

To Fight in the Most Important Battlefield

Formosan Association for Public Affairs on the Hill

A Story Behind the Taiwan Travel Act

Liu, Hsiu-An

This paper explains the functions of the Formosan Association for Public Affairs (FAPA), a grassroots advocacy organization that aim to promote US-Taiwan relations in the United States, including the process of approaching members of Congress, cultivating public awareness on issues, and introducing bills, and the strategy behind these movements. The paper also examines different factors contributing to a successful grassroots campaign launched by FAPA which ultimately led to the legislature of the Taiwan Travel Act (TTA). As the TTA was proposed four times throughout three different presidencies before it passed in the year 2018, I weigh the relevant factors to its success or failure by comparing the TTA campaigns at different times. I conclude that the ability to find friends in Congress to support bills and resolutions is always a critical determinant for a grassroots organization's success, and FAPA has always been good at finding champions in Congress. Also, a campaign based on the target state's own values and interest are more likely to succeed. FAPA has always been good at framing issues to align with US values and interests. The fundamental factors that changed over time and led to the ultimate success of the TTA campaign are the change of public opinions towards Taiwan and China and the change in US interests in US-China relations. This conclusion proves that the legislative process efficiently represents US interests and public opinions in the making of the TTA, not just the FAPA's interests or Taiwan's interests.

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Liu, Hsiu-An is a graduate student major in public Administration at the University of Maryland. He can be reached at hliu1213@umd.edu.

The US Congress has been an important battlefield not only for different US interest groups but also for foreign governments. Most countries want to secure their relations with the most powerful country on Earth, except few anomalies. It is more so for the countries that have security threats, for example, Israel. It is no coincidence that they have the most powerful and successful lobbying network in the US.

For countries and ethnicities without formal statehoods, the US Congress might be their major battlefield to fight for their rights and recognition. A piece of US legislation in favor of them will make a huge difference in their difficult circumstances. As they cannot represent themselves in the United Nations, they often try harder to represent themselves in US Congress.

Backgrounder

Taiwan has been one of these internationally disadvantaged political entities. Many refer to Taiwan as the “Orphan of Asia”¹. The historical context behind this is rather complex. It started with the relocation of the Republic of China’s (ROC) government to Taiwan in 1949, right after it lost the battle with the Chinese communists in mainland China. The Chinese Communists later founded the People’s Republic of China (PRC)². Both Chinas claimed to be the one and only China. ROC stayed in the UN and maintained its diplomatic relations with most countries, while PRC was recognized mostly by the communist world in the beginning. However, everything changed in 1971 when PRC joined the UN. The premise of PRC joining the UN or establishing diplomatic relations with any country is called the “One China Principle”. It recognizes PRC as the only legal China, and Taiwan is its inalienable part. The principle inevitably forced ROC out of the UN. Countries broke their diplomatic ties with ROC and established diplomatic ties with PRC instead, including the US in 1978.

The US-Taiwan non-diplomatic relations have been governed by the Taiwan

¹ The *Orphan of Asia* is an autobiographical novel completed in 1945 by Zhuoliu Wu, who was born in a Chinese family in Japanese-occupied Taiwan. It captured the postwar Taiwanese experience and identity. <http://cup.columbia.edu/book/orphan-of-asia/9780231137263>
The phrase “Orphan of Asia” was later used to describe Taiwan’s international status after its withdrawal from the UN.

² I use Taiwan and the Republic of China (ROC) interchangeably. I also use China and the People's Republic of China (PRC) interchangeably.

Relations Act (TRA) since 1979 ³. The American Institute in Taiwan (AIT)⁴, though registered as a non-profit, was granted the authority to serve as the de facto US embassy in Taiwan, while the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO) serves as the de facto Taiwan embassy in the US ⁵. The arrangement is practical for maintaining commercial and cultural relations between both parties.

The TRA also concerns the military aspect of the US-Taiwan relations. For example:

SEC. 2 (B) It is the policy of the United States—

(4) to consider any effort to determine the future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means, including by boycotts or embargoes, a threat to the peace and security of the Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States;

(5) to provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character; and

(6) to maintain the capacity of the United States to resist any resort to force or other forms of coercion that would jeopardize the security, or the social or economic system, of the people on Taiwan.

(Text from H.R.2479 - Taiwan Relations Act of 1979)

A part of the reason behind the inclusion of the military provisions was Taiwan's peace and security since China has never given up on taking Taiwan by force. But the most fundamental reason was still the US national interests. The TRA is a US national law. The US government understood that neither a war in the Taiwan Strait nor a China-occupied Taiwan will fit US interests. As stated in the following part of TRA:

SEC. 2 (B) It is the policy of the United States—

(2) to declare that peace and stability in the area are in the political, security, and economic interests of the United States, and are matters of international concern.

(Text from H.R.2479 - Taiwan Relations Act of 1979)

The US-Taiwan communications should be as smooth as possible because critical issues such as national security and regional peace are involved. However,

³ H.R.2479 - 96th Congress (1979-1980): Taiwan Relations Act. (1979, April 10). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/96th-congress/house-bill/2479>

⁴ The American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), <https://www.ait.org.tw/>

⁵ Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office (TECRO), https://www.roc-taiwan.org/us_en/index.html

there were plenty of restrictions on how US officials should interact with their Taiwanese counterparts. For example, no meeting with Taiwan officials is allowed at the State Department, White House, and Executive Office Building. Similarly, unofficial meetings in Taiwan can only take place in AIT or other unofficial settings, not in the Presidential Office or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Also, Taiwan's top officials including the elected president, vice president, prime minister, foreign minister, and defense minister cannot visit Washington DC. All US executive branch personnel who want to visit Taiwan must obtain clearance from the State Department. As the result, all communication between the US and Taiwan governments was channeled indirectly through AIT and TECRO, which was slow and inadequate.

These restrictions were never requested by Congress but self-imposed by the State Department. The purpose was obvious, to appease China. They made perfect sense when both ROC and PRC were authoritarian and claiming to be the only China. These guidelines only demonstrated that the US switched its recognition from ROC to PRC and was willing to act in concert with the PRC. However, they seem increasingly awkward as Taiwan has become a vibrant democracy and pretty much gave up its claim on China. It is hard to imagine that the US would treat Taiwan as some kind of second-class citizen for appeasing its authoritarian and increasingly aggressive neighbor.

The Taiwan Travel Act (TTA)

Several efforts were put into lifting these restrictions and encouraging more US-Taiwan high-level official visits. Among them, the Taiwan Travel Act (TTA) signed in 2018 is by far the most prominent success ⁶. It reaffirmed Taiwan's importance for the region's peace and the US's position to protect it as stated in the TRA. It also recognized Taiwan's democratic transformation. Most importantly, it allows officials at all levels of the US Government, including Cabinet-level national security officials, general officers, and other executive branch officials, to travel to Taiwan to meet their Taiwanese counterparts. It also allows high-level officials of Taiwan to enter the United States.

⁶ Text - H.R.535 - 115th Congress (2017-2018): Taiwan Travel Act. (2018, March 16). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/535/text>

The Taiwan Travel Act, full text:

[115th Congress Public Law 135]
[From the U.S. Government Publishing Office]

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Public Law 115-135
115th Congress

An Act

To encourage visits between the United States and Taiwan at all levels,
and for other purposes. <<NOTE: Mar. 16, 2018 - [H.R. 535]>>

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the
United States of America in Congress assembled, <<NOTE: Taiwan Travel
Act.>>

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ``Taiwan Travel Act''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The Taiwan Relations Act (22 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.),
enacted in 1979, has continued for 37 years to be a cornerstone
of relations between the United States and Taiwan and has served
as an anchor for peace and security in the Western Pacific area.

