

**HOLLY ZHANG
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Foreign Influence
Transparency
Initiative



**THE TAIWAN
LOBBY**



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Since Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. election, stories of foreign interference in America have continued to garner front-page headlines. Yet, this interference doesn't wait for elections. There is a half-billion-dollar foreign influence industry working to shape U.S. foreign policy every single day that remains largely unknown to the public. The Foreign Influence Transparency Initiative is working to change that anonymity through transparency promotion, investigative research, and public education.

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Elephant Mountain. Taipei, Taiwan. 2019. by Nico Kaiser/Flickr



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President Tsai speaks by phone with US President-elect Donald J. Trump, 2016 by Presidential Palace/Flickr

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Taiwan and the U.S. enjoy a complex, and in many ways, asymmetrical, relationship. Though the U.S. does not support Taiwan's independence, the U.S. and Taiwan maintain a comprehensive unofficial partnership marked by trade and defense commitments. But, while their economic ties are extensive, the U.S.-Taiwan relationship is most defined by geopolitics, and specifically, military ties. The Taiwan Relations Act, passed in 1979, practices strategic ambiguity in that it does not guarantee nor deny the possibility of the U.S. coming to Taiwan's defense in the event of an attack from China, but it does provide the legal basis for U.S. arms sales to Taiwan.¹ In 2020, for example, the U.S. announced \$5.9 billion in arms sales to Taiwan, consisting of aerial drones, coastal defense systems, various weapons systems, and a Field Information Communication System, according to data compiled by the Security Assistance Monitor at the Center for International Policy.²

Due to Taiwan's reliance on the U.S. for its defense capabilities and trade, the U.S. is perhaps Taiwan's most important ally. Thus, not surprisingly, the small state spends lavishly on lobbying in the U.S., much of which is related to trade, defense, and diplomacy.

To help understand how Taiwan's agents in the U.S. work to maintain these deep ties with the U.S. the Foreign Influence Transparency Initiative (FITI) at the Center for International Policy conducted an exhaustive analysis of all the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA)

¹ William D. Hartung and Elias Yousif, "U.S. Arms Sales Trends 2020 And Beyond from Trump to Biden," Center for International Policy, April 2021, https://3ba8a190-62da-4c98-86d2-893079d87083.usrfiles.com/ugd/3ba8a1_2e-4d4e9155664535a4a337fe4a91986b.pdf

² William D. Hartung and Elias Yousif, "U.S. Arms Sales Trends 2020 And Beyond from Trump to Biden," Center for International Policy, April 2021, https://3ba8a190-62da-4c98-86d2-893079d87083.usrfiles.com/ugd/3ba8a1_2e-4d4e9155664535a4a337fe4a91986b.pdf

filings made in 2019 by firms working on behalf of clients in Taiwan.

From this analysis we found:

- 7 different organizations served as Taiwan's registered foreign agents in the U.S.;
- Reported spending of \$4.97 million on FARA registrants working on behalf of Taiwan;
- 537 political activities carried out on behalf of Taiwanese interests by those organizations;
- Taiwan's foreign agents contacted the offices of 476 Members of Congress (nearly 90% of all members) and 5 Congressional committees;
- 143 campaign contributions from those organizations, totaling \$156,794;
- \$23,605 of those contributions went to 17 different Members of Congress that FARA registered firms had contacted on behalf of Taiwan;
- 2 times a foreign agent made a campaign contribution to a member of Congress on the exact same day they spoke with them on behalf of Taiwan.

In addition to these highlights, the report investigates political activities conducted by Taiwan's FARA registrants toward Congress, the Executive Branch, businesses, the media, and think tanks. The report highlights how Taiwan's lobbyists work to influence U.S. foreign policy, especially regarding U.S. defense activities in the Asia Pacific. The report then looks at political contributions made by these lobbying and public relations firms, with particular focus on the extent to which these contributions go to members of Congress these lobbyists contacted on behalf of Taiwan. It then concludes with recommendations for improving the transparency and enforcement of FARA so that the public can be aware of and equipped to assess how the U.S. government is influenced by outside interests.

INTRODUCTION

The Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) has become a salient talking point as foreign interference has attracted increasing levels of scrutiny in the U.S. The law, enacted in 1938 in response to Nazi propagandists in the U.S. prior to World War II, is meant to increase transparency of the work agents of foreign powers are doing in the U.S. Historically however, FARA has largely been under-enforced, leaving the public in the dark as to how foreign operations affect U.S. policy and opinions. While China and Russia receive the brunt of attention when it comes to foreign influence activities, the influence operations of places like Taiwan, often fly under the radar due to their traditionally friendly relations with the U.S. In this report we attempt to provide greater transparency of the work Taiwan's agents are doing in the U.S. by providing a comprehensive look at all the FARA filings made by foreign agents

working on behalf of Taiwan in 2019.

Taiwan and the U.S. enjoy a complex, and in many ways, asymmetrical, relationship. Though the U.S. does not support Taiwan's independence, the U.S. and Taiwan maintain a comprehensive unofficial relationship marked by trade and defense commitments.³ The economic relationship, supported by the U.S.-Taiwan Trade and Investment Framework, makes the U.S. Taiwan's second largest trading partner, second only to the People's Republic of China. Meanwhile, Taiwan is the U.S.' ninth largest trading partner.⁴



The Taiwanese Flag flies over Turtle Island by Vincent Chien/Flickr

Beyond their extensive economic ties though, the U.S.-Taiwan relationship is defined by geopolitics, and specifically, their military alliance. The Taiwan Relations Act, passed in 1979, practices strategic ambiguity in that it does not guarantee nor deny the possibility of the U.S. coming to Taiwan's defense in the event of an attack from China, but it does provide the legal basis for U.S. arms sales to Taiwan.⁵ In 2020, the U.S. government announced \$5.9 billion in arms sales to Taiwan, consisting of aerial drones, coastal defense systems, various weapons systems, and a Field Information Communication System, according to data compiled by the Security Assistance Monitor at the Center for International Policy.⁶ The sales made Taiwan the fifth largest recipient of arms offers from the U.S. in 2020.

