

TRA 'reaffirmation' sought

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In a move aimed to reinforce US-Taiwan relations, Republican Representative Steve Chabot on Wednesday introduced legislation to the US Congress to “reaffirm” the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) and the “six assurances.”

“The Taiwan Relations Act and the ‘six assurances’ together form the cornerstone of US relations with Taiwan,” said Chabot, former chairman of the Asian subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

As a “sense of Congress” bill, the legislation is almost certain to pass.

Chabot said in his legislation that for more than 50 years a close relationship has existed between the US and Taiwan and that it had been “of major economic, cultural and strategic advantage to both nations.”

He said that Taiwanese had worked hard to establish a vibrant and pluralistic democracy, and conducted five successful presidential elections.

“The US has vital security and strategic interests in the Taiwan Strait with troops stationed in countries within the region,” Chabot said. “The TRA makes it the policy of the US to provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character to maintain the capacity to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security or the social or economic systems of Taiwan.”

According to Mark Kao (高志彬), president of the Formosan Association for Public Affairs, China has always had a “one-sided interpretation of their US agreements.”

Speaking after Chabot’s legislation had been introduced, he said that Beijing only mentioned the Three Communiques and tried to assert that under the “one China” principle Taiwan had always been part of China.

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"This is simply untrue. The People's Republic of China has never held sovereignty over Taiwan," he said. "The Taiwan Relations Act is not just the law of the land, but the main cornerstone of the US relationship with Taiwan. It is critical that the 'six assurances' are also seen as an integral part and cornerstone of US-Taiwan relations."

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