

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION celebrating Taiwan Heritage Day

WHEREAS, The United States and the Republic of China (Taiwan) share common ideals and a clear vision for the 21st century, where freedom and democracy are the foundation for peace, prosperity, and progress; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan has become a multiparty democracy in which all citizens have the right to participate freely in the political process, as evidenced by Taiwan's five democratic presidential elections, which took place in 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, Through the cross-Straits dialogue, the establishment of the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) with mainland China, and the policy of Viable Diplomacy, President Ma Ying-jeou of the Republic of China (Taiwan) has transformed the Taiwan Strait from a major international flashpoint into an essential component of East Asian peace and prosperity; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan is one of the strongest democratic allies of the United States in the Asia-Pacific region and spares no effort to maintain peace and prosperity in East Asia, as evidenced by the East China Sea Peace Initiative proposed by President Ma Ying-jeou; and

WHEREAS, The United States passed the Taiwan Relations Act in 1979 to define the relations between the United States and the Republic of China (Taiwan), which strongly strengthens their friendship; and

WHEREAS, The United States and Taiwan share a long-term and close economic relationship, including \$63.6 billion of bilateral trade in 2013, making Taiwan the 10th largest trading partner of the United States; and

WHEREAS, The United States assisted Taiwan in attaining participation in the assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in 2013 and will continue supporting Taiwan's meaningful participation in other United Nations-affiliated organizations such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC); and

WHEREAS, In order to strengthen bilateral trade relations with the United States, the government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) has expressed its wish to participate in the Trans-Pacific Strategic Economic Partnership Agreement (TPP), and to sign a Bilateral Investment Agreement (BIA) and a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States in the near future; and

WHEREAS, The State of New York exported \$763 million and imported \$1.7 billion worth of products to/from Taiwan in 2013, making Taiwan the 15th largest foreign market for New York State, strengthening bilateral economic ties; and

WHEREAS, Many of the United States' top 500 companies headquartered in New York, including IBM, Pfizer, Corning, Citigroup, AIG, MetLife, JPMorgan Chase, Merrill Lynch, and New York Life, have invested in Taiwan. The State of New York has maintained a friendly and fruitful relationship with Taiwan for many years; and

WHEREAS, There are more than 300 Taiwanese companies that have invested in the State of New York in sectors such as computers, finance, jewelry, sporting goods, and garments; and

WHEREAS, The State of New York is home to a thriving overseas Taiwanese community. The societies of Taiwan and Taiwanese Americans, including the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce of New York, Inc, Buddha's Light International Association in New York and the National Women's League of the Republic of China (Taiwan), devote themselves to serving the community of the State of New York; and

WHEREAS, The New York State Legislature held the 2nd Taiwan Heritage Day Celebration at the Legislative Office Building in Albany in May

2014, to promote bilateral relations between New York and Taiwan, and this Legislature is holding the 3rd Taiwan Heritage Day Celebration in 2015; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to celebrate Taiwan Heritage Day; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to President Ma Ying-jeou of the Republic of China (Taiwan) through the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in New York.