
Introduced by Senator Ashburn

March 16, 2009

Senate Joint Resolution No. 3—Relative to Taiwan.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SJR 3, as introduced, Ashburn. Taiwan: World Health Organization participation.

This measure would urge President Obama and his administration to support Taiwan in obtaining appropriate and meaningful participation in the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, including, but not limited to, the World Health Organization.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The preamble to the Charter of the United Nations
2 declares that the United Nations are determined to “reaffirm faith
3 in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human
4 person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large
5 and small” Similarly, Article 2 of the Universal Declaration
6 of Human Rights states that “[e]veryone is entitled to all the rights
7 and freedoms set forth in [that] Declaration, without distinction
8 of any kind Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the
9 basis of political, jurisdictional or international status of the country
10 or territory to which a person belongs ...”; and
11 WHEREAS, The global issues tackled by the specialized
12 agencies of the United Nations system are closely connected to
13 the well-being of all humankind. Because Taiwan cannot attend
14 the conferences, mechanisms, and activities of the specialized
15 agencies, the welfare of its people, as well as the interests of all
16 humankind, have been seriously jeopardized; and

1 WHEREAS, Taiwan has been campaigning for participation in
2 the World Health Organization (WHO) for years, but has been
3 unable to establish direct access to, and communication with, the
4 WHO regarding disease prevention. In addition, Taiwan is
5 restricted from attending the WHO technical conferences and
6 activities. As a result, Taiwan can neither acquire the latest medical
7 and health updates nor receive timely assistance when epidemics
8 occur, as was the case with the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
9 (SARS) epidemic; and

10 WHEREAS, As early as May 2006, Taiwan announced its
11 decision to voluntarily comply with the International Health
12 Regulations that took effect on June 15, 2007. Although Taiwan
13 has repeatedly submitted updates to the WHO about various
14 diseases, the WHO has never responded. This has been detrimental
15 to the health rights of the 23 million people of Taiwan and the
16 foreigners residing or traveling in Taiwan. It also creates a weak
17 spot in the global epidemic surveillance network that will harm
18 the international community; and

19 WHEREAS, Being the world's 18th largest economy and 20th
20 largest outbound investor, Taiwan possesses significant economic
21 strength. Taiwan hopes to share its development experiences with
22 many developing countries. Taiwan is also willing to give back to
23 the world through humanitarian assistance and technical
24 cooperation; and

25 WHEREAS, The issues that the specialized agencies of the
26 United Nations system handle tend to be functional and technical
27 in nature. Therefore, allowing Taiwan's participation would help
28 the two sides of the Taiwan Strait to set aside differences and
29 strengthen cooperation on issues of mutual concern, thereby
30 reducing friction gradually and promoting stability and prosperity
31 in the Asia-Pacific region; now, therefore, be it

32 *Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of*
33 *California, jointly,* That the California Legislature urges President
34 Obama and his administration to support Taiwan and its 23 million
35 people in obtaining appropriate and meaningful participation in
36 the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, including,
37 but not limited to, the World Health Organization (WHO); and be
38 it further

39 *Resolved,* That the California Legislature urges that the United
40 States' foreign policy should include the pursuit of some initiative

1 in the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, including,
2 but not limited to, the WHO that would allow Taiwan to participate
3 in a meaningful manner that is consistent with the agencies'
4 requirements, such as an observer of the WHO; and be it further
5 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit a copy of
6 this resolution to the President of the United States, the United
7 States Secretary of State, the United States Secretary of Health
8 and Human Services, the Majority Leader of the United States
9 Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives,
10 the government of Taiwan, the United Nations, and the World
11 Health Organization.