(2) The Taiwan Relations Act declares that peace and
stability in the Western Pacific area are in the political,
security, and economic interests of the United States and are
matters of international concern.

(3) The United States considers any effort to determine the
future of Taiwan by other than peaceful means, including by
boycotts or embargoes, a threat to the peace and security of the
Western Pacific area and of grave concern to the United States.

(4) Taiwan has succeeded in a momentous transition to
democracy beginning in the late 1980s and has been a beacon of
democracy in Asia, and Taiwan's democratic achievements inspire
many countries and people in the region.

(5) Visits to a country by United States Cabinet members and
other high-ranking officials are an indicator of the breadth and
depth of ties between the United States and such country.

(6) Since the enactment of the Taiwan Relations Act,
relations between the United States and Taiwan have suffered
from insufficient high-level communication due to the self-
imposed restrictions that the United States maintains on high-
level visits with Taiwan.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS; STATEMENT OF POLICY.

(a) Sense of Congress.--It is the sense of Congress that the United
States Government should encourage visits between officials from the
United States and Taiwan at all levels.

(b) Statement of Policy.--It should be the policy of the United
States to--

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(1) allow officials at all levels of the United States
Government, including Cabinet-level national security officials,
general officers, and other executive branch officials, to
travel to Taiwan to meet their Taiwanese counterparts;

(2) allow high-level officials of Taiwan to enter the United

States, under conditions which demonstrate appropriate respect for the dignity of such officials, and to meet with officials of the United States, including officials from the Department of State and the Department of Defense and other Cabinet agencies; and

(3) encourage the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office, and any other instrumentality established by Taiwan, to conduct business in the United States, including activities which involve participation by Members of Congress, officials of Federal, State, or local governments of the United States, or any high-level official of Taiwan.

Approved March 16, 2018.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY--H.R. 535:

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 164 (2018):

Jan. 9, considered and passed House.

Feb. 28, considered and passed Senate.

US-Taiwan relations have suffered from the lack of high-level communication and all kinds of restrictions for decades, so the TTA is really a game-changer. I observed a big step forward in the US-Taiwan interaction post TTA. Also, it paved the way for other pro-Taiwan legislation that further deepened the US-Taiwan relationship. The Taiwan provision in the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act of 2018 and the Taiwan Assurance Act of 2019 all cited text from the TTA ⁷ ⁸:

SEC. 209. <> COMMITMENT TO TAIWAN.

(c) Travel.--The President should encourage the travel of highlevel United States officials to Taiwan, in accordance with the Taiwan Travel Act (Public Law 115-135).

(Text from S.2736 - Asia Reassurance Initiative Act of 2018)

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(7) In the Taiwan Travel Act, which became law on March 16, 2018, Congress observed that the "self-imposed restrictions that the United States maintains on high-level visits" between the United States and Taiwan have resulted in insufficient high-level communication.

(Text from H.R.2002 - Taiwan Assurance Act of 2019)

⁷ Text - S.2736 - 115th Congress (2017-2018): Asia Reassurance Initiative Act of 2018. (2018, December 31). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/senate-bill/2736/text>

⁸ Text - H.R.2002 - 116th Congress (2019-2020): Taiwan Assurance Act of 2019. (2019, May 8). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-bill/2002/text>

President Tsai Ing-Wen became the first Taiwan president ever to enter a US government venue when she toured NASA's Johnson Space Center on August 15, 2018, during her stopover in Houston. In May 2019, Taiwan National Security Chief David Lee met National Security Advisor John Bolton. This event marked the first high-level meeting between Taipei and Washington since 1979. Even more groundbreaking progress, Taiwan vice-president-elect, Lai, Ching-Te, visited Washington DC in February 2020. He also met with key members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. On August 9, 2020, US Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar arrived in Taiwan. He became the highest-level American cabinet official to visit Taiwan ever since 1979. He met with President Tsai, Foreign Minister Joseph Wu, and Health Minister Chen Shih-Chung ⁹.

Although some of these events were not technically regulated by a written guideline, they were still impossible under the former self-imposed restrictions ¹⁰. The TTA did encourage Washington to send higher-level officials to Taiwan and facilitate Taiwan officials to visit. I can only expect a more rapid improvement of US-Taiwan relations in the near future. Two years after the TTA, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo lifted all restrictions on the US-Taiwan relationship ¹¹. No one could have ever imagined that this happened so quickly.

The TTA and the events following it broke countless headlines in Taiwan. People all said the US-Taiwan relations are in the best shape ever. However, ordinary Taiwanese people including myself had only a vague notion on how such pro-Taiwan acts are passed and who was campaigning for them in the US. While Taiwanese people were guessing that the TECRO was behind it, TECRO as a foreign mission cannot influence the legislation of a US national law through lobbying.

⁹ The information is included in a 9-page memo Coen Blaauw shared with me before our first interview, in which he put all major events of US-Taiwan relations before and after the TTA in chronological order.

¹⁰ There are different versions of the Taiwan Guideline under each presidency. They are mostly restrictive after the end of US-Taiwan diplomatic relations in 1978 and before the legislation of the TTA. This is a 1990 version under the H.W. Bush Presidency:
[https://bush41library.tamu.edu/files/1999-0182-F/SO_DP_TAIWANUS_91\(3\)_333.pdf](https://bush41library.tamu.edu/files/1999-0182-F/SO_DP_TAIWANUS_91(3)_333.pdf)

¹¹ This is the press statement of the US Secretary of State, Michael Pompeo, on the lifting of restrictions on the US-Taiwan relationship on January 9, 2021: <https://2017-2021.state.gov/lifting-self-imposed-restrictions-on-the-u-s-taiwan-relationship/index.html>

Formosan Association for Public Affairs (FAPA)

After some research, I found out that one group has been doing the most groundwork for the TTA, the Formosan Association for Public Affairs (FAPA) ¹². FAPA is a Washington DC-based nonprofit that aims to promote international support for Taiwan's democracy, self-determination, peace, and security. It was founded by graduate students and political exiles from Taiwan in 1982. It expanded over the years as more Taiwanese moved to the US and became citizens. Now FAPA has 44 local chapters and 2500 members. What FAPA does is encourage its members to be politically active and influence their local representatives in Congress. FAPA also launches seminars, distributes newsletters, and collects petition papers, to educate and advise members of Congress on Taiwan issues.

Besides the TTA, FAPA was also behind almost all pro-Taiwan campaigns for the past four decades. Some of them were human rights campaigns during the authoritarian era of Taiwan before 1990. These students and political exiles in FAPA were able to raise awareness in the US and leverage against the authoritarian regime of Taiwan at the time. They successfully had the US pressure Taiwan's government to remove the blacklist, so they could finally return home. FAPA also campaigned for Taiwanese identity. Taiwanese Americans were not able to mark their birthplace as “Taiwan” instead of China on their US passport until the birthplace bill passed in 1994. Other campaigns were about Taiwan's participation in international organizations. FAPA introduced resolutions for the US government to openly support Taiwan's inclusion in the UN and the WHO. The bid for Taiwan to join WHO was signed into law in 2001 by President Bush. Some of FAPA's co-founders even helped with building the cornerstone of US-Taiwan relations, the Taiwan Relations Act. Former FAPA president Peng Ming-Min testified in a congressional hearing for the TRA. FAPA is now working on practically all aspects of the US-Taiwan relations, including a US-Taiwan free trade agreement, embassy name change from TECRO to TRO (Taiwan Representative Office), senate confirmation of AIT director, and ultimately the removal of the US One China Policy ¹³.

