

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 249

To direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to regain observer status for Taiwan in the World Health Organization, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JANUARY 29, 2019

Mr. INHOFE (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. ROUNDS) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to regain observer status for Taiwan in the World Health Organization, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. PARTICIPATION OF TAIWAN IN THE WORLD**

4 **HEALTH ORGANIZATION.**

5 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
6 ings:

7 (1) The World Health Organization (WHO) is
8 a specialized agency of the United Nations, charged
9 with coordinating health efforts within the United

1 Nations system. The World Health Assembly
2 (WHA) is the decision-making body of the WHO,
3 which convenes annually in May to set the policies
4 and priorities of the organization. Statehood is not
5 a requirement for attendance at the WHA, and nu-
6 merous observers, including non-members and non-
7 governmental organizations, attended the most re-
8 cent WHA in May 2018.

9 (2) Taiwan began seeking to participate in the
10 WHO as an observer in 1997. In 2009, with strong
11 support from successive United States Administra-
12 tions, Congress, and like-minded WHO Member
13 States, and during a period of improved Cross-Strait
14 relations, Taiwan received an invitation to attend
15 the WHA as an observer under the name “Chinese
16 Taipei”. Taiwan received the same invitation each
17 year until 2016, when following the election of Presi-
18 dent Tsai-Ing Wen of the Democratic Progressive
19 Party, Taiwan’s engagement in the international
20 community began facing increased resistance from
21 the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Taiwan’s in-
22 vitation to the 2016 WHA was received late and in-
23 cluded new language conditioning Taiwan’s partici-
24 pation on the PRC’s “one China principle”. In 2017

1 and 2018, Taiwan did not receive an invitation to
2 the WHA.

3 (3) Taiwan remains a model contributor to
4 world health, having provided financial and technical
5 assistance to respond to numerous global health
6 challenges. Taiwan has invested over
7 \$6,000,000,000 in international medical and human-
8 itarian aid efforts impacting over 80 countries since
9 1996. In 2014, Taiwan responded to the Ebola crisis
10 by donating \$1,000,000 and providing 100,000 sets
11 of personal protective equipment. Through the Glob-
12 al Cooperation and Training Framework, the United
13 States and Taiwan have jointly conducted training
14 programs for experts to combat MERS, Dengue
15 Fever, and Zika. These diseases know no borders,
16 and Taiwan's needless exclusion from global health
17 cooperation increases the dangers presented by glob-
18 al pandemics.

19 (4) Taiwan's international engagement has
20 faced increased resistance from the PRC. Taiwan
21 was not invited to the 2016 Assembly of the Inter-
22 national Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), despite
23 participating as a guest at the organization's prior
24 summit in 2013. Taiwan's requests to participate in
25 the General Assembly of the International Criminal

1 Police Organization (INTERPOL) have also been
2 rejected. In May 2017, PRC delegates disrupted a
3 meeting of the Kimberley Process on conflict dia-
4 monds held in Perth, Australia, until delegates from
5 Taiwan were asked to leave. Since 2016, the Demo-
6 cratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, the Re-
7 public of Panama, the Dominican Republic, Burkina
8 Faso, and the Republic of El Salvador have termi-
9 nated longstanding diplomatic relationships with
10 Taiwan and granted diplomatic recognition to the
11 PRC.

12 (5) Congress has established a policy of support
13 for Taiwan's participation in international bodies
14 that address shared transnational challenges, par-
15 ticularly in the WHO. Congress passed H.R. 1794
16 in the 106th Congress, H.R. 428 in the 107th Con-
17 gress, and S. 2092 in the 108th Congress to direct
18 the Secretary of State to establish a strategy for,
19 and to report annually to Congress on, efforts to ob-
20 tain observer status for Taiwan at the WHA. Con-
21 gress also passed H.R. 1151 in the 113th Congress,
22 directing the Secretary to report on a strategy to
23 gain observer status for Taiwan at the ICAO Assem-
24 bly, and H.R. 1853 in the 114th Congress, directing
25 the Secretary to report on a strategy to gain ob-

1 server status for Taiwan at the INTERPOL Assem-
2 bly. However, since 2016 Taiwan has not received
3 an invitation to attend any of these events as an ob-
4 server.

5 (b) AUGMENTATION OF REPORT CONCERNING THE
6 PARTICIPATION OF TAIWAN IN THE WORLD HEALTH OR-
7 GANIZATION.—

8 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subsection (c) of section 1
9 of Public Law 108–235 (118 Stat. 656) is amended
10 by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

11 “(3) An account of the changes and improve-
12 ments the Secretary of State has made to the
13 United States plan to endorse and obtain observer
14 status for Taiwan at the World Health Assembly,
15 following any annual meetings of the World Health
16 Assembly at which Taiwan did not obtain observer
17 status.”.

18 (2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made
19 by paragraph (1) shall take effect and apply begin-
20 ning with the first report required under subsection
21 (c) of section 1 of Public Law 108–235 that is sub-
22 mitted after the date of the enactment of this Act.

○