

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1545

To designate Taiwan as a visa waiver program country under section 217(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

SEPTEMBER 13, 2011

Mr. INHOFE introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To designate Taiwan as a visa waiver program country under section 217(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress makes the following findings:

5 (1) The United States enjoys a friendly and
6 mutually beneficial relationship with Taiwan. Solid
7 commercial, educational, and cultural ties between
8 the United States and Taiwan could be further
9 strengthened by the inclusion of Taiwan in the
10 United States Visa Waiver Program.

1 (2) As a full-fledged, stable democracy, Taiwan
2 shares with the United States a commitment to de-
3 mocracy, human rights, the rule of the law, and a
4 market-based economy.

5 (3) Taiwan is the United States ninth largest
6 trading partner and a key export market in almost
7 every major sector. Trade in commercial goods be-
8 tween Taiwan and the United States totaled nearly
9 \$62,000,000,000 in 2010.

10 (4) The United States and Taiwan have long
11 maintained close and productive cooperation in
12 science and technology. Since 1979, the United
13 States and Taiwan have signed more than 190
14 science and technology agreements under the frame-
15 work of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Rep-
16 resentative Office and the American Institute in Tai-
17 wan.

18 (5) Taiwan has worked very closely with the
19 United States in the field of education. More than
20 26,000 Taiwanese studied at colleges and univer-
21 sities in the United States during 2010.

22 (6) These important relationships generate sig-
23 nificant interpersonal contact and travel. In 2009,
24 people from Taiwan made more than 500,000 trips
25 to the United States.

1 (7) If allowed to participate in the Visa Waiver
2 Program, holders of Taiwan passports could travel
3 to the United States without the expense and time
4 consuming process of obtaining a visa, which is ex-
5 pected to boost the number of visits for sightseeing
6 and business purposes. Taiwanese travel to the
7 United Kingdom and New Zealand increased by 35
8 to 40 percent after those countries waived visa obli-
9 gations. Tourism revenue would increase by an esti-
10 mated \$1,800,000,000 by waiving visa requirements
11 for Taiwanese travelers to the United States.

12 (8) Taiwan has already exempted United States
13 passport holders from visa requirements for visits up
14 to 30 days. By extending similar privileges to Tai-
15 wanese travelers, the United States could facilitate
16 people-to-people contacts, enhance cultural links,
17 and expand business opportunities and tourism.

18 (9) During fiscal year 2010, Taiwan's United
19 States visa refusal rate was 2.2 per cent, which is
20 well below the maximum allowable 3 percent rate for
21 refusals of United States nonimmigrant visitor visa
22 applications under the Visa Waiver Program.

23 (10) Taiwan has a high Human Development
24 Index, which indicates that it has a high income
25 economy.

1 (11) The Government of Taiwan has actively
2 pursued the resumption of mutual trust between
3 Taiwan and the United States at the highest levels.

4 (12) Census figures show that there were about
5 230,000 Taiwanese residing in the United States in
6 2010, while unofficial reports put that figure at
7 500,000.

8 (13) S. Con. Res. 17 was introduced on May
9 12, 2011, to express the sense of Congress that Tai-
10 wan should be accorded observer status in the Inter-
11 national Civil Aviation Organization and has since
12 been voted favorably out of the Committee on For-
13 eign Relations of the Senate.

14 (14) Taiwanese citizens who are in possession
15 of a machine readable passport and have completed
16 Form I-736 (Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Information
17 Form) and Form I-94 (Arrival-Departure Record)
18 may enter Guam or the Commonwealth of the
19 Northern Mariana Islands without a visa under a
20 visa waiver program that applies to these United
21 States territories.

22 **SEC. 2. DESIGNATING TAIWAN AS A VISA WAIVER PROGRAM**
23 **COUNTRY.**

24 Notwithstanding section 217(c) of the Immigration
25 and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1187(e)), Taiwan shall be

1 deemed to be a designated program country for purposes
2 of the Visa Waiver Program established under section 217
3 of such Act.

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