FAPA has launched so many successful campaigns over the years. However,

¹² Formosan Association for Public Affairs (FAPA): <https://fapa.org/>

¹³ A list of FAPA's recent concerning issues, <https://fapa.org/issues/>

everyone knows that political campaigns fail more than they succeed, and FAPA is no exception. Even the TTA failed three times for the past two decades. It passed the House but not the Senate when introduced in 2004 as a non-binding resolution. It was attached to the National Defense Authorization Act in 2013, this time a binding act, but the act passed without the Taiwan provision in its final version ¹⁴. The TTA was reintroduced in both Houses in 2016 as a binding act, but the congressional term expired before any further progress could be made. Fortunately, it was reintroduced immediately for the 115th Congress in 2017 and passed both houses in 2018. It was finally signed into law by President Trump on March 16 ¹⁵.

The TTA story makes me wonder what factors have contributed to FAPA's final success for the TTA campaign in 2018 and why the first three attempts were not as successful. In a more general sense, what makes a campaign more successful than others, and what is FAPA's recipe for success. This is a hundred-million-dollar question to ask since multinational corporations, foreign governments, and nonprofit organizations all campaign for different purposes in DC every day, and they all want their campaigns to succeed in the US Congress.

Interview-based Research

It was really fortunate for me that I got to interview one of FAPA's most senior executives, Coen Blaauw ¹⁶. He is the executive director of the Formosan Association for Public Relations (FAPR) ¹⁷, which is FAPA's lobbying arm. (FAPA's amount of lobbying, advocacy, or political activity is limited due to its 501 (c)(3) nonprofit status, while FAPR does not have that limitation for its 501 (c)(4) status ¹⁸.) Blaauw has been FAPA's and FAPR's chief lobbyist for the past 32 years and is involved in every major campaign. Blaauw drafted the TTA for congressmen to introduce it to the House. He also worked closely with Chabot's office to ensure

¹⁴ Text - H.R.4310 - 112th Congress (2011-2012): National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013. (2013, January 2). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/112th-congress/house-bill/4310/text>

¹⁵ The information is included in a 9-page memo Coen Blaauw shared with me before our first interview, in which he put all major events of US-Taiwan relations before and after the TTA in chronological order.

¹⁶ I conducted online interviews and exchanged correspondence with FAPA's lobbyist Coen Blaauw from May to October 2021. To avoid excessive notation, I will not repeat this information in every piece of information I acquired from him.

¹⁷ Formosan Association for Public Relations (FAPR), <https://fapronline.org/>

¹⁸ 501 (c)(3) and 501(c)(4): <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/other-non-profits/social-welfare-organizations>

TTA's success. Blaauw called the TTA "FAPA's baby" during our first meeting. That statement told me how much he was involved, and I am interviewing the right guy who has all the answers to my questions.

I also interviewed congressman Chabot's former legal assistant, James Burchfield, thanks to Blaauw's connection ¹⁹. James worked closely with FAPA during the TTA campaign. He described himself as part of the "Team TTA". Blaauw also introduced me to TECRO's director of congressional liaison division, Jason Ma, who was already stationed at DC during the TTA campaign. The interview with Jason provided me an embassy perspective on the same event ²⁰.

Factors

To make my study and interviews more structured, I referred to the framework used by Professor Chen Yu-Wen in her previous study on FAPA's work in 2007: *Taiwanese American Grassroots Lobbies on the Hill: A Case Study of the Formosan Association for Public Affairs*. In her study, she hypothesized three factors for FAPA's successes and failures in the past, including FAPA's ability to find champions in Congress, the U.S. administration's support, and the nature of the issue.

FAPA's champions are the ones that can introduce pro-Taiwan bills for FAPA in Congress. Chen identified them as FAPA's access point to the US foreign policy based on Risse-Kappen's domestic structure approach (1999). I do not intend to examine whether champions in Congress play a role in FAPA's campaigns because I am sure they do. I would also not doubt FAPA's ability to find its champions. Instead, I will analyze the determinants for these champions to become FAPA's friends in the first place, and how FAPA mobilized them for important campaigns.

While Congress initiated these pro-Taiwan bills, the State Department is the one to enforce them once they became laws. The president and the administration were given the most prominent role in US foreign policy making. The president has the tool to make things happen if desired. On the other hand, the president has a hundred ways to stop a piece of legislation if it is not wanted. It is intuitive to assume

¹⁹ I interviewed with congressman Chabot's former legal assistant James Burchfield on July 27, 2021, in downtown Washington DC.

²⁰ I conducted an online interview with TECRO's director of congressional liaison division Jason Ma on July 23, 2021.

that the support from the administration has positive effects on FAPA's campaign.

Finally, Chen hypothesized the nature of the issue as a critical factor to the outcome of a campaign based on Keck and Sikkink's study (1998). They emphasize the influence of norms and values in a society and its political structure. They further concluded that the most successful networks tend to focus on issues that involve bodily harm to vulnerable individuals or the denial of legal equality of opportunity. Chen examined if FAPA was able to associate its campaigns with these issues (2007). For example, Taiwan's exclusion from the WHO denied Taiwanese people equality for health and exacerbated bodily harm to vulnerable Taiwanese in times of pandemics. FAPA successfully stressed these aspects of this issue and made the campaign objectives align with the US norms and values. This was an important determinant for the US to support Taiwan's inclusion in the WHO. The nature of the issue can also be interpreted as how FAPA framed the issue.

Chen examined these hypotheses by comparing five different FAPA's campaigns (2007). Although I only have one campaign to analyze, the Taiwan Travel Act, instead of five, I can still adopt these factors and integrate them into my interview questions. Also, since the TTA campaigned three times, I can still conduct a time-based comparison across three different timings to examine the importance of the different factors.

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Grassroots Advocacy

Before addressing the first factor, it is important to understand FAPA's general tactics and the definition of grassroots advocacy, to understand the context of FAPA's interaction with the members of Congress. According to Blaauw, a grassroots organization approaches members of Congress from the bottom-up, not from the top-down.

A bottom-up approach comes straight from the congressmen's constituents. As mentioned, FAPA has 44 local chapters, 2500 members and families in the US ²¹. FAPA encourages these families to approach their elected representatives for advocating Taiwan issues. The easiest way for FAPA members and families to

²¹ A map of FAPA's local chapters: <https://fapa.org/chapter/>

approach their representatives is to help them with reelections. However, since FAPA is a nonprofit advocacy organization, they cannot fundraise for candidates. What FAPA can do is encourage its members to make personal donations or become campaign volunteers for the members of Congress that helped Taiwan. FAPA also collects petition letters from its members and other Taiwan supporters to inform members of Congress of their constituents' demands.

In contrast to a bottom-up approach, a top-down approach involves having former members of Congress, influential DC players, or a lobbying firm lobby the current Congress. Blaauw mentioned the major disadvantage of a top-down approach is that it can only be done once a year. It is almost impossible for a former member of Congress to ask his or her former colleagues for a favor every day. There is no such limitation for the bottom-up approach. People can always feed new information and requests to their representatives. Also, there is no need for FAPA to hire a lobbying firm because lobbying firms are only practical for companies or interest groups that have a huge interest in Capitol Hill but not necessarily the knowledge to play in DC. FAPA, on the other hand, is a 40-year-old DC player itself.

