

Congress of the United States House of Representatives

May 14, 2020

His Excellency Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus Director-General, World Health Organization c/o Regional Office for the Americas World Health Organization 525 23rd Street NW Washington, DC 20037

Dear Director-General Tedros:

During this unprecedented global public health crisis, we write to express our strong support for Taiwan's unconditional inclusion as an Observer in the 73rd World Health Assembly (WHA) and in World Health Organization (WHO) technical meetings.

Taiwan's commitment to global public health and its response to the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrate the value of including Taiwan in WHO activities. By all accounts, Taiwan has mounted one of the best responses of any country to the pandemic. Since April 1, it has also donated 23 million masks to other countries, continuing its long, substantial history of aid in the face of health crises. Furthermore, Taiwan has an outstanding record of multilateral engagement on a wide range of health challenges and runs over 50 public health programs in 20 countries.

Despite Taiwan's outstanding response and demonstrated expertise, WHO's treatment of Taiwan during the COVID-19 crisis is concerning. Specifically, Taiwan has stated that its officials are not receiving necessary information from WHO in a timely manner; it is excluded from WHO's laboratory network; WHO is not sharing information from Taiwan with Member States; and Taiwan's statistics have been misleadingly included with those of the People's Republic of China (PRC). These slights fit a pattern. Between 2009 and 2019, WHO rejected 130 out of Taiwan's 187 applications to take part in technical meetings. Further, since President Tsai Ing-Wen was elected as President of Taiwan in 2016, the PRC has succeeded in pressuring WHO to withhold an invitation to Taiwan to participate as an Observer at the last three WHA annual meetings.

Given Taiwan's contributions and the health needs of its people, WHO cannot uphold the spirit of its Constitution to seek the health of all people while excluding Taiwan from participation as an Observer at this year's WHA. This is especially true since neither United Nations General Assembly Resolution 2758 nor WHA Resolution WHA25.1 grant Beijing the right to represent the people of Taiwan.

We believe that inviting Taiwan to this year's WHA is not only the right thing to do but would strengthen the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We appreciate your consideration of our concerns and look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

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/s/ Jeff Duncan Jeff Duncan Member of Congress

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/s/ Michael Cloud Michael Cloud Member of Congress