Due to Taiwan's reliance on the U.S. for its defense capabilities and trade, the U.S. is perhaps Taiwan's most important ally. Thus, much of the political lobbying that Taiwan seeks out is related to trade, defense, and diplomacy. The U.S. conducts its consular functions through the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), which is a private nonprofit, while Taiwan operates through the American branches of the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative

³ "U.S. Relations with Taiwan," U.S. Department of State, August 31, 2018, <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-taiwan/>

⁴ "Taiwan- Market Overview," Export.GOV, November 8, 2019, <https://www.export.gov/apex/article2?id=Taiwan-Market-Overview>

⁵ William D. Hartung and Elias Yousif, "U.S. Arms Sales Trends 2020 And Beyond from Trump to Biden," Center for International Policy, April 2021, https://3ba8a190-62da-4c98-86d2-893079d87083.usrfiles.com/ugd/3ba8a1_2e-4d4e9155664535a4a337fe4a91986b.pdf

⁶ Citation 1: Reuters Staff, "Timeline: U.S. Arms Sales to Taiwan in 2020 Total \$5 Billion Amid China Tensions," Reuters, December 7, 2020, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-taiwan-security-usa-timeline/timeline-u-s-arms-sales-to-taiwan-in-2020-total-5-billion-amid-china-tensions-idUSKBN28I0BF> Citation 2: William D. Hartung and Elias Yousif, "U.S. Arms Sales Trends 2020 And Beyond from Trump to Biden," Center for International Policy, April 2021, https://3ba8a190-62da-4c98-86d2-893079d87083.usrfiles.com/ugd/3ba8a1_2e4d4e9155664535a4a337fe4a91986b.pdf

Office (TECRO).⁷

During the Trump administration, through congressional bills and lobbying efforts, the relationship between the U.S. and Taiwan improved considerably; former President Trump approved the sale of \$1.42 billion worth of advanced weapons to Taiwan.⁸ It was no accident Trump supported Taiwan, and one man above all others helped ensure it--Bob Dole. The former Republican Senator and Presidential candidate turned lobbyist for Taiwan played a key and essential role in pivoting Trump's viewpoint on Taiwan.⁹ Dole not only "briefed the campaign director, set up meetings between campaign staff and Taiwanese emissaries, arranged for Taiwan's delegation to attend the Republican National Convention, [but also] helped tilt the party platform further in [Taiwan]'s favor," according to Isaac Arnsdorf of Politico.¹⁰ In return, Taiwan paid Dole and his law firm \$140,000 from May to October of 2016.¹¹ Dole's persistent campaign not only highlights the efficacy of lobbying in U.S. policy, but also exemplifies how the revolving door¹² -- in which individuals move between working in government and the industries they regulate -- allows former politicians to leverage their connections and understanding of the government to influence policy on behalf of corporate or foreign interests.

The Trump administrations' close ties to Taiwan continued throughout his administration and even into the transition period when, on January 9th, 2021, former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo abruptly lifted the U.S. government rules limiting interactions between U.S. and Taiwanese diplomats.¹³ These and other provocations by the Trump administration may have contributed to China dispatching warplanes near Taiwan on January 24th, just days after President Biden was sworn in, in a clear attempt to continue pressuring Taiwan and test the new U.S. administration.¹⁴

7 "U.S. Relations with Taiwan," U.S. Department of State, August 31, 2018, <https://www.state.gov/u-s-relations-with-taiwan/>

8 William D. Hartung and Elias Yousif, "U.S. Arms Sales Trends 2020 And Beyond from Trump to Biden," Center for International Policy, April 2021, https://3ba8a190-62da-4c98-86d2-893079d87083.usrfiles.com/ugd/3ba8a1_2e-4d4e9155664535a4a337fe4a91986b.pdf

9 Isaac Arnsdorf, "Dole Lobbied Trump's Team on Taiwan for Months," Politico, December 6, 2016, <https://www.politico.com/story/2016/12/bob-dole-donald-trump-taiwan-232266>

10 Isaac Arnsdorf, "Dole Lobbied Trump's Team on Taiwan for Months," Politico, December 6, 2016, <https://www.politico.com/story/2016/12/bob-dole-donald-trump-taiwan-232266>

11 Bryan Logan, "Bob Dole's Law Firm Was Paid \$140,000 to Lobby Trump on Behalf of Taiwan," Business Insider, December 7, 2016, <https://www.businessinsider.com/bob-dole-trump-taiwan-lobbyist-2016-12>

12 "Revolving Door," Open Secrets, <https://www.opensecrets.org/revolving/>

13 Gerry Shih, Lily Kuo, "Trump Upsets Decades of U.S. Policy on Taiwan, Leaving Thorny Questions for Biden," The Washington Post, January 13, 2021, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/trump-biden-taiwan-china/2021/01/13/1bbadee0-53c0-11eb-acc5-92d2819a1ccb_story.html

14 The Associated Press, "US Reaffirms Taiwan Support After China Sends Warplanes," ABC News, January 24, 2021, <https://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/us-reaffirms-taiwan-support-china-sends-warplanes-75451590>

Biden responded in kind on February 4th, when a U.S. Navy warship sailed through the channel between China and Taiwan. A Navy spokesperson explained this was to show the U.S. will continue its “commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific.”¹⁵ While the USS John S. McCain, a guided missile destroyer, was passing through the strait, China was closely monitoring the situation.¹⁶ Wang Wenbin, a spokesperson for China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, chastised the move and urged the U.S. to assume the role of maintaining peace in the region, “not the other way around.”¹⁷ On February 10th, President Biden had his first official phone call with Xi Jinping since taking office. Among other concerns, Biden raised the fundamental concern of China’s “increasingly assertive actions” in Taiwan.¹⁸ After the phone call, the Taiwanese government expressed its thanks and “admiration” to President Biden for addressing the Taiwan issue to China.¹⁹

“ON FEBRUARY 10TH, PRESIDENT BIDEN HAD HIS FIRST OFFICIAL PHONE CALL WITH XI JINPING SINCE TAKING OFFICE. AMONG OTHER CONCERNS, BIDEN RAISED THE FUNDAMENTAL CONCERN OF CHINA’S “INCREASINGLY ASSERTIVE ACTIONS” IN TAIWAN.”

On February 18th, Senator Rick Scott and Representative Guy Reschenthaler reintroduced a ‘Taiwan Invasion Prevention Act’ bill, which would allow the U.S. “to use military force if China attacks Taiwan,” and urged Democrats and President Biden “to take a stand for democracy.”²⁰ They argued that if President Biden fails to confront Xi Jinping, it would damage U.S. national security

15 Yasmine Salam, “U.S. Navy Warship Sails Through Taiwan Strait for First Time under Biden’s Rule,” NBC News, February 4, 2021, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/u-s-navy-warship-sails-through-taiwan-strait-first-time-n1256695>

16 Yasmine Salam, “U.S. Navy Warship Sails Through Taiwan Strait for First Time under Biden’s Rule,” NBC News, February 4, 2021, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/u-s-navy-warship-sails-through-taiwan-strait-first-time-n1256695>

17 Yasmine Salam, “U.S. Navy Warship Sails Through Taiwan Strait for First Time under Biden’s Rule,” NBC News, February 4, 2021, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/u-s-navy-warship-sails-through-taiwan-strait-first-time-n1256695>

18 Carol E. Lee, “Biden Raises Concerns with Chinese President in First Official Phone Call,” NBC News, February 10, 2021, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/joe-biden/biden-raises-concerns-chinese-president-first-official-phone-call-n1257405>

19 Reuters staff, “Taiwan Expresses ‘Admiration’ for Biden Concern in Xi Call,” Reuters, February 10, 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-taiwan-usa/taiwan-expresses-admiration-for-biden-concern-in-xi-call-idUSKBN2AB05I>

