

**Hawai'i State Association of Counties (HSAC)**  
Counties of Kaua'i, Maui, Hawai'i & City & County of Honolulu

March 18, 2013

**TESTIMONY OF MEL RAPOZO**  
**PRESIDENT, HAWAII STATE ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES**  
**ON**  
**HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 8**  
**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**

Committee on Veterans, Military, & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts

Wednesday, March 20, 2013

8:30 A.M.

Conference Room 312

Dear Chair Takai and Committee Members:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HCR 8. My testimony is submitted in my capacity as President of the Hawai'i State Association of Counties (HSAC).

HSAC is in full support of HCR 8, which urges the United States Department of State, the Department of Homeland Security, and the United States Attorney General to ease the Visa restrictions for the People's Republic of China (PRC).

The PRC has approximately 1.3 billion citizens which represent a very large and lucrative pool of visitors, as the average PRC tourist to Hawai'i spends on average \$368 per day, compared to the \$275 daily for every Japanese tourist and \$178 per day for every other tourist to Hawai'i. However, despite the reciprocity between China and Hawai'i, the Visa application and approval process for PRC business and tourist travelers is an arduous and often lengthy one, which often deters potential visitors to Hawai'i and the United States (U.S.).

A PRC citizen who wishes to visit the U.S. must appear in person before a U.S. consulate official to obtain the Visa, but there are only five (5) U.S. consulates in the entire PRC. The average wait time for a PRC visa applicant far exceeds the wait time for other countries. A solution to ease this problem is for the PRC to be admitted into the U.S. State Department's Visa Waiver Program, which allows nationals from foreign countries to enter the U.S. for tourism or business related purposes for a maximum of ninety (90) days without obtaining a Visa. Currently there are thirty-six (36) countries admitted into the Visa Waiver Program.

For the reason stated above, HSAC is in strong support of HCR 8 and asks for your favorable support. Again, thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,

*Mel Rapozo*

MEL RAPOZO  
President, HSAC

AB:lc

DENNIS "FRESH" ONISHI  
Council Member  
District 3



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**HAWAI'I COUNTY COUNCIL**  
25 Aupuni Street, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

March 19, 2013

The Honorable K. Mark Takai, Chair  
and Members of the House  
Committee on Veterans, Military, International Affairs  
Culture and the Arts

Dear Chair Takai and Committee Members,

Thank you very much for this opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of House Concurrent Resolution No. 8.

The People's Republic of China is the world's most populous country, the world's second largest economy and a major trading partner of the United States. Chunyun (春运), the annual spring festival travel season that coincides with the Lunar New Year holiday season, is the largest annual human migration in the world, with more than a billion people vacating the cities to visit their ancestral homes. The Chinese are waking up.

But the United States, and Hawai'i especially, risks missing out on this enormous market as a result of the restrictive visa requirements that are in effect today. This resolution requests the U.S. government to take sensible steps to reduce the visa restrictions in place for the economic benefit of Hawai'i and the rest of the nation.

Please amend this resolution to remove references to former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and to the outgoing Acting Commerce Secretary Rebecca Blank, who on March 18, 2013, accepted the chancellorship of the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and recommend approval.

Sincerely,

Dennis "Fresh" Onishi  
Hawai'i County Council  
District 3

Council Chair  
Gladys C. Baisa

Vice-Chair  
Robert Carroll

Council Members  
Elle Cochran  
Donald G. Couch, Jr.  
Stacy Crivello  
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Michael P. Victorino  
Mike White

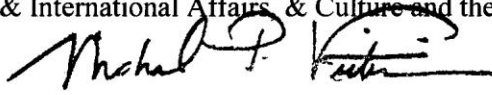


Director of Council Services  
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

**COUNTY COUNCIL**  
COUNTY OF MAUI  
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[www.mauicounty.gov/council](http://www.mauicounty.gov/council)

March 19, 2013

TO: The Honorable K. Mark Takai, Chair  
House Committee on Veterans, Military, & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts

FROM: Michael P. Victorino, Treasurer   
Hawaii State Association of Counties

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF MARCH 20, 2013; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HCR 8 AND HR 22, 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**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of these important measures. The purpose of the measures is to urge 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.

I am aware that the President of the Hawaii State Association of Counties ("HSAC") has submitted testimony, on behalf of HSAC, in support of these measures, which are in the HSAC Legislative Package. As the Treasurer of HSAC, I concur with the testimony submitted by the President, and urge you to support these measures.