TECRO, as the foreign mission representing Taiwan, employs more top-down approaches. TECRO hires retired members of Congress to be its consultants on specific congressional knowledge. As Jason Ma, the TECRO officer I interviewed, explained to me, TECRO gains access to the conference rooms in Capitol Hill from these consultants, to host lunch seminars for current members of Congress to join ²². It is an effective way to connect members of Congress and educate them on Taiwan issues. Jason also explained to me that TECRO invites members of Congress and their aids to visit Taiwan on behalf of the Taiwan government, through the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange program of the US ²³. Nearly all the strongest Taiwan supporters in Congress have visited Taiwan. These trips emotionally tied members of Congress to Taiwan, which is essential for their championships.

FAPA, as a non-profit organization, does not have the resources to hire former members of Congress or the legitimacy to invite members of Congress to visit

²² I conducted an online interview with TECRO's director of congressional liaison division Jason Ma on July 23, 2021.

²³ Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange program:
<https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title22/chapter33&edition=prelim>

Taiwan. What FAPA does have is the grassroots network it built. Also, it has one advantage that TECRO does not have. Jason explained to me that TECRO, as a foreign mission, cannot openly support any piece of US legislation. Every political activity it engages requires full disclosure and a strict registration process ²⁴. FAPA, on the other hand, has every right to push bills because it is a group of Taiwanese American citizens that by nature should be concerned by US internal affairs. Therefore, grassroots advocacy has always been FAPA's most valuable niche.

FAPA approaches the members of congress from the bottom-up, not from the top-down.

– Coen Blaauw

Legislature & Administration

FAPA has made many friends in Congress through years of grassroots campaigns, but what about the State Department? While FAPA does know people in the State Department, they do not come to them for favors the way they approach members of Congress. Blaauw explained to me that he does not lobby the administration or the Taiwan desk of the State Department because there is no reason for them to listen to FAPA. The State Department only listens to the 435 representatives and 100 senators that represent the whole United States. It is only through lobbying Congress that FAPA has the leverage to influence the Administration. Blaauw described Congress as a hammer that knocks the State Department on the head.

By making pro-Taiwan acts in Congress, FAPA is providing a legitimate excuse for the State Department to reject Chinese diplomats' requests. For example, the limitations on US-Taiwan interactions had always been self-imposed, so the State Department could remove them anytime. However, such actions would have provoked serious complaints from China and jeopardized US-China relations hugely. Now with the TTA passed in Congress, the State Department has a legal obligation to remove these restrictions. Such actions are in accordance with the will of the American people and there is nothing a foreign government can do or say about it.

²⁴ Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA): <https://www.justice.gov/nsd-fara>

Congress is like a hammer that knocks the State Department on the head.

– Coen Blaauw

House & Senate

As discussed in the previous section, FAPA targets the legislature instead of the administration. Within the legislature, FAPA also tends to target the House more than the Senate. This is due to the different mentalities of the House and the Senate. Blaauw described the mentality of the House as a fraternity where people have fun and drink beers. They are always asking: what should we do today? What should we do next? Let's do something exciting! The mentality of the Senate, on the other hand, is more like a senior citizen's home. They are always asking: do we really need this today? Can't we wait for a couple of years? Let's discuss first and ask for reports from the State Department. So, the Senate serves somewhat as a brake to the actions that the House initiates. The TTA, for example, passed in the House but stopped in the Senate twice. Therefore, whenever Blaauw has fresh ideas, he first goes to FAPA's friend in the House, even though FAPA has friends in both Houses.

Democrats & Republicans

FAPA has friends in both Houses. It also has friends in both political parties. It is always better to have both Democrats and Republicans in Congress to support a FAPA act. The TTA, for example, was introduced by both Republicans and Democrats in both the House and the Senate in 2017. However, bipartisan issues are so rare nowadays with everything so polarized. While Taiwan has become one of the few bipartisan issues, it still takes considerable efforts to have members from both parties work with each other on a bill or a resolution. Given how rare bipartisan support is, Blaauw said FAPA always saves the silver bullet for the bill or resolution that has real potential to pass. Though FAPA proposes 10~15 resolutions a year, not all of them are FAPA's main focus, according to Blaauw. Some of them are purely educational for Congress and the US public, others are for the feelings of Taiwanese people and FAPA members. FAPA would not seek bipartisan support for these campaigns. FAPA only saves the bipartisan favor for the most important campaigns that have real potential to succeed, like the TTA.

FAPA's Ability to find Champions in Congress

With clearer understanding of FAPA's tactics and how it functions in US politics, I can now answer questions such as how FAPA found these champions in Congress. How did these members of Congress become such huge Taiwan supporters? And how do FAPA and its members mobilize them?

Professor Chen summarized four factors leading to the legislator's championship of an interest group in her paper, the constituents' position, the campaign contribution to the legislator, the legislator's party's preference, and the legislator's personal preference (2007). I will examine these factors' presence in the stories of FAPA's most active champions during the TTA campaign. I will also look for other determinants that were not mentioned in the previous studies.

Steve Chabot (R-OH)

I want to start with the biggest Taiwan supporter and FAPA's best friend, congressman Steve Chabot ²⁵. Chabot co-founded the congressional Taiwan Caucus in 2002²⁶. He not only introduced the TTA to the House three times in 2004, 2016, and 2017 but also strongly supervised the implementation of the act after it passed. For example, he urged National Security Adviser John Bolton to attend the opening of the new AIT building in Taipei. Chabot also met Taiwan's vice president Lai Ching-Te during his historical visit in DC 2020 ²⁷.

I wonder if Chabot's strong support for Taiwan comes from his constituents' position. Chabot's former legal assistant, James Burchfield, told me that there is a strong outspoken group of Taiwanese Americans in Cincinnati, a part of Chabot's congressional district ²⁸. They established strong relationships with Chabot very early in his career. His continued exposure to Taiwan-related issues made him more aware of Taiwan's situation. Burchfield further explained that it is not the size of the Taiwanese American group that makes them important but their political activeness. They regularly travel to DC and regularly stop at the congressman's office. They also

²⁵ Congressman Steve Chabot: <https://chabot.house.gov/>

²⁶ Congressional Taiwan Caucus: <https://fapa.org/house-taiwan-caucus/>

²⁷ The information is included in a 9-page memo Coen Blaauw shared with me before our first interview.

²⁸ I interviewed with congressman Chabot's former legal assistant James Burchfield on July 27, 2021, in downtown Washington DC.

support Chabot's reelection.

While the constituent is an important factor, Blaauw also attributed Chabot's support for Taiwan to his friendship with former FAPA president, Lee Ching-Tai. Lee approached Chabot about 25 years ago when he first became a member of Congress. They liked each other and soon became close friends. As Blaauw commented: you are always willing to do something extra for your friend.

Congressman Chabot's personal values also play a role in his support for Taiwan. Burchfield told me that Chabot has always been very pro-democracy and pro-freedom-of-speech in general, and Taiwan is a shining example of a young, free, and democratic society in Asia. Also, Chabot is very outspoken against oppressive regimes, and China is a perfect example of an oppressive society.

