry group appointed by the United States Secretary
3 of Commerce, recommended measures that can be taken to increase
4 travel to the United States from China, which include:

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- 6 (1) Raising the visa refusal rate from three to ten per
7 cent;
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 - 9 (2) Establishing a maximum wait time for in-person visa
10 interviews of five days;
 - 11
 - 12 (3) Adding four to six visa processing locations and
13 several hundred consular officers to process visas;
14 and
 - 15
 - 16 (4) Allowing non-immigrant visas to last ten years for
17 Chinese visitors, which is permitted in other
18 countries; now, therefore,
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20 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-seventh
21 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2013, the
22 House of Representatives concurring, that it urges the United
23 States Department of State, the Department of Homeland Security,
24 and the United States Attorney General to include the People's
25 Republic of China in the Visa Waiver Program and support the
26 recommendations of the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board to ease
27 visa restrictions and the visa application and approval process
28 for business and tourist travelers from the People's Republic of
29 China; and

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31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
32 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to Secretary Hillary
33 Clinton, United States Department of State; Secretary Janet
34 Napolitano, Department of Homeland Security; United States
35 Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr.; Acting Secretary Rebecca
36 Blank, United States Department of Commerce; China's Ambassador
37 to the United States, the members of Hawaii's congressional
38 delegation; the Hawaii Tourism Authority; the Director of
39 Business, Economic Development, and Tourism; the Asian American
40 Institute; the Organization of Chinese Americans; the



S.C.R. NO. 5

1 President of the Hawaii State Association of Counties; and the
2 Mayors of the Counties of Kauai, Hawaii, Honolulu, and Maui.

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OFFERED BY: *Senne Inoué*

By Request

