

By: Senator(s) Burton

To: Rules

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 551

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION TO COMMEND THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA
2 (TAIWAN) FOR ITS CLOSE ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS TIES WITH THE STATE
3 OF MISSISSIPPI AND TO URGE AND REQUEST THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED
4 STATES TO DIRECT THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE TO
5 NEGOTIATE A FREE TRADE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND
6 TAIWAN.

7 WHEREAS, the State of Mississippi has a strong and vibrant
8 economic relationship with the Republic of China (Taiwan); and

9 WHEREAS, in 2004, Mississippi exported \$26.19 Million to
10 Taiwan, which grew by 40% compared with the previous year. This
11 makes Taiwan the 40th largest market for Mississippi products.
12 The agriculture and manufacturing sectors of the Mississippi
13 economy, most notably the chemicals and machinery industries,
14 would benefit significantly if the United States enacted a free
15 trade agreement with Taiwan; and

16 WHEREAS, a free trade agreement between the United States and
17 Taiwan would substantially reduce or eliminate most import quotas,
18 duties and other trade barriers, and expand market opportunities
19 for manufactured goods and agricultural products from Mississippi
20 and the entire United States; and

21 WHEREAS, other states in the region, like Texas, Arkansas,
22 Louisiana and Oklahoma, also have an economic interest in a free
23 trade agreement between the United States and Taiwan; and

24 WHEREAS, the United States has completed or is in the process
25 of negotiating free trade agreements with several countries and
26 regions; and

27 WHEREAS, a free trade agreement with Taiwan is appropriate:
28 Taiwan is already the United States' eighth largest trading
29 partner and the sixth most important destination of United States

30 agricultural exports; Taiwan's economy is thriving and robust; and
31 Taiwan maintains long-standing educational and cultural ties with
32 the United States; and

33 WHEREAS, Taiwan was admitted to the World Trade Organization
34 (WTO) on January 1, 2001; a free trade agreement between the
35 United States and Taiwan would extend the coverage of WTO
36 agreements to products, sectors, and conditions of trade not
37 adequately covered, and it would provide a platform to address
38 issues such as Taiwan's tariff rate on agricultural imports from
39 the United States, which currently averages over 15%; and

40 WHEREAS, Public Law 107-210, the Trade Act of 2002, gives the
41 President the authority to enter into trade agreements with
42 foreign countries whenever the President determines that one or
43 more existing duties or other import restrictions of any foreign
44 country or the United States are unduly burdening and restricting
45 the foreign trade of the United States; and

46 WHEREAS, President George W. Bush, speaking before the
47 historic signing of the United States - Australia Free Trade
48 Agreement in 2004, emphasized that he supports free and open trade
49 because "it has the power to create new wealth for whole nations
50 and new opportunities for millions of people and has a record of
51 creating jobs, raising living standards, and lowering consumer
52 prices":

53 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF
54 MISSISSIPPI, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN, That
55 the Legislature of Mississippi does hereby commend the Republic of
56 China (Taiwan) for its close economic and business ties with the
57 State of Mississippi and does respectfully urge and request that
58 the President of the United States extend the benefits of free
59 trade by directing the United States Trade Representative to
60 negotiate a free trade agreement between the United States and
61 Taiwan.

62 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be
63 transmitted to the President of the United States and the United
64 States Trade Representative, to members of the Mississippi
65 Congressional Delegation and to the members of the Capitol Press
66 Corps.