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STATE REPRESENTATIVE
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Joint Committee on Ways & Means
Co-Chair, Public Safety Subcommittee, Joint Committee on Ways & Means
Joint Transportation Committee
House Committee on Emergency Management, General Government, and Veterans

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 27, 2024

Senate Committee on Veterans, Emergency Management, Federal, and World Affairs
Oregon State Senate
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Ref: House Concurrent Resolution 203 (HCR 203)

Dear Colleagues:

Thank you for considering HCR 203 today. Shepherding this resolution through the Oregon Legislature is a duty I carry with focus as well as fervor. While one might question the importance, the impact of a state resolution, this one is a critical piece of a larger structure. Taiwan is under siege. Taiwan is under threat. Taiwan is under the shadow of an aggressive neighbor that views silence as indifference, and indifference as an invitation for conquest.

We live in a time of challenge and change. During this era, what we say and how we say it has consequence. More importantly, what we do, and what we do not do, has consequence. Right now, Taiwan is a friendly trading partner to Oregon with more than \$2.39 Billion in trade value and \$135.5 Billion between Taiwan and the US. However, Taiwan is more than a trading partner, much more.

Taiwan is a successful Republic based upon the principles of democracy, the rule of law, and the aspirations of self-determination. Taiwan has consistently continued to stand for democracy with less than 100 miles between their territory and the land mass of the People's Republic of China. Since the end of World War II, the Republic of China – modern day Taiwan – has been an ally, friend, and partner in defending our shared values.

This resolution is offered to ensure we maintain the international pressure. It is an instrument for peaceful demonstration: an unapologetic statement of support for our friends. A statement of support, adding our state to a growing list of US states and international governments, clarifying our position. Clarity today is more important than ever because we have learned in the past decade that ambiguity too often opens the door for the action of bullies and tyrants.

We are witnessing a crisis of confidence in democratic principles, the rule of law, and the aspirations of self-determination. Across the planet – there is a crisis of confidence in democracy – a loss of faith in the institutions, the formal and informal networks, that have served the interests of relative peace since the end of WWII.

Democracies are under constant, mortal, threat – the forces of autocracy are advancing – the communities built upon the values of individual rights and societal responsibilities are in decline. And, as state legislators, we are somewhat constrained. Though we are impacted by the tectonic changes taking place, we are often reduced to little more than passionate spectators on issues of foreign concern.

Today, we have an opportunity to speak with one voice, to stand with a friend, to support an ally, to add our encouragement to a growing international response to the forces of autocracy. Today, we have an opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to another nation built upon the principles of Democracy, Freedom, Justice, and Liberty.

When your committee advances HCR 203 to the floor, it will take us a step closer to reminding our friends in Taiwan, across the World, and everywhere democracy loving people's dwell, that Oregon and Taiwan are connected in common cause – two fiercely independent states working as one – with shared fealty to our shared aspirations of peace through the practice of democratic ideals.

Thank you for your consideration. This Resolution is needed, it is necessary, it is essential – because the more nations, states, and organizations that tell the world that Taiwan matters, the better, the stronger our shared ability to defend the rights of all our democracy loving friends becomes.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'P. H. C.', written in a cursive style.