20 Keoni Everington, “US Senator Reintroduces Taiwan Invasion Prevention Act,” Taiwan Times, February 19, 2021, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/4130946>

and its allies.²¹ Representative Reschenthaler stated that with this act, Taiwan would be empowered and strengthened by “calling for a free trade agreement, increasing bilateral security cooperation, and authorizing the commander-in-chief to utilize military power to protect Taiwan in the event of a direct assault.”²²

Needless to say, given the tumultuous state of the U.S.-Taiwan-China relationship it is unsurprising that Taiwan spends so much energy and money attempting to shape U.S. foreign policy. To better understand this complex relationship between Taiwan and the U.S., and the role that Taiwan’s influence in Washington plays in it, the Foreign Influence Transparency Initiative (FITI), a program of the Center for International Policy (CIP), analyzed every FARA filing made in 2019 by firms working on behalf of clients in Taiwan. From this analysis we found:

- 7 different organizations served as Taiwan’s registered foreign agents in the U.S.;
- Reported spending of \$4.97 million on Foreign Agents Registration Act registrants working on behalf of Taiwan;
- 537 political activities carried out on behalf of Taiwanese interests by those organizations;
- Taiwanese foreign agents contacted the offices of 476 Members of Congress (nearly 90% of all members) and 5 Congressional committees;
- More than 143 campaign contributions from those organizations, totaling \$156,794;
- 17 of those contributions went to 17 different Members of Congress that FARA registered firms had contacted on behalf of Taiwan;
- 2 case in which a firm contacted a Congressional office on behalf of Taiwan on the same day of that firm making a campaign contribution to that specific Member of Congress

The remainder of the report focuses on political activities conducted by Taiwan’s FARA registrants toward Congress, the Executive Branch, businesses, the media, and think tanks. The report highlights how Taiwan’s lobbyists work to influence U.S. foreign policy, especially regarding U.S. defense activities in the Asia Pacific. The report then looks at political contributions made by these lobbying and public relations firms, with particular focus on the extent to which these contributions go to members of Congress these lobbyists contacted on behalf of Taiwan. Finally, it concludes with recommendations for improving the transpar-

21 Keoni Everington, “US Senator Reintroduces Taiwan Invasion Prevention Act,” Taiwan Times, February 19, 2021, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/4130946>

22 Keoni Everington, “US Senator Reintroduces Taiwan Invasion Prevention Act,” Taiwan Times, February 19, 2021, <https://www.taiwannews.com.tw/en/news/4130946>

ency and enforcement of FARA so that the public can be aware of and equipped to assess how the U.S. government is influenced by outside interests.



Former Taiwanese Vice President Chen meets with United Nations Representatives by Taiwan Presidential Office/Flickr

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

Under FARA, all political activities conducted by firms working on behalf of Taiwanese clients must be recorded and reported at regular intervals to the Department of Justice in what are known as Supplemental Statements. The statute has a rather expansive definition of “political activities,” which includes anything that is believed or intended to “influence any agency or official of the government of the U.S. or any section of the public within the U.S. with reference to...the domestic or foreign policies of the U.S. or with reference to the political or public interests, policies, or relations of a government of a foreign country or a foreign political party.”²³ The definition serves to cover a broad swath of influence activities FARA registrants may conduct on behalf of their foreign clients. In addition, other provisions of FARA apply to other types of outreach such as public relations and publicity. These categories also include multiple types of interactions, including in person meetings, phone calls, texts, and emails. Ideally then, the reported activities should give U.S. policymakers and the public awareness of what foreign governments like Taiwan are paying registrants to do for them in America.

It is also important to note that Supplemental Statements cover a six-month reporting period, but firms do not have uniform reporting timelines. As FARA does not have a standard reporting period, these results represent all supplemental statements filed in 2019, but activities and political contributions may have occurred throughout 2018 as well. Likewise, some

²³ “Title 22 - Foreign Relations and Intercourse § 601-672,” Government Information,(n.d.), <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/USCODE-2009-title22/pdf/USCODE-2009-title22-chap11-subchapII.pdf>

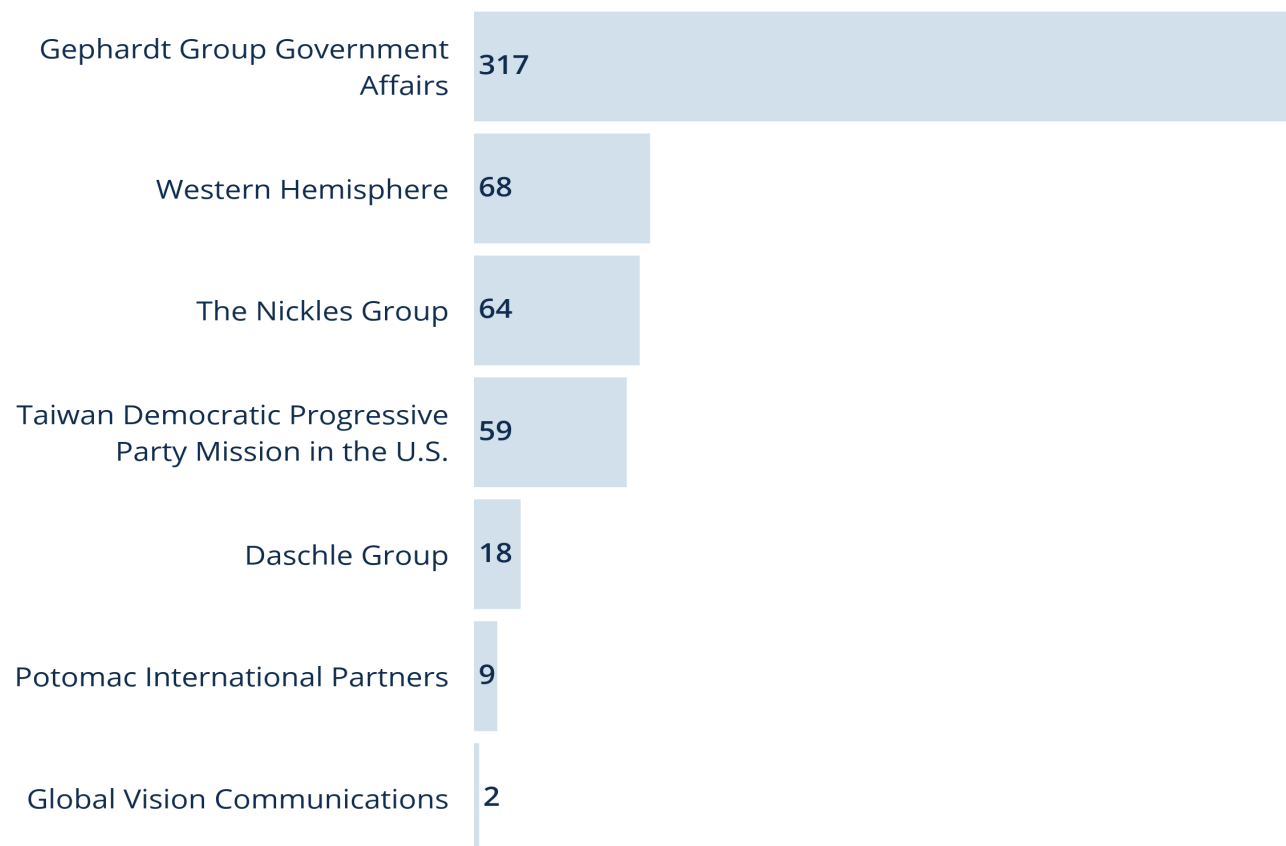
late 2019 activities were filed in 2020 and are thus not within the scope of this analysis.

