

Cory Gardner vows to push TAIPEI Act

Written by Taipei Times

Monday, 03 June 2019 04:28 -



President Tsai Ing-wen, front right, takes US Senator Cory Gardner, center left, on a tour of Taipei's Dadaocheng District yesterday.

Photo: CNA

US Senator Cory Gardner pledged to push for the passage of a bill that would require the US government to work with other nations to ensure that Taiwan is recognized internationally in the face of China's efforts to block Taipei's entry into international organizations and reduce its diplomatic allies.

"The importance of the Taiwan Allies International Protection and Enhancement Initiative [TAIPEI Act] is the bipartisan support we have for the act. Passage of the legislation can be challenging sometimes in the US, regardless of the subject matter. We would push for the passage of TAIPEI Act as well as the principle behind it, which signifies US support for Taiwan, US recognition that friends and allies around the globe support Taiwan as well as an important launch of strategy for global Taiwan relations," Gardner, the Republican chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy, told a news conference at the Taipei Guest House.

He and three colleagues — Republican senators Marco Rubio and John Cornyn and Democrat Chris Coons — reintroduced the TAIPEI Act last month after it failed to win approval when it was first proposed last year.

Gardner said his visit, his fourth, was to stress the importance of the US-Taiwan relationship as well as Taiwan being a key part of a free and open US Indo-Pacific strategy.

The US Congress has passed several pieces of legislation to recognize US-Taiwan relations,

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he said.

One was the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act, which recognizes the importance of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) that has guided US policy on Taiwan over the past 40 years and would continue to be the guiding policy, he said.

“I will continue to lead efforts in the US Congress to ensure Taiwan’s voice is represented in international organizations, we will continue to pursue high-level visits from dignitaries to Taiwan and to show Taiwan and its leadership around the globe,” he said.

Asked if he was concerned that US-Taiwan relations might change should a pro-China candidate win Taiwan’s presidential election in January next year, Gardner said that the US has concerns over behaviors that China has shown relating to fair trade practices, human rights and devaluation of voices of dissidents across China.

“All nations have to work together to ensure that China recognizes the dignity of fellow people as well as the ability for other nations to enter into trade relationships freely and fairly and to ensure that relationships with China are not affected by interference in the sovereignty of any nation,” the senator said.

President Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文) said Gardner’s support for Taiwan embodies the spirit of the TRA and the US’ pledge to the values of democracy as she met with him at the Presidential Office earlier.

She later took the senator on a walking tour of the Dadaocheng (大稻埕) area.

The TAIPEI Act, if passed, would ask the US secretary of state to submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report on specific steps taken by the US to reaffirm and strengthen Taiwan’s international alliances worldwide within 90 days of its enactment.

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It would authorize the US Department of State to downgrade ties with any government taking actions unfavorable to Taiwan.

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Source: [Taipei Times - 2019/06/03](#)