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## **JOINT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA (TAIWAN) ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS NATIONAL DAY**

**WHEREAS**, the Republic of China, commonly known as Taiwan, is a nation in East Asia established on October 10, 1911 after over 2,000 years of imperial rule and formally established as a republic on January 1, 1912, and October 10th is now celebrated as the Republic of China's National Day; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States, and in particular the State of Maine, and the Republic of China share a historical and close relationship marked by strong bilateral trade, educational and cultural exchange, scientific and technological interests and tourism; and

**WHEREAS**, the United States ranks as Taiwan's 3rdlargest trading partner, Taiwan is the 9thlargest trading partner of the United States and bilateral trade reached \$62 billion in 2010 with United States exports to Taiwan totaling \$26 billion and Maine exports to Taiwan totaling \$10.3 million, including paper, computer equipment, electronic parts and transportation equipment; and

**WHEREAS**, the Republic of China was the first republic in Asia and the first fullfledged democracy in Chinese history and shares with Maine the common values of freedom, democracy, human rights and rule of law; and

**WHEREAS**, President Ma Ying-jeou has worked tirelessly to uphold democratic principles in Taiwan, ensure the prosperity of Taiwan's 23 million citizens, promote Taiwan's international standing as a responsible member of the international community, increase participation in international organizations, dispatch humanitarian missions abroad and further improve relations between the United States and Taiwan; and

**WHEREAS**, there is a high volume of travel and strong tourism between the United States and Taiwan, with the number of travelers from Taiwan to the United States in 2009 totaling 477,500 and the number of American travelers to Taiwan totaling in excess of 369,000; and

**WHEREAS**, Taiwan is a key transport hub in the Asia-Pacific region and the Taipei Flight Information Region under Taiwan's jurisdiction covers an area of 176,000 square nautical miles with 1.35 million controlled flights passing through annually; and

**WHEREAS**, it remains in the mutual interest of Maine and Taiwan that Taiwan be allowed to observe the meetings and activities of international organizations, in particular the International Civil Aviation Organization to ensure the safety of the traveling public; and

**WHEREAS**, Taiwan's participation in the United States Visa Waiver Program, enabling Taiwan's citizens to travel to the United States for tourism or business for stays of 90 days or less without being required to obtain a visa, will increase tourism and business between Taiwan and the United States, particularly Maine; and

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**WHEREAS**, Taiwan presents a low immigration risk for the United States since it is a fullfledged democracy characterized by stability and social order and Taiwan's citizens present few, if any, crime or public security issues in the United States and illegal immigration or visa overstays are rare, with the rejection rate of applications made by Republic of China nationals for United States visas now at 2.2%, well below the 3% requirement of the United States Visa Waiver Program; and

**WHEREAS**, Taiwan has extended visa waivers to United States citizens since 1993 in the spirit of reciprocity, and 100 nations currently grant Taiwan's citizens visa waivers, including the European Union, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, Canada and the United States island territory of Guam; and

**WHEREAS**, the people of Maine and Taiwan look forward to an even stronger friendship over the next century; now, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, take this opportunity to congratulate the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the good citizens of Taiwan on the historic Centennial Anniversary of the establishment of the Republic of China on October 10, 1911; and be it further

**RESOLVED:** That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Legislature, support Taiwan's participation as an observer in the meetings and activities of the International Civil Aviation Organization and participation in the United States Visa Waiver Program; and be it further

**RESOLVED:** That suitable copies of this resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Honorable Barack H. Obama, President of the United States, to the President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, to each Member of the Maine Congressional Delegation, to President Ma Ying-jeou of Taiwan and to Anne Hung, Director-General of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Boston.