Unfortunately, many firms choose to only disclose certain types of communications, or give sparse details that do not meet the standard required for disclosure under FARA. Despite these limitations, from the FARA filings of Taiwan's foreign agents, we catalogued over 500 distinct contacts.

■ The Firms

In 2019 there were seven firms registered under FARA to represent Taiwan in the U.S. Though a much lower number of firms represented Taiwan than those that represented lobbying heavyweights like Japan, South Korea, and Saudi Arabia that were analyzed in previous FITI reports, the firms working on Taiwan's behalf were active and the lobbyists working for them included several well-connected former members of Congress. Graph 1 lists these firms, ranked by number of contacts disclosed.

Graph 1: Firms by Number of Activities Reported on Behalf of Taiwanese Clients in 2019



Gephardt Group Government Affairs reported the most political contacts of all the registrants, by far, making up nearly sixty percent of all political contacts made on behalf of Taiwan in the U.S.. The Gephardt Group was founded by Richard “Dick” Gephardt (D-MO) after his 28 year stint representing Missouri’s 3rd District in Congress.²⁴ During his tenure in

Congress, Gephardt served as both the House Majority Leader and the Minority Leader.



Taiwanese Presidential Office Building Taipei, Taiwan by CEphoto, Uwe Aranas

There is a wealth of information from the over 300 political contacts that Gephardt’s firm reported. First, there are five contacts to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff concerning Taiwan’s World Health Organization (WHO) observer status between March and June of 2019.²⁵ Two are described as “Senate consideration of S. 249 Taiwan WHO observer status,” two as “Committee consideration of HR 353 - WHO observer status,” and the remaining contact is explained

as “US Taiwan relations, HR 353.” The last contact on the topic is to the House Foreign Affairs Committee about “House floor consideration of H.Res 273.” “S. 249” refers to the “bill to direct the Secretary of State to develop a strategy to regain observer status for Taiwan in the World Health Organization, and for other purposes”²⁶ sponsored by Senator James Inhofe (R-OK) in January 2019. “HR 353”²⁷ refers to the house version of the bill sponsored by Representative Ted Yoho (R-FL). Taiwan previously held observer status at the WHO from 2009-2016, but lost it after Tsai Ing-wen was elected president of Taiwan.²⁸ In retaliation for President Tsai’s tougher stance against China, the Chinese government embarked on a cam-

²⁴ “About Us,” Gephardt Group, LLC, <https://www.gephardtgroup.com/About-Us>

²⁵ Gephardt Group Government Affairs, LLC, “Supplemental Statement,” U.S. Department of Justice, July 31, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/5874-Supplemental-Statement-20190731-22.pdf>

²⁶ Senator James M. Inhofe, “S.249 - A Bill to Direct the Secretary of State to Develop a Strategy to Regain Observer Status for Taiwan in the World Health Organization, and for Other Purposes,” 116th Congress, May 12, 2020, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/senate-bill/249/text>

²⁷ Representative Frank D. Lucas, “H.R.353 - Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017,” 115th Congress, April 18, 2017, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/353>

²⁸ Bethany Allen-Ebrahimian, “WHO Members to Discuss Taiwan’s Status,” AXIOS, May 6, 2020, <https://www.axios.com/world-health-organization-taiwan-china-8fb01221-bc98-4938-8d29-c44b81a9d5df.html>

campaign to delegitimize Taiwan and compelled the WHO to revoke Taiwan's observer status. As a member of the WHO and a reliable partner of Taiwan's, the U.S. was a natural ally for Taiwan to seek out in its quest to regain its observer status.

There were 18 contacts made to various members of Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi's (D-CA) staff regarding a request for a "phone call for president of Taiwan with Speaker."²⁹ The last two recorded contacts were on July 8, 2019 with Nancy Pelosi's Director of Scheduling and Director of Protocol on the topic of "Phone call for President of Taiwan with speaker."³⁰ Just a week later, on July 15, 2019, Taiwan's President had closed-door meetings with a number of U.S. officials, including Speaker Pelosi.³¹

In addition to Taiwan's lobbyists helping to secure private meetings with high-ranking government officials, they also spent considerable time getting

Members to attend public events, including a reception celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act and invitations to receptions with President Tsai in New York City and Denver, during her visit to the U.S. in July.³² A press release from the congressional delegation that met with President Tsai during her stop in New York City, quotes Rep. Eliot Engel (D-NY), Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, as saying he is, "committed to deepening and strengthening the tremendous partnership between the U.S. and Taiwan" and that he "[honors] President Tsai and the 40th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act."³³ Not mentioned in the press release is that the firm of Engel's former colleague, Dick Ge-

"IN ADDITION TO TAIWAN'S LOBBYISTS HELPING TO SECURE PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH HIGH-RANKING GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, THEY ALSO SPENT CONSIDERABLE TIME GETTING MEMBERS TO ATTEND PUBLIC EVENTS."

29 Gephardt Group Government Affairs, LLC, "Supplemental Statement," U.S. Department of Justice, July 31, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/5874-Supplemental-Statement-20190731-22.pdf>

30 Ibid.

31 Yang Chun-hui and Jonathan Chin, "Tsai Talks to US Officials, Pelosi During NY Stopover," Taipei Times, July 15, 2019, <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/front/archives/2019/07/15/2003718685>

32 Gephardt Group Government Affairs, LLC, "Supplemental Statement," U.S. Department of Justice, February 28, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/5874-Supplemental-Statement-20190731-22.pdf>

33 Kaylin Minton, Caroline Campbell, "Bipartisan Congressional Delegation Meets Taiwan President Tsai in New York," Foreign Affairs Committee, July 12, 2019, <https://gop-foreignaffairs.house.gov/press-release/bipartisan-congressional-delegation-meets-taiwan-president-tsai-in-new-york/>

phardt, contacted his office twice on behalf of Taiwan to ensure he was at the event.³⁴

Other notable recorded political activities include three contacts to Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff regarding the “Status of S. 2736” in late 2018.³⁵ “S.2736” is the “Asia Reassurance Initiative Act of 2018,” introduced by Sen. Cory Gardner (R-CO) to bolster U.S. interests and values in the Indo-Pacific region.³⁶ Section 209 of the bill affirms support for “the close economic, political, and security relationship between Taiwan and the U.S.,” and “regular transfers of defense articles to Taiwan.”³⁷

While the Gephardt Group provided fairly detailed descriptions of its activities, Western Hemisphere, the second most active FARA registrant working for Taiwan, was less transparent. Their 68 reported contacts with Congressional offices were all described as some variation of, “Discussed Taiwan relations and the importance of Taiwan’s relations with U.S. Congress.”³⁸ Needless to say, little can be gleaned from such an overbroad description.

