



For Release  
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## **Sister City Document Agreement Undermines Democracy Formosa Foundation Calls on Irvine City for Revision**

LOS ANGELES—The Formosa Foundation called upon Irvine, California Mayor, Beth Krom, and the Irvine City Council to rescind a highly controversial agreement that Mayor Krom and city staffer, Valerie Larenne, signed during a recent visit to China, and further requested that the Mayor disavow all political language that was outlined in both the Sister City agreement and in an additional memorandum to the Sister City document.

Chaos has engulfed the Irvine city hall since word leaked out of the signing of a Sister City agreement with the Xuhui District in China that goes well beyond the authority vested in local government and the purpose of Sister Cities agreements. Mayor Krom and Ms. Larenne are scrambling to explain why they signed an agreement with the communist party Mayor of Xuhui, China, Sun Chao which effectively requires Irvine to break off Irvine's existing sister city relationship with Taoyuan, Taiwan.

Among the various demands that the Chinese placed upon the agreement was the understanding that Irvine City officials would refrain from visiting Taiwan in any official capacity and that they would also not attend any of the National Day celebrations and "other" vague activities.

In response to these actions, the Formosa Foundation joins forces with other Taiwanese-American organizations to demand the following of the city government of Irvine: (a) rescind the incomplete, incorrect and one-sided language in the Sister City agreement referring to the U.S.-China relations; (b) rescind the additional memorandum signed by Ms. Larenne because it is wholly inappropriate and because Ms. Larenne had no authority to sign it, and (c) issue a public apology to the Taiwanese-American community of Irvine and to Irvine's sister city, Taoyuan, Taiwan.

"Once again, China has inserted itself into United States domestic issues by dictating and distorting a simple sister city agreement," said Don Lee, Chairman of the Formosa Foundation. "China clearly believes that it can instruct a freely-elected U.S. official on what they can and cannot do."

The U.S. Sister City program originated in 1956 when President Dwight D. Eisenhower proposed a people-to-people, citizen diplomacy initiative. The purpose of the program is to create and strengthen sister city partnerships in an effort to increase global cooperation, promote cultural understanding, and stimulate economic development. At the same time, however, the Sister Cities program is explicitly and deliberately non-political.

"The fact that the United State's policy towards Taiwan is vague and ambiguous creates these situations where Communist China officials believe they can write policy that suits their purposes," said George Wu, an Irvine resident, leading Irvine business executive and Formosa Foundation board member. "We should not forget that U.S. policy regarding US, China, Taiwan relations is to merely acknowledge that the Chinese on both sides of the Taiwan Straits believe that there is one China, but that any dispute should be peacefully resolved by people on both sides of the Straits. Furthermore, the Taiwan Relations Act, a U.S. law, clearly states that it is U.S. policy to maintain strong economic, cultural and social relations with the Taiwanese people."

Lee agrees “The U.S. One-China policy needs to be revised to reflect reality. Taiwan is a self-governing free market democracy, a US ally and should be openly recognized as such. A clarification of this policy would stop China from attempting to undermine Taiwan’s democracy and create more stability in the Pacific.”

Based in Los Angeles, CA, the Formosa Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting greater understanding of the relationship between Taiwan and the United States, and preserving and enhancing democracy, human rights and freedom for the people of Taiwan.

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