

Trump signs TAIPEI Act into law

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US President Donald Trump speaks at a coronavirus task force daily briefing at the White House in Washington on Thursday.

Photo: Reuters

US President Donald Trump on Thursday signed the Taiwan Allies International Protection and Enhancement Initiative (TAIPEI) Act of 2019 into law, before he talked with Chinese President Xi Jinping (习近平) by telephone about the COVID-19 pandemic.

The TAIPEI Act authorizes the US government to increase economic, diplomatic and security engagements with nations upgrading relations with Taiwan, or reduce such engagements with nations taking actions that seriously undermine Taiwan.

The act calls on Washington to advocate for Taiwan's membership, or observer status, in international organizations, while encouraging the US trade representative to further strengthen trade and economic relations with Taiwan.

It is the second piece of legislation directly related to Taiwan that Trump has signed.

On March 16, 2018, he signed the Taiwan Travel Act, which encourages visits between US and Taiwanese officials of all levels, and signals an upgrade of bilateral ties, following the US' Taiwan Relations Act of 1979.

The latest bill, first introduced by US Senator Cory Gardner in May last year, was passed by the US Senate on March 11.

US Representative John Curtis introduced the bill in the House of Representatives, which unanimously passed it on March 4.

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The US is one of Taiwan's most important international collaborators, President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) wrote on Facebook yesterday, thanking Trump for taking concrete action to expand relations with Taiwan and support its participation in the global community.

She also thanked Gardner for introducing the bill in the US Senate and Curtis in the US House of Representatives.

The TAIPEI Act is "a testament to #Taiwan-#US friendship & mutual support as we work together to address global threats to human health & our shared democratic values," Tsai wrote on Twitter.

Presidential Office spokesman Alex Huang (黃alex) said in a statement that the US is Taiwan's most important international partner.

Taiwan would continue to strengthen collaboration with the US and other like-minded nations, Huang said, thanking Trump's administration and the US Congress for their steadfast support.

Taiwan would advance partnerships around the globe based on the shared values of freedom, democracy and prosperity, he said, adding that the nation — as a force for good in the world — would continue to contribute to the global community.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokeswoman Joanne Ou (歐陽) said that the ministry would maintain its close ties with the US based on mutual trust and reciprocity, while working with other like-minded nations to achieve a greater global presence.

Source: [Taipei Times - 2020/03/28](#)