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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3001

PLEASE REPLY TO:

2265 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-6501

515 GROVE STREET
3RD FLOOR, SUITE 3C
HADDON HEIGHTS, NJ 08035
(856) 546-5100

63 NORTH BROAD STREET
WOODBURY, NJ 08096
(856) 546-5100

WEBSITE:

www.house.gov/andrews

December 15, 2011

President Barack H. Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

Next month, Taiwan will be conducting combined national elections. On January 14, 2012, the people of Taiwan will go to the polls to choose the next leader of their country.

Remarkably, it was a mere 16 years ago that Taiwanese voters cast their ballots to directly elect a president for the first time. Persevering through decades of martial law, the Taiwanese people have managed in one generation to transform a virtual police state into a vibrant and open society, governed by free institutions and the rule of law. This serves as a beacon of hope to people in every region of the world aspiring to break free from autocracy.

The closely contested electoral campaign currently playing out in Taiwan speaks to the success of Taiwan's democratic transition. As the United States continues engaging with our longtime friend and ally across many areas of mutual interest and cooperation, I hope you will work to ensure that the Administration projects the strictest degree of political neutrality with regard to Taiwan's upcoming election, so as not to inadvertently influence the outcome with its words or actions. As Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell has rightly articulated: "No party in Taiwan has a monopoly on good relations with the U.S., and our government will work closely and cooperatively with whoever is elected."

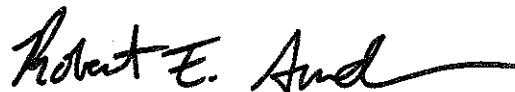
We in the United States Congress will also be watching closely to make sure that the elections are carried out in a manner that is free, fair, and transparent, and that there are no attempts by actors either within or outside of Taiwan to undermine the integrity of the democratic process. We strongly support the right of the Taiwanese people to choose their own leader free from coercion.

Moreover, as we look forward to congratulating the people of Taiwan on the successful completion of another election, I think it is also wise to remind ourselves that the true mark of a mature and consolidated democracy is its ability to carry out a peaceful transfer of power in the event of a victory by the opposition. We are confident that the Taiwanese people will continue finding ways to resolve differences of opinion within the established rules of democratic discourse.

America is strengthened when the values of our founding fathers are more prevalent around the world. We commend the people of Taiwan for their democratic spirit, and we wish them the best as they prepare to take this next step on the path toward perfecting a democratic consensus about the future of their country.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert E. Andrews". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert E. Andrews
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

CC: The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State