Burchfield told me that Taiwan has the nearest place to his heart. He has only one piece of legislation framed on the wall of his office, the Taiwan Travel Act. He further explained to me that as a legal assistant he did lots of different things on the Hill, but not all of them have big meaningful changes and impacts. The Taiwan Travel Act, on the other hand, really made a huge difference for US-Taiwan relations. This might be a psychological determinant for congressmen and their staffers wanting to work on Taiwan issues, as there is a huge space for some real changes.

I only had one piece of legislation framed on the wall, the Taiwan Travel Act.
– James Burchfield

Blaauw also explained to me that Chabot enjoys being a Taiwan expert in the House. As Blaauw said, if you have questions about the Uighurs, Falun Gong, and Laogei prison camps, you go to Chris Smith ²⁹. If you have questions about Taiwan, you go to Steve Chabot. Though members of Congress do not necessarily need to specialize in a certain issue, it is good to have a niche to stand out from all 435 members, and Taiwan is a fun and easy issue to work on. The specialization of a certain issue is also a factor neglected by the previous studies.

²⁹ Congressman Chris Smith: <https://chrissmith.house.gov/>

Brad Sherman (D-CA)

Congressman Brad Sherman from Sherman Oaks, Los Angeles, has been the strongest Democrat supporter of FAPA³⁰. He introduced the TTA to the House along with Chabot in 2016 and 2017. He also urged the administration to enact the TTA by granting President Tsai a trip to Washington DC in 2018.

Similar to Chabot, Sherman became a huge Taiwan supporter because of personal friendship. President Tsai's former political advisor, Wu, Li Pei, initiated FAPA's friendship with congressman Sherman. He used to be the Vice President of the National Bank of Alaska. He also had some congressional friends from all around the states, including Sherman Oaks, Los Angeles.

I joined one of Sherman's virtual meetings with FAPA's members on July 17, 2021. Congressman Sherman started his speech regarding FAPA's recent campaigns and what he has done for these campaigns. He then answered some of FAPA members' questions. Finally, he mentioned his reelection next year and the potentials for challengers to emerge from the inside of the Democratic party. He implicitly asked for personal donations by suggesting a more solid financial basis would lower the risks of being challenged. Though the campaign contribution is not the primary reason for congressman Sherman to support Taiwan and he has already done way more than FAPA members could have ever offered him, it is still a factor in maintaining the relationship.

Sherman also touched on the issue of how to be more politically active during the meeting. To be more specific on my research question, how to mobilize members of Congress for a campaign? He basically advised FAPA members to be pushier when approaching a member of Congress. He advised them to always come to a congressman's office with specific requests and come out with solid commitment. It is always smart to ask for follow-up. Do not be satisfied with gullible answers and the politics 101 tricks. He explained the politics 101 tricks by the following quote:

Don't write anything you can phone. Don't phone anything you can talk. Don't talk anything you can whisper. Don't whisper anything you can smile. Don't smile anything you can nod. Don't nod anything you can wink.
- Earl Long

³⁰ Congressman Brad Sherman: <https://sherman.house.gov/>

He addressed this issue in a funny, practical, and understandable way to FAPA members. However, his suggestions might not fit the friendship-based approach traditionally used by FAPA and might not be good for establishing a positive long-term legislator-interest group working group relationship.

Sherrod Brown (D-OH)

Sherrod Brown was the other co-founder of the congressional Taiwan Caucus³¹. He introduced the TTA to the Senate in 2017. FAPA befriended Sherrod Brown the same way they befriended Steve Chabot. A Taiwanese anesthesiologist, Masao Yu, became friends with Brown and his staff. Blaauw always encourages FAPA members: We have 2500 FAPA families. If Lee Ching-Tai can do it, Wu Li-Pei can do it, and Masao Yu can do it, we can have more friends in Congress.

I can conclude here that friendships play a big role in FAPA's champion finding. However, Blaauw knows that there is no formula to guarantee a friendship. When the chemistry is just not right between a FAPA member and a representative, visiting the representative more often would not help. Being pushy on issues as Sherman suggested, can sometimes even exacerbate the relationship. Friendship is a highly functional but uncontrollable factor.

Marco Rubio (R-FL)

Marco Rubio is perhaps the most outspoken Taiwan supporter in the Senate in recent years³². Therefore, he is also very well-known to the Taiwanese people. He introduced the TTA to the Senate in 2016 and 2017. He challenged the administration to enact the TTA several times afterward. He urged President Trump to send a Cabinet-level official to the opening of the AIT's new compound in 2018 and the 40th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act in 2019. He even urged House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to invite President Tsai to address a joint session of Congress³³.

Blaauw explained to me that Rubio's support for Taiwan can be traced back to his mentor. Rubio was an intern of congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen from Miami.

³¹ Senator Sherrod Brown: <https://www.brown.senate.gov/>

³² Senator Marco Rubio: <https://www.rubio.senate.gov/public/>

³³ The information is included in a 9-page memo Coen Blaauw shared with me before our first interview.

Ros-Lehtinen attended one of FAPA's earliest events in 1992, even without an active invitation from FAPA. Ros-Lehtinen was essentially the first generation of FAPA's champions and Rubio later became the second generation. Both Rubio and Ros-Lehtinen's support for Taiwan are related to their personal backgrounds, values, and beliefs

Many members of Congress from South Florida have Cuban heritage like Marco Rubio and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen. They often have stronger anti-communist sentiments because either they or their family members grew up under communist oppression in Cuba. While Cubans were the victims of the Cold War, Taiwan is on the edge of the new Sino-American Cold War now. Many scholars regard Taiwan as the West Berlin of the new Cold War against Communist China. The strong anti-communist beliefs make these Cuban Americans sympathetic for Taiwan, and therefore, more willing to support Taiwan.

From Rubio's first day in the Senate, he has been a strong supporter of human rights, freedom, democracy, and anti-communism. His whole mindset has been very favorable to Taiwan. It is natural that FAPA eventually approached Rubio. Blaauw recalled that he was extremely well-prepared with handouts and talking points when he first visited Rubio's aids. Rubio's office was very impressed by FAPA's work. They established a long-lasting working relationship since then.

Conclusion

To conclude the determinants for members of Congress to become Taiwan supporters and FAPA's champions, I would say personal values and beliefs play a huge role. It can be found in both Chabot and Rubio's stories. The preference of the belonging political party, on the other hand, has no obvious impact. There is no evidence of the Republican Party or the Democratic Party having its members vote for Taiwan. I will clarify the partisan myth for Taiwan issues in the part examining the administration's support for FAPA's campaigns. The role of a constituents' position depends on how politically active the Taiwanese American community in that constituency is, not necessarily how big the community is. The campaign contribution is a supportive factor in maintaining the relationship with a member of Congress, but not a decisive one to initiate such a relationship.

From my interview with Blaauw and the stories of congressman Chabot,

Sherman, and Senator Brown, I found friendships an important determinant for FAPA's championships, though an unmanageable and unpredictable one. Also, the sense of expertise and the sense of accomplishment are some less-discussed factors. It takes more research on other issues to verify if they can count as general factors for finding or maintaining championships.

The Administration's Support

Now I will move our focus from the legislative branch to the executive branch, as they are both important in the US foreign policy-making process. As mentioned before, the president has the tool to make things happen if desired. The president also has a multitude of ways to stop a piece of legislation if he does not want it. Therefore, I hypothesize that the support from the administration has positive effects on FAPA's campaign.

