

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Ed Royce (R-CA), Chairman  
House Foreign Affairs Committee  
Hearing on “The Promise of the Taiwan Relations Act”  
March 14, 2014**

(As Prepared for Delivery)

For 35 years, the Taiwan Relations Act has served as the legal framework governing the important relationship between the United States of America and the Republic of China (Taiwan). Since the Act came into force in 1979, there have been few other pieces of foreign policy legislation as consequential as the TRA. Indeed, it is the steadfast support of the United States Congress that has helped Taiwan become what it is today: a thriving modern society that strongly respects human rights, the rule of law, and free markets.

The purpose of today’s hearing is to consider whether the Administration is doing enough to fulfill the larger promise of the Taiwan Relations Act. America’s support for Taiwan is now more important than ever, and it is vital that we speak with one voice when it comes to our support for Taiwan.

Strengthening the U.S. relationship with Taiwan is one of the Committee’s top legislative priorities. In fact, I have led two bipartisan delegations to Taipei in the past 13 months. Last year, our delegation’s trip included a visit to Taiwan’s World War II-era submarines based near Kaoshiung. And just last month, the Committee delegation travelled to Tainan to see firsthand the fleet of fighter jets that serves as the backbone of the Taiwanese air force. The fact that the first batch of these jets entered into service in 1965 is a stark reminder that Taiwan needs continuous U.S. support in order to maintain a credible deterrence across the Taiwan Strait. On this front, I reluctantly submit that we are not doing enough to meet the spirit of the Taiwan Relations Act.

Just as necessary as defense sales are to Taiwan, it is equally important that the U.S. actively support Taiwan’s efforts to maintain and expand its diplomatic space. When it comes to matters of public safety or public health, the U.S. must do its utmost to ensure that Taiwan has a seat at the table. For this reason, I authored legislation that was signed into law to help Taiwan participate at the International Civil Aviation Organization last year. Taiwan’s absence from ICAO prevents it from obtaining air safety information in real-time. The recent disappearance of the Malaysian aircraft highlights the importance of cooperation in the aviation field. As a result of my legislation, Taiwan was finally able to have a seat at ICAO for the first time since 1976.

Taiwan’s participation in the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade agreement is an important opportunity that we must not overlook. By working to include Taiwan in a high-quality, multilateral trade agreement, the U.S. would be helping to preserve Taiwan’s ability to do business internationally. The events unfolding in the Ukraine reminds us of the strategic weakness of relying on one major trading partner. I understand that the Government of Taiwan

will soon announce its intention to seek membership in TPP. As Chairman of this Committee, I strongly urge the Administration to support Taiwan's inclusion in TPP. American consumers and exporters would benefit.

The story of Taiwan is really a story about transformation – from the grinding poverty of the postwar era to a military dictatorship to a thriving multiparty democracy. The investment that the American people made in Taiwan has more than paid off. Today, Taiwan is a beacon of democracy in a region of the world that still yearns for freedom. The good people of Taiwan have also been a part of America's own success story with many Taiwanese Americans participating as leaders in business, government, and in their own communities.

As we acknowledge the 35th Anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, let us come together to support and strengthen the U.S.-Taiwan relationship. Our actions will directly impact the future of Taiwan, and our strategic and economic standing in the critical Asia-Pacific region.