

Follow/Mention
@HouseForeign

Opening Statement of the Honorable **Ed Royce (R-CA), Chairman**
House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific Hearing:
“Renewing Assurances: Strengthening U.S.-Taiwan Ties”
June 15, 2017

(As prepared for delivery)

Thank you Chairman Yoho for holding this important hearing on Taiwan, and for marking up the Taiwan Travel Act, which I am proud to co-sponsor with Rep. Steve Chabot. By encouraging more frequent visits between our two governments – including at the highest levels – we will further strengthen the critical U.S.-Taiwan partnership.

The U.S. and Taiwan share a commitment to democracy, human rights, and rule of law, and it is these values that serve as the bedrock of this partnership.

I lead large bipartisan delegations to Taiwan every year to highlight the broad and steadfast relationship the U.S. has with Taiwan, which was made possible by the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979. Taiwan is facing new challenges as a result of changes in cross-Strait and global dynamics, and it is more important than ever to reassure Taiwan of the U.S.’s commitment to the relationship.

Unfortunately, just this week, under pressure and with inducements from Beijing, Panama broke off decades of diplomatic relations with Taiwan, and switched diplomatic recognition to the People's Republic of China. This decision from Panamanian President Varela came after Taiwan has, according to media reports, provided \$20 million per year in foreign aid to Panama on average. I’d hope that Panama, and all nations, would act to include Taiwan in international organizations.

I found it particularly concerning that Taiwan was excluded from this year’s World Health Assembly. Over the years, Taiwan has contributed to international efforts to improve global health with financial and technical assistance. It is for this reason that Taiwan has been invited to the World Health Assembly for the past eight years. Taiwan’s exclusion this year only hurts global health. There should have been no question about its participation.

I am a strong advocate for strengthening Taiwan’s economic links to the U.S. and across Asia. Taiwan is the U.S.’s tenth largest goods-trading partner and the seventh largest market for America’s farmers and ranchers. Taiwanese companies also invest substantially in the U.S. Taiwanese companies have pledged over \$34 billion in investments into the U.S. for 2017. With our shared values of democracy and open markets, it is vital that we continue to grow this economic partnership.

Chairman Yoho understands this and has taken the lead on this issue by authoring legislation to encourage a deeper trade relationship between the U.S. and Taiwan, and I am a cosponsor and supporter of those efforts.

Finally, one of the key provisions of the Taiwan Relations Act was the commitment from the U.S. to provide Taiwan with defensive arms. I remain concerned about successive administrations' delays in arms sales notifications for Taiwan, which have needlessly dragged out the arms sales process. I hope to see regular notifications in the future, and look forward to the announcement of new sales this year.

Thank you again, Chairman Yoho. I look forward to hearing the witnesses' testimonies.