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181 MEMBERS OF THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CHALLENGE PRESIDENT OBAMA ON F-16S FOR TAIWAN

The US-Taiwan Business Council welcomes the August 1, 2011 letter to President Barack Obama, where 181 Members of the U.S. House of Representatives stated their belief that *"it is critical for the United States to sell the government of Taiwan all the F-16 C/Ds it requires."* The letter strengthens and reinforces the corresponding message in a similar letter sent earlier this year by 47 members of the U.S. Senate.

The government of Taiwan has attempted to purchase 66 new F-16 C/D model fighters from the United States since 2006, but has found itself in the precarious position of the U.S. refusing to even consider the sale. These new fighters would replace Taiwan's aging fleet of Vietnam War -era F-5s and Mirage 2000s, which are to be retired from active service in the coming decade.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has committed the Obama Administration to decide by October 1 what - if anything - the U.S. is prepared to do in order to help modernize Taiwan's air force. That includes making a decision on providing replacement F-16 C/Ds, as well as on upgrading Taiwan's 145 existing F-16 A/Bs.

US-Taiwan Business Council President Rupert Hammond-Chambers noted that "again, the United States Congress has stepped forward to express its support for the US-Taiwan security commitment, which is an essential component of the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA). The military threat from China toward democratic Taiwan continues to go unaddressed by the Obama Administration, thereby sending exactly the wrong signal to Beijing about American resolve in Asia."

Hammond-Chambers went on to note that "the F-16 production line in Texas is in need of new export orders if it is to remain open beyond fall 2013. Over 16,000 jobs nationally are dependent on F-16 production, with a heavy concentration in Florida and Ohio. The bleak unemployment picture in the United States underscores the significance of accepting Taiwan's request, and of ensuring a future for the many domestic communities that rely on foreign sales of F-16s."

About the US-Taiwan Business Council:

The US-Taiwan Business Council (www.us-taiwan.org) is a membership-based non-profit association, founded in 1976 to foster trade and business relations between the United States and Taiwan. The Council provides its members with business intelligence, offers access to an extensive network of relationships, and serves as a vital and effective representative in dealing with business, trade, and investment matters.

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