Aside from the Gephardt Group and Western Hemisphere, The Nickles Group reported more political contacts than any other firm working for Taiwan. Like many other D.C. lobbying firms, the Nickles Group was founded by a former member of Congress. Don Nickles, the firm’s founder and namesake, was the Republican Senator from Oklahoma for twenty-four years, but now counts the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the U.S. (TECRO), as a client. TECRO’s Washington D.C. office is Taiwan’s de facto embassy since there is not an official diplomatic relationship between Taiwan and the U.S..³⁹ Amongst other work for TECRO, the firm made repeated contact with senators and representatives to attend a “social event with Taiwan representatives” and contacted Sen. Jim Risch (R-ID) twice in February 2019 “Requesting that the Senator film a video acknowledging the 40th Anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act.”⁴⁰ Though such a video was seemingly never made, Sen. Risch and four of his Senate colleagues announced a resolution in honor of the 40th Anniversary

34 Gephardt Group Government Affairs, LLC, “Supplemental Statement,” U.S. Department of Justice, July 31, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/5874-Supplemental-Statement-20190731-22.pdf>

35 Ibid.

36 Senator Cory Gardner, “S.2736 - Asia Reassurance Initiative Act of 2018,” 115th Congress, December 31, 2018, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/2736>

37 Ibid.

38 Western Hemisphere Strategies, LLC, “Supplemental Statement,” U.S. Department of Justice, February 28, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/6086-Supplemental-Statement-20190228-16.pdf>

39 “Organizations,” Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in New York, October 1, 2020, https://www.roc-taiwan.org/usnyc_en/post/16.html

40 The Nickles Group, LLC, “Supplemental Statement,” U.S. Department of Justice, March 29, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/6089-Supplemental-Statement-20190329-16.pdf>

of the Taiwan Relations Act in a press release on April 4, 2019.⁴¹ In the press release, Risch is quoted as saying, “In the 40 years since the Taiwan Relations Act was signed into law, the U.S. and Taiwan have enjoyed a strong relationship rooted in our common values, as well



President Tsai Ing-wen attending a military demonstration by Taiwan Presidential Office/Flickr

as our shared economic and security interests” and that he “[looks] forward to many more years of partnership with the people of Taiwan.”⁴²

Following the Nickles Group, the next organization listed in Table 1 is the Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party Mission in the U.S., which is unique because of its relationship to a specific political party in Taiwan, rather than a government agency.⁴³ The Taiwan Democratic

Progressive Party (DPP) is the party of the incumbent President Tsai Ing-wen. The registrant made four contacts to the Office of Taiwan Coordination under the U.S. Department of State and two contacts to the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT). Though the AIT is a non-profit organization, it functions as a de-facto U.S. embassy in Taiwan providing consular services.⁴⁴ Therefore, the two meetings with James Moriarty, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of AIT “to discuss Moriarty’s insights into Chinese pressure on Taiwan and US policies designed to counter this by strong US support for Taiwan” and “to discuss US views on current issues in US-Taiwan relations” in May and August of 2019 offer a glimpse into the way Taiwan conducts diplomacy with the U.S. as an ally that is not recognized as a country.⁴⁵ As the U.S. branch of the DPP, the registrant connects with the U.S. politicians on China and Taiwan

41 James M. Inhofe, “Inhofe, Menendez, Gardner, Markey and Risch Introduce Legislation Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act,” James M. Inhofe U.S. Senator for Oklahoma, April 4, 2019, <https://www.inhofe.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/inhofe-menendez-gardner-markey-and-risch-introduce-legislation-commemorating-the-40th-anniversary-of-the-taiwan-relations-act>

42 James M. Inhofe, “Inhofe, Menendez, Gardner, Markey and Risch Introduce Legislation Commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act,” James M. Inhofe U.S. Senator for Oklahoma, April 4, 2019, <https://www.inhofe.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/inhofe-menendez-gardner-markey-and-risch-introduce-legislation-commemorating-the-40th-anniversary-of-the-taiwan-relations-act>

43 “DPP U.S. Mission,” Twitter, October 2014, https://twitter.com/taiwandpp_dc?lang=en

44 “Our Relationship,” American Institute in Taiwan, <https://www.ait.org.tw/our-relationship/>

45 Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party Mission in the U.S., “Supplemental Statement,” U.S. Department of Justice, October 30, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/6187-Supplemental-Statement-20191030-15.pdf>

relations, “[updating] Sen. Jim Risch on “Developments in Taiwan” and “[getting] a read on theChina and Taiwan issues going forward,” according to FARA filings.⁴⁶

The Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party Mission in the U.S.’ second filing is informative because it includes 5 contacts with descriptions mentioning “defense,” with the most notable contact being to Department of Defense personnel. The FARA registrant met with James Ballas, the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Security Cooperation and former Director for China, Taiwan, and Mongolia⁴⁷, and Michael Fortin, the Senior Taiwan Advisor⁴⁸, on June 11, 2019 “to discuss Taiwan’s defense needs.”⁴⁹ The meeting followed the publication of the Department of Defense’ Indo-Pacific Strategy Report on June 1⁵⁰ and preceded the Department of State’s tentative approval of a \$2.2 billion in arms sale to Taiwan less than a month later.⁵¹ The Mission also conducted several meetings with think tank scholars and private company employees to discuss Taiwan’s defense program.

