

The Honorable Ed Royce  
Prepared Remarks  
Formosa Foundation Conference “Ensuring Free and Fair Elections: Taiwan 2012”  
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Good morning. I'd like to thank Terri and the Formosa Foundation for putting together this timely discussion. I know you are hearing from a lot of important voices today – I'll be brief.

As mentioned, my name is Ed Royce. I represent a portion of Southern California and serve on the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia.

I've been pleased to work with Chairman Ros-Lehtinen and Ranking Member Berman to improve U.S.-Taiwan relations. Just the other week, we passed out of Committee the “Taiwan Policy Act of 2011.” The legislation stresses political, economic, and security rejuvenation between the United States and Taiwan. One area I'm particularly interested in is expanding trade. I know that the Formosa Foundation, and many in this room, helped to get this legislation where it is today. Thank you.

Elections – as fiercely competitive as they can be – are reasons to celebrate. And when you consider that Taiwan, which has gone from poverty to prosperity and autocracy to democracy in merely decades, it is an even greater reason to celebrate. It is these core democratic values that are the foundation of a strong, prosperous U.S.-Taiwan relationship.

Letting Taiwan's light shine also means letting the Taiwanese people steer their democracy. No one – whether in Washington or Beijing – should be interfering. Period. This election is for the Taiwanese people.

Taiwan's democratic transformation is a legacy to be proud of. But like anywhere, it's one that needs constant protection. We have to safeguard our gains in democracy and human rights, taking nothing for granted.

This requires constant vigilance. In any country, democracy or not, there is a tendency to try to stifle debate, shut-down political opponents. This is wrong. Congress has very high standards for Taiwan. If the government strays from its principles, it's our responsibility to help the Taiwanese stand up for free elections and free speech – keeping Taiwan honest to its democratic legacy.

Taiwan must continue to be a “beacon of democracy” to Asia and the rest of the world.

I have faith in the Taiwanese people that they will determine the best course for their future.

Thank you.