

# House Joint Memorial 1

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## SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Urges Congress to ease visa application process for Chinese visitors to United States.

## JOINT MEMORIAL

To the President of the United States and the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled:

We, your memorialists, the Seventy-sixth Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legislative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

Whereas Oregon's exports to China are growing, with China now being Oregon's number one trading partner; and

Whereas in 2008 Oregon exports to China totaled \$2.5 billion, in 2009 exports grew by nearly \$500 million to \$3 billion, and by the end of 2010 exports are expected to nearly double to \$6 billion; and

Whereas Chinese citizens face numerous difficulties and unnecessary obstacles in obtaining visas to the United States; and

Whereas the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, necessitated increased security processes being applied to United States visa applications; and

Whereas the stringent post-9/11 clampdown on granting United States visas in China has loosened somewhat, but the process remains far too expensive and cumbersome; and

Whereas as a result, Oregon's economy and the United States' economy are losing millions of investment and tourism dollars to Australia, Japan and other countries that have adopted less burdensome travel visa policies; and

Whereas to obtain a United States nonimmigration visa in China, a Chinese citizen must pay a nonrefundable fee of at least \$140, wait several weeks for an appointment with a United States embassy visa officer, invest substantial time and money to travel hundreds of miles for an interview at one of only six United States embassies in China and then stand in front of an embassy visa officer for one or two minutes while the officer reviews the application and documentation provided to prove the applicant will return to China after the trip to the United States is concluded; and

Whereas by comparison, for a Chinese citizen to obtain a Japanese travel visa, the applicant must submit in writing and without a personal appearance a passport, proof of residency, photographs, a business introduction letter, a letter of invitation, proof of travel arrangements, a visa application form and a visa fee of \$32; and

Whereas United States visa officers are required by federal regulations to decline a visa to the United States unless they are convinced by the documentation and presentation of the applicant that

**NOTE:** Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 the applicant will return to the country of origin at the conclusion of the trip; and

2 Whereas requiring the presence of the applicant for a one- or two-minute interview is anti-  
3 quated, expensive and overly burdensome; and

4 Whereas it is important for national security to have a rational visa policy that meets valid  
5 security concerns but eliminates burdensome requirements that do not contribute to our national  
6 security; and

7 Whereas easing visa restrictions can help our trading relations with China; now, therefore,

8 **Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:**

9 (1) The Congress of the United States is respectfully urged to pass legislation to ease the visa  
10 application process for Chinese visitors to the United States.

11 (2) A copy of this memorial shall be sent to the President of the United States, to the Senate  
12 Majority Leader and the Speaker of the House of Representatives and to each member of the Oregon  
13 Congressional Delegation.

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