In addition to Taiwan’s notable ties to Democrats through Gephardt and the Daschle Group--whose founder and namesake, Tom Daschle, was the Democratic Senator from South Dakota for eighteen years and briefly Senate Majority leader⁵² -- their lobby includes high-level connections with the Republican Party as well, through Potomac International. Though the firm reported few contacts, they were all with high level Trump administration officials or key Republicans on the Hill. For example, in November 2018, Potomac International Partners had several phone calls with Vice-President Mike Pence regarding “U.S. foreign policy regarding Taiwan.”⁵³ On March 27, 2019, Potomac met with the Director of Policy Planning, and Senior Advisor to the Secretary of State of the Department of State for a “General discussion of U.S. foreign policy regarding Taiwan.”⁵⁴ On March 7, 2019, Potomac met with the legislative assistant of Sen. Marco Rubio regarding, “Potential legislation pertaining to U.S. -

46 Ibid.

47 “James Ballas,” U.S. Department Defense, <https://www.defense.gov/Our-Story/Biographies/Biography/Article/2046334/james-ballas/>

48 “Michael Fortin,” LinkedIn, <https://www.linkedin.com/in/michael-fortin-7b193b5/>

49 Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party Mission in the U.S., “Supplemental Statement,” U.S. Department of Justice, October 30, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/6187-Supplemental-Statement-20191030-15.pdf>

50 “Indo-Pacific Strategy Report Preparedness, Partnerships and Promoting a Networked Region,” U.S. Department of Defense, June 1, 2019, <https://media.defense.gov/2019/Jul/01/2002152311/-1/-1/1/DEPARTMENT-OF-DEFENSE-INDO-PACIFIC-STRATEGY-REPORT-2019.PDF>

51 “US Approves \$2.2bn Taiwan Arms Sale Despite Chinese Ire,” BBC News, July 9, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-48917705>

52 “Tom Daschle,” Bipartisan Policy Center, <https://bipartisanpolicy.org/person/tom-daschle/>

53 Potomac International Partners Inc, “Supplemental Statement,” U.S. Department of Justice, April 30, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/6459-Supplemental-Statement-20190430-6.pdf>

54 Ibid.

Taiwan relations.”⁵⁵ Shortly after, on March 26, 2019, Sen. Rubio released a press release announcing his endorsement of the Taiwan Assurance Act because, as Rubio explained, “The U.S. must continue to enhance our strategic relationship with Taiwan against an increasingly aggressive China. Taiwan is an important democratic partner whose security is critical to advancing America’s national security interests in the Indo-Pacific.”⁵⁶

While most of the firms working for Taiwan were fairly transparent in reporting the work they had done, Global Vision Communications was less forthcoming. In working on behalf of the Taiwan Civil Government the firm reported just two contacts, covering the periods between “October 31, 2019-March 31, 2019” and “March 31, 2019-September 30, 2019” indicating that the firm chose to lump its various political activities into two broad entries.⁵⁷ The description for both these activities is listed as, “Public relations services listed above in an effort to promote the Taiwan Civil Government’s efforts to achieve self-determination for the people of Taiwan and forge closer relations with the U.S..”⁵⁸ Needless to say, this is an extremely broad description and these three month date ranges offer the public little opportunity to evaluate the work they are doing on behalf of Taiwan.



A view of the Pentagon from the Potomac River by Reinhard Link/Flickr

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Marc Rubio, “Rubio Joins Cotton, Colleagues To Introduce Taiwan Assurance Act,” Marc Rubio US Senator for Florida, March 26, 2019, <https://www.rubio.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/2019/3/rubio-joins-cotton-colleagues-to-introduce-taiwan-assurance-act>

⁵⁷ Global Vision Communications, “Supplemental Statement,” U.S. Department of Justice, April 22, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/6340-Supplemental-Statement-20190422-7.pdf>

⁵⁸ Global Vision Communications, “Supplemental Statement,” U.S. Department of Justice, April 22, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/6340-Supplemental-Statement-20190422-7.pdf>

Organizations Contacted

What stands out in Taiwan’s lobbying operations is the overwhelming focus on Congress and, specifically, the House. The House was by far the most contacted organization (400 times), followed by the Senate (74 times), and think tanks (30 times). Notably, there were no recorded political contacts to media organizations despite mentions of public relations work by some of the firms representing Taiwan.

Table 2: Top Congressional Offices and Committees Contacted by Taiwanese Lobbyists

Congressional Office/Committee	Times Contacted
Nancy Pelosi	34
Senate Foreign Relations Committee	16
Steny Hoyer	11
Norma Torres	11
Maxine Waters	9
Jim Risch	7
Alan Lowenthal	7
Salud Carbajal	6
Julia Brownley	6
Gerry Connolly	6
Bob Menedez	6

Table 2 lists the members of Congress and Committees whose offices were most contacted by Taiwan’s lobbyists. The office of House Majority Leader Nancy Pelosi was contacted most, followed by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Steny Hoyer, the House Majority Leader. Notably, the list is dominated by Democrats, reflecting the connections and focus of Taiwan’s top lobbyists Dick Gephardt and Tom Daschle.

Defense Activities

The crux of the U.S.-Taiwan defense relationship lies in the 1979 Taiwan Relations Act, and defense activities featured heavily in these FARA filings. The act “[s]tates that the U.S. shall provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character and shall maintain the capacity of the

U.S. to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or social or economic system, of the people of Taiwan.”⁵⁹ Since then the U.S. has been a major arms supplier to Taiwan.⁶⁰ According to the Security Assistance Monitor at the Center for International Policy, “Between FY2000 and FY2020, Taiwan has been among the top five purchasers of U.S. weaponry, with \$17.9B in notified transfers over the last two decades.”⁶¹

The lobbying documented here reveals how Taiwan’s agents are working to keep U.S. arms flowing to the country. For example, as mentioned earlier, the Gephardt Group contacted Congress about S.2736, the “Asia Reassurance Initiative Act” which includes a provision on strengthening the U.S.-Taiwan security relationship through “regular transfers of defense articles to Taiwan.”⁶² And as discussed above, agents working for the Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party Mission in the U.S., met with two senior officials from the Department of Defense in 2019 “to discuss Taiwan’s defense needs.”⁶³ The meeting came after the publication of the Department of Defense Report on the U.S.’ Indo-Pacific Strategy Report,⁶⁴ but came shortly before the Department of State’s approval of a \$2.2 billion arms sale to Taiwan.⁶⁵ Discussion of Taiwan’s defense with American thought leaders and policy makers is critical as the U.S. has been a major arms supplier since the signing of the Taiwan Relations Act in 1979.⁶⁶

59 Representative Clement J. Zablocki, “H.R.2479 - Taiwan Relations Act,” 96th Congress, April 10, 1979, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/96th-congress/house-bill/2479>

60 “U.S. Conventional Arms Sales to Taiwan 1980-2010,” Arms Control Association, October 2012, <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/taiwanarms>

61 “Why U.S. and Taiwan Agree to Arms Sales?,” Center for International Policy, <https://securityassistance.org/why-u-s-and-taiwan-agree-to-arms-sales/>

62 Senator Cory Gardner, “S.2736 - Asia Reassurance Initiative Act of 2018,” 115th Congress, December 31, 2018, <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/2736/text>

63 Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party Mission in the U.S., “Supplemental Statement,” U.S. Department of Justice, October 30, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/6187-Supplemental-Statement-20191030-15.pdf>

64 “Indo-Pacific Strategy Report Preparedness, Partnerships and Promoting a Networked Region,” U.S. Department of Defense, June 1, 2019, <https://media.defense.gov/2019/Jul/01/2002152311/-1/-1/1/DEPARTMENT-OF-DEFENSE-INDO-PACIFIC-STRATEGY-REPORT-2019.PDF>

65 “US Approves \$2.2bn Taiwan Arms Sale Despite Chinese Ire,” BBC News, July 9, 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-48917705>

66 Reuters Staff, “Fact Box: U.S. Arms Sales to Taiwan in Past Decade,” Reuters, June 6, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-taiwan-china-defence-factbox/factbox-u-s-arms-sales-to-taiwan-in-past-decade-idUSKCN1T717N>

I Transparency Issues

FARA enforcement has long been lenient on accurate and timely reporting by registrants. As a 2016 Department of Justice (DOJ) Inspector General's (IG) audit of FARA found, half of all registrants file Supplemental Statements late, and filing deficiencies run rampant. Even when prompted to remedy these shortcomings, the DOJ IG found that registrants "are often unresponsive to FARA Unit requests to update their information."⁶⁷ In the case of Taiwan, some firms offer more detailed records of the political activities that they conduct on behalf of their clients than others, while others offer barely anything at all. The firms that offer the most detailed records of their activities list the type of activity that they conduct, the date conducted, the individuals involved in the interaction, and a brief description of what the activity was about.

