

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. **136**

BY BELL

A Resolution supporting a proposal to invite the Republic of China (Taiwan) to participate in the upcoming meeting of the World Health Assembly as an observer.

WHEREAS, the next World Health Assembly meeting is scheduled to take place on May 14, 2002, in Geneva, Switzerland; and

WHEREAS, the Republic of China, commonly known as Taiwan, was a founding member of the World Health Organization and participated for 24 years as a full member contributing to achieving the organization's objectives; and

WHEREAS, in 1972, in the wake of the admission of the People's Republic of China to the United Nations, Taiwan's membership in the World Health Organization was discontinued; and

WHEREAS, Taiwanese health officials and medical professionals have been unable to participate in World Health Organization forums and workshops regarding technological advances in the diagnosis, monitoring, and control of diseases since 1972, and have been denied the right to maintain contact and coordination with the World Health Organization in emergency situations involving the containment and cure of existing and newly emerging infectious diseases; and

WHEREAS, Taiwan's location at the juncture of important maritime routes between northeast and southeast Asia has resulted in extensive world trade

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1 with Taiwan, a thriving Taiwanese tourism industry,
2 and a large foreign migrant worker population in
3 Taiwan; and

4 WHEREAS, Taiwan's absence from the World Health
5 Organization system has become a missing link in the
6 global framework of providing health and medical care;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, the granting of observer status to Taiwan
9 would not constitute a challenge to representation by
10 the People's Republic of China in the World Trade
11 Organization and would demonstrate that the
12 organization is inclusive with regard to Taiwan's 23
13 million inhabitants; and

14 WHEREAS, as a democratically elected government,
15 the government of Taiwan has a duty and responsibility
16 to ensure that the people of Taiwan are represented in
17 an organization which establishes and oversees an
18 international framework for the control of disease and
19 the promotion of universal health; and

20 WHEREAS, Taiwan has made substantial progress in
21 the health field, has one of the highest life
22 expectancy rates in Asia, has maternal and infant
23 mortality rates comparable to those in western
24 countries, has eradicated infectious diseases such as
25 cholera, smallpox, and the plague, and has been the
26 first country in the region to eradicate polio and
27 provide children with hepatitis B vaccinations; and

28 WHEREAS, Taiwan has expressed a willingness in
29 recent years to provide financial and technological
30 assistance in international aid and health activities

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1 supported by the World Health Organization; NOW

2 THEREFORE,

3 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

4 That the House of Representatives supports the
5 granting of observer status to Taiwan during the World
6 Health Assembly to be held in May 2002; and

7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an official copy of
8 this Resolution be prepared and forwarded by the
9 Secretary of the Senate to the governing authority and
10 member states of the World Health Organization, the
11 World Health Assembly, and the governments of Taiwan
12 and the People's Republic of China.

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