I will not only test this assumption of the administration's support but also examine the possible determinants for the administration's support. The most obvious possible determinant in this context is the success of pro-Taiwan lobbying activities launched by FAPA or TECRO. Secondly, the administration by nature should act in accordance with the US national interests and the voters' opinions, so they should be important factors too. Finally, people often wonder if partisanship or the president's preference plays a role in determining the administration's support for Taiwan. I will discuss all these possible factors in the following section.

Lobbying Activities

As explained previously in the paper, FAPA does not directly lobby the US administration. Although TECRO has an official channel to contact the State Department, as a foreign mission, it cannot and should not influence the US administration. I can conclude that the administration's attitude towards Taiwan issues is not influenced by any Taiwan lobbying.

National Interests and Public Opinions

US national interests and public opinions are more fundamental factors influencing the administration's attitude towards Taiwan issues, especially in the case of the Taiwan Travel Act. The negative US public opinions on China and the positive image of Taiwan placed the old restrictions on US-Taiwan relations in an awkward

position. The administration might have a more positive view on removing these restrictions because of that. Also, a smoother US-Taiwan interaction fits the US interests. In this case, the administration was driven by its own interest and public opinions to support or at least permit some pro-Taiwan legislation.

Partisanship and Presidencies

While some people might regard partisanship as a factor deciding the administration's support, it is not decisive enough for Taiwan issues. People always ask, who is the bigger supporter of Taiwan? The Democrats or the Republicans? Coen Blaauw always answers, it depends. In general, Congress in a divided government tends to support Taiwan more. If there is a Democratic president in the White House, the Republicans in the House and the Senate tend to be more supportive and outspoken for Taiwan issues. And vice versa for a Republican president in the White House. These congressmen push a Taiwan act not necessarily because they support Taiwan, but for they want to give their president a hard time. This fact also demonstrates how Taiwan was a difficult issue for the presidents in the past.

For example, House Republicans proposed the Taiwan Security Enhancement Act (TSEA) during the Clinton administration ³⁴. The act essentially aimed to foster US-Taiwan military cooperation, improve US-Taiwan military communication, and enhance Taiwan's self-defense ability. There was only one Democrat who supported this act. Democrats were suspecting the Republicans were using this act to ruin president Clinton's achievements in the US-China relations. Clinton even threatened to veto the TSEA for it would sabotage Clinton's accommodating approach to China (Chen, 2007). Eventually, the TSEA only passed the House but not the Senate.

The dynamic changed around the time when Donald Trump became the President. Blaauw had expected the Democrats to be stronger supporters of Taiwan, to challenge President Trump. Surprisingly, the Republican congressmen were equally strong supporters of Taiwan, and of course, they were not doing so to challenge their friends in the White House. Instead, they were doing so for their own beliefs and the US interests.

I have discussed partisanship and the dynamic between an opposition

³⁴ H.R.1838 - 106th Congress (1999-2000): Taiwan Security Enhancement Act. (2000, April 13). <https://www.congress.gov/bill/106th-congress/house-bill/1838>

Congress and the administration, but not touched on the issue of whether one administration supports Taiwan more than the other yet. The TTA was introduced in 2004, 2013, 2016, and 2017. It experienced three different presidencies from Bush to Obama to Trump, so I should have something to compare.

The United State would do whatever it took to help Taiwan defend herself
– George W. Bush, 2001

Bush was considered a huge Taiwan supporter at the beginning of his presidency. He said the US would do whatever it takes to defend Taiwan ³⁵. The relations just went sour as Taiwan President Chen, Shui-Bian more actively seeking for Taiwan independence. President Bush then called President Chen a “troublemaker” ³⁶. One can imagine how hard it is to push a pro-Taiwan act after that.

Obama was a careful president in regard to foreign policies. He also had a group of super careful advisors around him. Whenever there was pro-Taiwan legislation, President Obama consulted the State Department and his advisor first, to see if there is going to be reprisal from China. Obama’s carefulness was a good quality as a president for the American people. It was not as positive for the people campaigning for Taiwan at the time, including FAPA.

Campaigning for Taiwan became much easier after Trump became president. Because many pro-Taiwan acts including the TTA passed smoothly during Trump’s presidency, many Taiwanese people tend to believe that the Republican Party and President Trump himself support Taiwan more. The congratulations call from President Tsai that Trump picked up after he got elected convinced more Taiwanese people with this idea, though it was later proven to be an amateur mistake ³⁷.

The reality is that neither Trump nor the Republican party was behind these legislations ³⁸. They never encouraged Republican members of Congress to vote for a

³⁵ Bush Pledge Whatever it takes to defend Taiwan:
<https://edition.cnn.com/2001/ALLPOLITICS/04/24/bush.taiwan.abc/>

³⁶ US officials later denied President Bush called President Chen a troublemaker, but Bush did warn Taiwan to keep the status quo: <https://www.nytimes.com/2003/12/10/news/bush-warns-taiwan-to-keep-status-quo-china-welcomes-us-stance.html>

³⁷ The Trump-Taiwan Call: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-38191711>

³⁸ According to John Bolton’s book “The Room Where It Happened”, President Trump often compared Taiwan to the tip of his Sharpies pen and China to his Resolute desk.
<https://www.wsj.com/articles/john-bolton-the-scandal-of-trumps-china-policy-11592419564>

certain pro-Taiwan bill. They just went along with the flow and did not block the bill by any means. In terms of Taiwan issues, the administration only has impacts on stopping things, not initiating them. As Blaauw told me, the State Department would never say something like: Let's teach China a lesson by doing something for Taiwan! The State Department tends to be the brake of Taiwan issues, not the motor. The only question is whether it chooses to step on the brake or not.

In fact, the administration has hundreds of ways to stop a pro-Taiwan bill. The president could have a senator put a hold on a bill. The president can even veto the act, if necessary, although US presidents would never waste their veto on small issues for them like Taiwan. The administration's attitude is crucial in terms of whether it wants to stop a pro-Taiwan bill, not in terms of whether it supports one.

Conclusion

I conclude that the administration is a passive actor rather than an active actor in Taiwan issues. The factor would be better framed as "the administration's tolerance" than the administration's support. Also, the administration's attitude towards Taiwan cannot be influenced by any pro-Taiwan lobbying or US partisanship. It can only be shaped by US interests and public opinions.

Taiwan was traditionally a dangerous issue for the administration because it is in the US's interests to maintain a positive relationship with China. Congress associated Taiwan issues with US values such as freedom, democracy, and self-determination to challenge the administration. The administration stalled Taiwan issues for not to provoke Chinese protest. Pro-Taiwan acts were introduced but often difficult to pass. As for now, Taiwan might still be a dangerous issue, but at least supporting Taiwan fits both US values and the US strategic interest for the growing Chinese aggression and US-China rivalry.

The Nature of the Issue

The last major factor is the nature of the issue. There are two parts to this factor. One is the set nature of the issue, and the other is the framing of it. The nature of the TTA campaign was to increase US-Taiwan bilateral interaction. The framing of it was to enhance the US's relations with a democratic country that is important strategically for the US. FAPA's ability to frame the nature of the issue to be aligned

with US interests and values is essential to its success.