Most firms recorded their political activities as individualized entries with the exception of the Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party Mission in the U.S.' first filing and Global Visions. Rather than listing out each contact it conducted on behalf of its client, the Taiwan Civil Government, Global Visions chose to write the same brief sentence about its political activities for both its filings in 2019. "Public relations services listed above in an effort to promote the Taiwan Civil Government's efforts to achieve self-determination for the people of Taiwan and forge closer relations with the U.S."^{68 69}

Additionally, the Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party Mission in the U.S., who worked for the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), two filings offer differing levels of transparency. The first filing, for the period ending on March 31, 2019 fails to list individual political activities, instead, providing a brief summary of the activities conducted and the organizations contacted.⁷⁰ The paragraph says the firm "attended meetings," "Congressional hearings," and "conferences" with a variety of prominent Washington, D.C. think tanks, universities, and congressional committees. The second filing, for the period ending September 30, 2019, offers individualised records.⁷¹

67 "Audit of the National Security Division's Enforcement and Administration of the Foreign Agents Registration Act," U.S. Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General, September 2016, <https://www.oversight.gov/sites/default/files/oig-reports/a1624.pdf>

68 Global Vision Communications, "Supplemental Statement," U.S. Department of Justice, October 29, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/6340-Supplemental-Statement-20191029-6.pdf>.

69 Global Vision Communications, "Supplemental Statement," U.S. Department of Justice, April 22, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/6340-Supplemental-Statement-20190422-7.pdf>

70 Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party Mission in the U.S., "Supplemental Statement," U.S. Department of Justice, April 23, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/6187-Supplemental-Statement-20190423-14.pdf>

71 Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party Mission in the U.S., "Supplemental Statement," U.S. Department of Justice, October 30, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/6187-Supplemental-Statement-20191030-15.pdf>

POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The supplemental statements filed under FARA include political contributions the firms reported in 2019 while actively employed by Taiwanese entities. The FARA filings examined in this report were filed in 2019, however these include some contributions and actions from 2018 as well, and some 2019 filings will not have been reported until 2020.

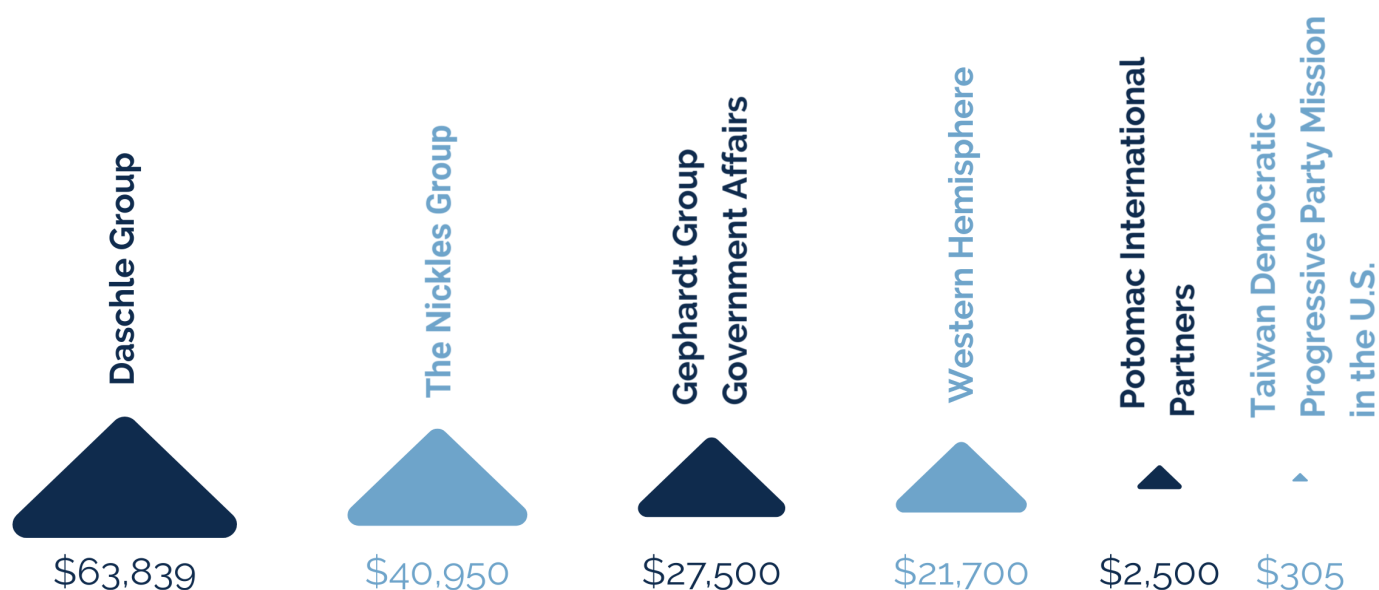
Overall, the FITI team recorded 143 political contributions made by Taiwan's foreign agents, totaling \$156,794.

Table 3: Top Ten Recipients of Campaign Contributions from Firms Representing Taiwan

Recipient	Sum of Amount
Doug Jones (D-AL)	\$12,350
Ed Markey (D-MA)	\$6,800
Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)	\$6,100
Mitch McConnell (R-KY)	\$3,700
Ted Deutch (D-FL)	\$2,700
Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY)	\$2,700
Dick Durbin (D-IL)	\$2,700
Patrick Leahy (D-VT)	\$2,500
Cory Gardner (R-CO)	\$2,500
Mario Diaz-Balart (R-FL)	\$2,200

The top ten recipients of campaign contributions from the FARA registrants represent a bipartisan mix of Senators and House Representatives. Rep. Nancy Pelosi and Sen. Mitch McConnell are both obvious recipients as the respective leaders of the House and Senate at the time of the filings. Sen. Doug Jones also stands out as the highest recipient of campaign contributions by far, receiving all of his contributions from former Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle's eponymous firm.

