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Rep. Sherrod Brown – Strong Advocate of Taiwanese Freedom and Self-Determination

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LOS ANGELES - Congressman Sherrod Brown of Ohio visited the Taiwan Center in Rosemead on May 15 to meet with local Taiwanese-American leaders and to deliver his speech, *Defending Democracy—A Case for Taiwan*, before a crowd of 150 people. He was greeted at the start of his speech with a long and loud applause.

Brown is highly regarded by the Taiwanese community as one of the four founding members of the Taiwan Congressional Caucus. He is one of the longest and strongest advocates of Taiwan in Congress.

The event was co-sponsored by the North American Taiwanese Medical Association, the Formosa Association of Public Affairs, and the Taiwan Center Foundation of Southern California.

"Congressman Brown is fearless in his determination to promote and support liberty," said Terri Giles, Executive Director of the Formosa Foundation.

As evidence of Brown's strong stance in support of Taiwan he recently

"Large American corporations have too much influence on our China policy; the U.S. does not support Taiwan the way it should; and the U.S. needs to change its 'One China' policy." - Rep. Brown

introduced legislation with Steve Chabot (R-OH) to lift all restrictions on high level exchanges between U.S. and Taiwanese officials, including the democratically elected president of Taiwan. He has also denounced the Chinese communist regime's "Anti-Secession" law that serves to intimidate Taiwan from moving towards independence.

Brown also urged the United States to assist Taiwan in exercising its right of self-determination and independent status and by advocating Taiwan's admission into various international organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO).



STRONG ADVOCATES FOR TAIWAN: Congressman Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Terri Giles, Executive Director, The Formosa Foundation. (Dan Sanchez/Epoch Times)

A Real Democracy that Should be Supported

In one of the highlights of his speech, Brown emphasized that Taiwan is a real democracy that should be supported.

"When you saw President Lee Teng-Hui turn over the reigns of power to President Chen Shu-Bian of another party, that was pretty exciting. You know a country is a real democracy when you can see a President of one party hand off the government to a President of another party without people firing guns."

"What that signifies is a mature democracy. Many of you in this room left Taiwan when it was not so democratic and not so prosperous and you must look with much pride at a country that has done so well against such odds when the world community quite frankly has not received Taiwan the way that it should," said Brown.

President of Taiwan Not Allowed Official Visits in the United States

"We continue to try to convince the State Department to receive the President of Taiwan, Chen Shu-Bian. I met him in his office when he was Mayor of Taipei, I met him in my office in Washington when he was out of office, and I met him in his office in Taipei during his Presidency. But he cannot come to my office now and this is one of the absurdities of our international policy".

"This travel issue is one that concerns me, it is one of the sort of almost silly outgrowths of this "One China" policy The President of Taiwan was duly elected. Our President travels the world talking about bringing democracy to country after country. And Taiwan has done it."

"It is a model of economic growth and democracy that we should emulate around the world. Yet we shut the door on this sitting Taiwanese President from coming to our country and that's a policy that to me makes no sense in the grand scheme of things," said Brown.

"Our government needs to change its 'One China' policy" - Brown

"This policy has been the subject of much debate but is one that favors the Chinese regime over Taiwan. The U.S. officially treats Taiwan as part of the Chinese regime and not as a separate sovereign state. It treats Taiwan and the Chinese regime as 'One China'," said Brown.

In an effort to change this policy to more fully recognize the democratic achievements in Taiwan and the fact that it is a strong ally of the U.S, Brown and many other Democracy advocates point to the economic and democratic miracle that has occurred in Taiwan, raising it up from a third world, non-democratic country to a thriving democratic nation with the same cherished values of freedom we share in the United States.

Brown gave an example of the absurdity of the "One China" policy that involved getting assistance to Taiwan after an earthquake. Before assistance could be delivered to Taiwan, permission had to first be obtained from Beijing, the headquarters of the Chinese communist Regime.

"I think more members of congress think that the 'One China' policy makes less and less sense because of Taiwan's success as an economic power and democratic nation. The average Taiwanese income is something like 10 times more than the Chinese," said Brown.

"Large American Corporations Have Too Much Influence on Our China Policy" - Brown

"Our government clearly does not want to offend the Chinese. We have a China policy that is mostly suggested by large American corporations that have had way too much influence on our China policy."

"We don't stand up to China on human rights issues the way we should and we don't support Taiwan the way we should as a nation."

"Our government is resisting WHO observer and membership status for Taiwan because of the power and big influence that U.S. corporations have on our China policy," said Brown.

If Elected U.S. Senator, Brown Hopes to Have a Stronger Voice in Support of Taiwan

Brown is running for Senate, after serving twelve years as a member of congress.

"I hope as a member of the Senate, come January, that my voice will be louder and stronger, adding to the chorus of what we need to do to build a relationship between our two countries and more fully integrate Taiwan, one of the real miracles of our time, a country that has had immense prosperity and an inexorable march toward democracy. We should be more welcoming in the international community of nations such as the miracle of Taiwan," said Brown.

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