US Values

Taiwan's own nature as a democracy is already advantageous for pro-Taiwan lobbying. All FAPA needs to do is to emphasize that nature. Although Taiwan's democracy is still young, some democratic values and beliefs are already entrenched in Taiwanese people's lives. Therefore, Taiwanese people generally know how to approach US legislators using their own language of democracy better than their Chinese opponents. Also, it is easier to persuade the US legislator to support closer relations with a democratic country than an autocratic one. As Blaauw always says, Taiwan is a wonderful product to sell to the members of Congress. No congressman would say no to Human rights, freedom, democracy, and self-determination.

No congressman would say no to Human rights, freedom, democracy, and self-determination. – Coen Blaauw

Chinese lobbying, on the other hand, become more disadvantaged recently for China's notorious human rights records and its backstepping to totalitarianism. As Blaauw described, these Chinese lobbyists have a lousy product to sell. The genocide against the Uyghurs, violation of Hong Kong's judicial autonomy, and the growing aggression in the South China Sea reshaped both the US public and congressional opinion about China. The negative images of China's government are now omnipresent in the US. Members of Congress became more cautious when responding to a Chinese lobbyist's requests because they do not want the US public to associate them with China's government or regard them as China's supporters. Now US lawmakers are willing to take a more confrontational approach on China because it became more popular than the previous accommodating one. This trend directly undermined Chinese lobbyists' ability to counter pro-Taiwan lobbying and created an unprecedentedly friendly environment for the TTA to pass.

Blaauw once told me his story with a congressman. Normally, whenever he visits this congressman's office for a favor, that congressman lays his issue aside for a later review, as congressmen always do. One time, very peculiarly, the same congressman reviewed Blaauw's issue immediately and accepted his request. It turned out that a Chinese lobbyist just came to the congressman for the same issue before

Blaauw, but of course, to counter Blaauw's lobby in advance. The congressman became more active to help Blaauw because he knew whatever a Chinese lobbyist opposes is the right thing to do. Blaauw's experience demonstrates the counterproductivity of Chinese lobbying nowadays and how it surprisingly benefits Taiwan.

US interests

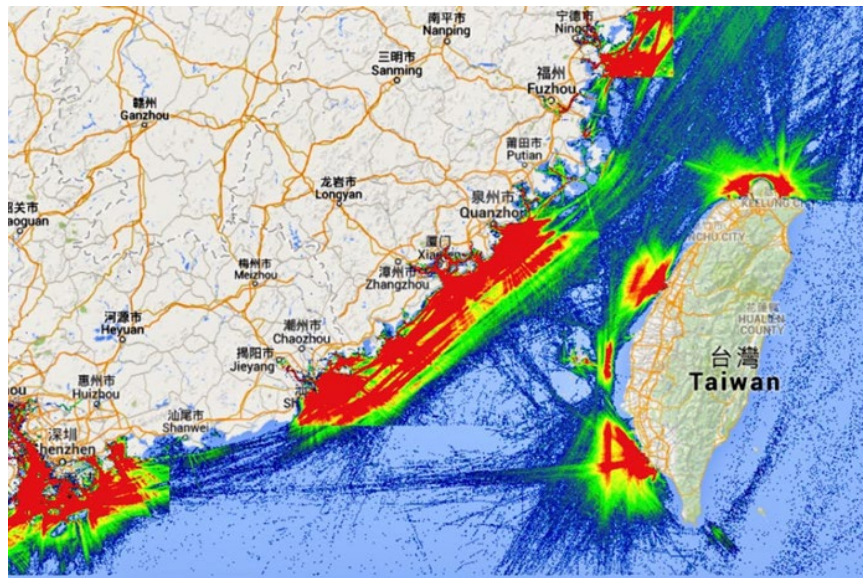
FAPA is good at lobbying based on US values. It is also good at lobbying based on US strategic interests. For every pro-Taiwan campaign, no matter it is for arms sales, free-trade, or high-level exchange, FAPA must build their argument on the importance of US-Taiwan relations is to the US interests. Taiwan is such a small piece of island that people sometimes forgot its importance, especially compared to the gigantic continent of China and its massive population. It is FAPA's job to constantly remind members of Congress how important Taiwan is to US's strategic interest in the Asia-Pacific region and how terrible it will be if the US lose Taiwan to China. Every time Blaauw approaches a member of Congress, he brings the following maps with him to introduce Taiwan's strategic values ³⁹:



1. Taiwan's east coast is an ideal natural harbor for its depth. Once Taiwan is

³⁹ Blaauw shared these three maps with me via email and explained to me during our interviews.

occupied by China, the People's Liberation Army will make Taiwan its unsinkable aircraft carrier to project their military force to the Pacific⁴⁰. By that time, the US will need to build more fleets and station them in the Pacific to contain China. This will be a nightmare for both US military experts and taxpayers. The effort and money could be spared simply by keeping Taiwan autonomous and free.



2. The Taiwan Strait is now international waters, which means Korean tankers, Japanese freighters, the US 7th fleet can all sail through the Taiwan strait freely. It is the bottleneck between the East-China Sea and the South-China Sea. Therefore, it is very busy waters for sea commerce as shown in the picture. However, once Taiwan is occupied by China, the Taiwan strait will become China's domestic territorial waters. China would further claim the 200 nautical miles exclusive economic zone east of Taiwan, which is in accordance with China's interpretation of the Law of the Sea⁴¹. Foreign countries that sail through the Taiwan strait or even sail around Taiwan will either need China's permission or take a detour that increases the freight cost. The freedom of navigation will be severely undermined. More importantly,

⁴⁰ General Douglas MacArthur first compared Formosa in the hands of the Communists to an unsinkable aircraft carrier to accomplish Soviet offensive strategy in his Memorandum on Formosa, 14 June 1950. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1950v07/d86>

⁴¹ The US and China have very different interpretations of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The US regards the ocean areas outside of coastal nations' 12-nautical-mile territorial zones as international waters, while China claims 12-mile territorial zone and 200-mile exclusive economic zone outside its coastline. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/08/08/chinas-taiwan-strait-provocations-need-a-us-response/>

the control over the Taiwan Strait will be powerful leverage for China in all kinds of negotiations. China can use it to threaten the US and US allies. This is another reason for the US to keep Taiwan safe.



3. This picture illustrates the internet communication cables linked to Taiwan and lies undersea the east coast of Taiwan, out of reach from China. There are also American cables among them. China can threaten to block certain countries from accessing the cables or even cut some of them once Taiwan is under China's control. The US must save such trouble for its allies and itself by securing Taiwan.

These are vivid examples of how FAPA persuades members of Congress that protecting Taiwan aligns with US strategic interests. Though the TTA has no specific provision on security issues, its findings echo the US strategic interests in Taiwan stated in the TRA. Also, congressmen know it would be easier to cooperate with Taiwan militarily when interactions become much smoother.

Conclusion

The natures of Taiwan issues range from national security and regional peace to US-Taiwan commerce and official interaction. The important factor here is FAPA's ability to frame these issues in accordance with either US values or US interests. Also, the US values and public opinions often shape one another.

Public Opinions

From the conclusions of the factors discussed, I found that the change in US public opinions is the fundamental determinant for all other factors. It is easier for FAPA to find Champions in Congress when the US public opinions are in favor of Taiwan since the very nature of Congress's job is to represent these opinions. I also discussed how public opinions influence the administration's attitude toward Taiwan issues more than any form of Taiwan lobbying. The US values are essential in framing Taiwan issues. Values shape public opinions but at the same time are shaped by public opinions. Therefore, the change in public opinions is a factor that is worth further examination.