Graph 4: Campaign Contributions by FARA Registered Firms Representing Taiwan



Graph 4 lists the firms who contributed to political campaigns by the total amount of their campaign contributions. All the firms in the table except for the Taiwan Democratic Progressive Party Mission in the U.S. are D.C. area consulting and public affairs firms, explaining their significant donations to political campaigns. The tens of thousands of dollars worth of donations from the Daschle Group and Gephardt Group are especially notable as they are from firms founded by former congress members, who were once on the receiving end of such political campaigns.

CONNECTING POLITICAL ACTIVITIES TO CONTRIBUTIONS

Separately analyzing political activities and campaign contributions made by firms working for Taiwan is telling, but considering these activities together reveals that lobbyists often make campaign contributions to the same members of Congress they contact on behalf of their foreign clients.

During the time period analyzed here, firms registered under FARA to represent interests in Taiwan made campaign contributions, totaling \$23,605, to seventeen different members of Congress whose offices they had contacted on behalf of their Taiwanese clients.

This is just a conservative estimate of the flow of money from firms representing interests in Taiwan to members of Congress they contacted on their foreign clients' behalf. Of the \$156,794 in campaign contributions we tracked, more than a third (\$53,964) cannot be traced to individual members of Congress, as this money was given to political action committees (PAC's) and party organizations like the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee and the National Republican Congressional Committee. These organizations could,



Capital Dome Washington DC by Ron Cogswell/Flickr

potentially, then make contributions to members of Congress that meet with Taiwan's foreign agents, but we are unable to attribute those contributions to any of the firms mentioned here. This data also only reflects direct campaign contributions made from these agents to members of Congress and does not reflect other fundraising activities like bundling, which allow lobbyists to solicit contributions for candidates from friends, family, or literally anyone else.

Excluding the PAC and party contributions then, our analysis finds that nearly 1-in-4 campaign contribution dollars made by Taiwan's foreign agents went to members of Congress they had contacted on Taiwan's behalf.

In at least two cases, these contributions were made on the exact day Taiwan's lobbyists contacted these members of Congress. Specifically, former Rep. Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-FL), working on

behalf of Western Hemisphere Strategies client TECRO, reportedly met with Rep. Andy Barr (R-KY) on September 17, 2018 to discuss "Taiwan relations and the importance of Taiwan's relations with [sic] U.S. Congress."⁷² That very same day Diaz-Balart made a \$1,000 contribution to Andy Barr's campaign.⁷³

Additionally, according to Western Hemisphere Strategies's same FARA filing, Diaz-Balart spoke over the phone with Rep. Brian Mast to discuss Taiwan relations on August 15, 2018 and, that very same day, made a \$1,000 contribution to Mast's campaign.⁷⁴

In both instances, these were the only times Lincoln Diaz-Balart reported speaking with either Representative, and the only times he reported making a contribution to their campaigns.

⁷² Western Hemisphere Strategies, LLC, "Supplemental Statement," U.S. Department of Justice, February 28, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/6086-Supplemental-Statement-20190228-16.pdf>

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Western Hemisphere Strategies, LLC, "Supplemental Statement," U.S. Department of Justice, February 28, 2019, <https://efile.fara.gov/docs/6086-Supplemental-Statement-20190228-16.pdf>

While it is illegal for foreign nationals to make campaign contributions in the U.S.,⁷⁵ it is legal for foreign powers to hire U.S. lobbyists that can then make contributions to politicians in the U.S., even on the very same day they speak with those politicians on behalf of those very same foreign powers.

CONCLUSION

Evident in these FARA filings is a concerted effort to establish contact with a variety of Congress Members, especially Congressional leadership like the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader. Seeing that the Taiwanese government is fairly unique amongst FARA foreign principals in that it does not have official diplomatic relations established with the U.S., these filings also reveal how Taiwan circumvents this barrier through its lobbyists and unofficial channels.

Given the sway these influence operations have on political talking points and even legislation, it is critical that the American people are aware of the breadth and depth of Taiwan's lobbying operations.

With this in mind, the research here revealed:

- 7 different organizations served as Taiwan's registered foreign agents in the U.S.
- Reported spending of \$4.97 million on Foreign Agents Registration Act registrants working on behalf of Taiwan;
- 537 political activities carried out on behalf of Taiwanese interests by those organizations;
- Taiwanese foreign agents contacted the offices of 476 Members of Congress (nearly 90% of all members) and 5 Congressional committees;
- 143 campaign contributions from those organizations, totaling \$156,794;
- \$23,605 of those contributions went to 17 different Members of Congress that FARA registered firms had contacted on behalf of Taiwan;
- 2 times a foreign agent made a campaign contribution to a member of Congress on the exact same day they spoke with them on behalf of Taiwan.

If tensions between the U.S., and China continue to escalate, the U.S.-Taiwan alliance will be increasingly important. And, the U.S. continues to fuel the island with military weapons.

⁷⁵ "Foreign Nationals," Federal Election Commission United States of America, June 23, 2017, <https://www.fec.gov/updates/foreign-nationals/>

In 2020 alone, there were arms sales totaling \$5.9 billion from the U.S. to Taiwan, according to data on arms sales notifications compiled by the Security Assistance Monitor.⁷⁶ The backdrop of these arms sales and US.-Taiwan diplomacy is the \$4.97 million that Taiwan spent in 2019 on foreign agents and the 537 political activities that Taiwanese foreign agents conducted on behalf of Taiwanese clients. According to data compiled by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Italy and Germany were the only other nations that sold arms to Taiwan in the past decade, and the amount that they transferred pales in comparison to the arms packages that Taiwan received from the U.S..⁷⁷ This dependency on the U.S. for its arms further puts into perspective Taiwan's persistent lobbying for strong defense ties. Ultimately, even lobbying by close allies can be detrimental to U.S. foreign policy. Taiwan's lobbying for U.S. arms, for example, may push the U.S. towards further escalating tensions with rivals like China.

Perhaps not coincidentally, Taiwan's lobbying operations in the U.S. are growing alongside U.S. arms sales to the country. As of April 2021, 15 FARA registered firms are working on behalf of Taiwan in the U.S.--more than double the firms working for Taiwan just two years ago.⁷⁸ If this is any indication, the Taiwan lobby is not going anywhere and will continue to wield outsized influence over U.S. foreign policy decisions in the Asia-Pacific.

76 William D. Hartung and Elias Yousif, "U.S. Arms Sales Trends 2020 And Beyond from Trump to Biden," Center for International Policy, April 2021, https://3ba8a190-62da-4c98-86d2-893079d87083.usrfiles.com/ugd/3ba8a1_2e-4d4e9155664535a4a337fe4a91986b.pdf

77 "Transfers of Major Weapons: Deals with Deliveries or Orders Made for 2010 to 2020," Stockholm International Peace Research Institute Arms Transfers Database, https://armstrade.sipri.org/armstrade/page/trade_register.php

78 "Browse Filings," U.S. Department of Justice, <https://efile.fara.gov/ords/f?p=1381:1:5688751248812::::>



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