Because pushing pro-Taiwan acts became easier in recent years, I hypothesize that there are growing positive public opinions toward Taiwan and negative attitudes toward China. I use the statistics from the Pew Research Center, Gallup, and the Chicago Council of Foreign Affairs to examine my hypothesis.

Pew Research Center

Majority supports a more assertive stance on bilateral relations with China across a range of issues

% who say the U.S. should ...

Prioritize strengthening economic relations with China, even if it means not addressing human rights issues

26%

Try to promote human rights in China, even if it harms economic relations with China

70%

% who ___ limiting Chinese students studying in the U.S.

Oppose Support

43%

55%

% who say it is more important to ...

Build a strong relationship with China on economic issues

44%

Get tougher with China on economic issues

53%

Note: Those who did not answer not shown.

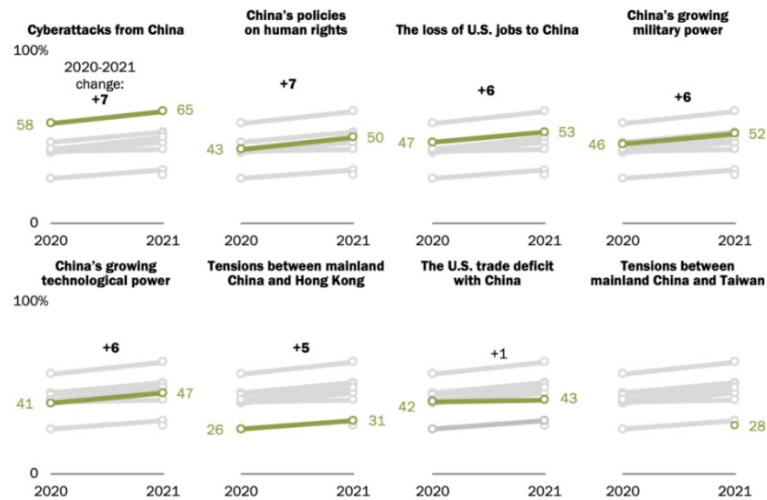
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Feb. 1-7, 2021. Q20, Q50 & Q55.

"Most Americans Support Tough Stance Toward China on Human Rights, Economic Issues"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Rising concerns about China on many issues

% who say ___ would be a **very** serious problem for the U.S.



Note: Statistically significant differences shown in bold. Tensions between mainland China and Taiwan was not asked in 2020.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Feb. 1-7, 2021. Q51a-h.

"Most Americans Support Tough Stance Toward China on Human Rights, Economic Issues"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

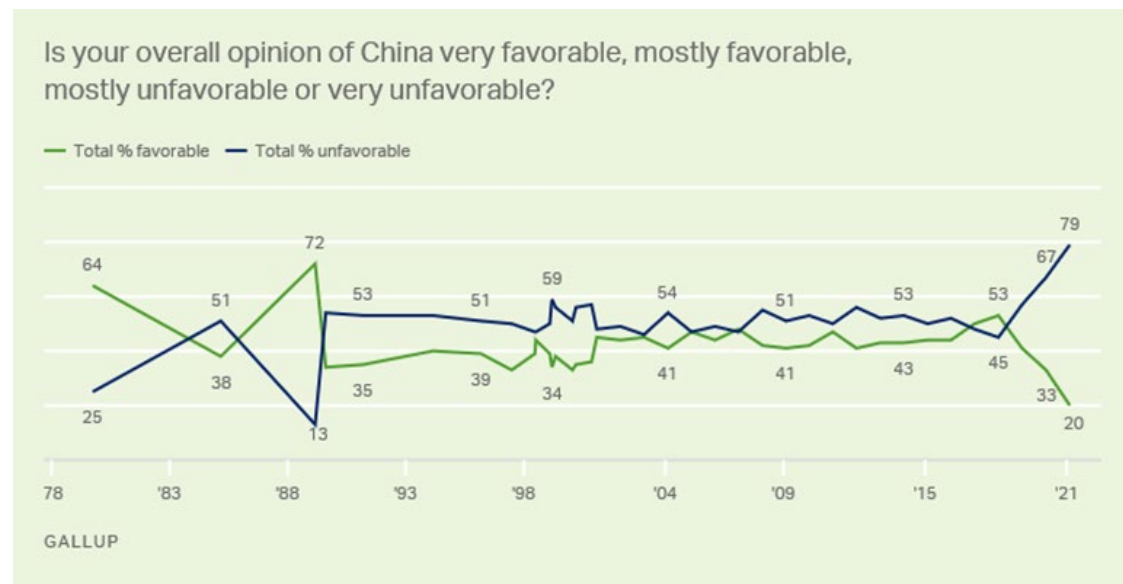
(Pew Research Center, March 4, 2021 ⁴²)

This first poll result shows that the American majorities want a tougher approach with China on both economic issues and human rights issues. The majorities' supports for limitations on Chinese students studying in the US also imply the rising distrust.

The second poll result illustrates the Americans' rising concerns on China's cyberattack, human rights problems, trade relations with the US, tensions with Hong Kong, military power, and technological power from 2020 to 2021.

⁴² Pew Research Center, March 4, 2021. https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2021/03/04/most-americans-support-tough-stance-toward-china-on-human-rights-economic-issues/pg_2021-03-04_us-views-china_0-01-2/

Gallup



(Gallup, March 18, 2021 ⁴³)

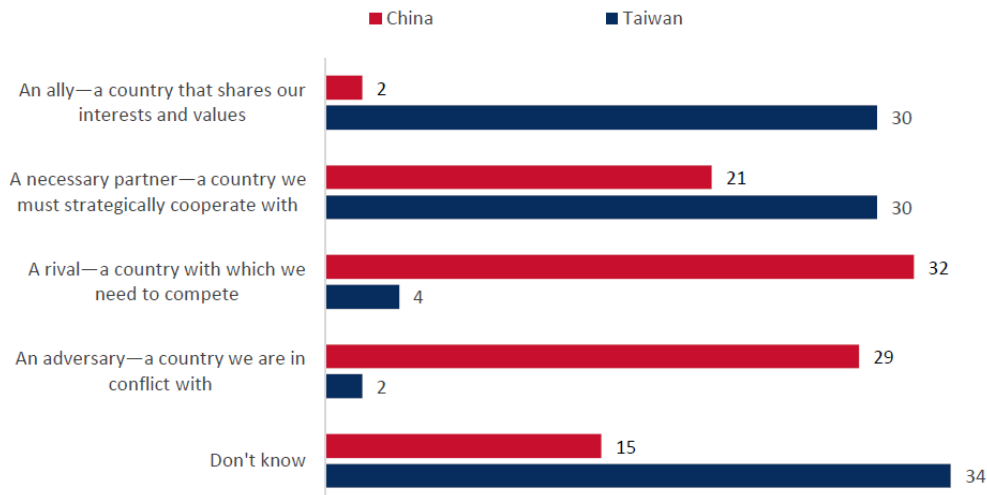
The Gallup poll shows the overall trend of public opinions toward China from 1978 when the US started its diplomatic relations with China till now. Besides a short period after 1978 and around 1988, the overall attitude has been unfavorable slightly more than favorable. We can observe a drastically rising peak of unfavorable opinions toward China started around 2018, which happens to be the year TTA passed. More pro-Taiwan acts have passed since then, but it still remains unclear whether the deterioration of public opinions towards China has transformed into their support for Taiwan. However, it can already sufficiently explain why the administration became less cautious about pro-Taiwan acts after 2018 and how it became easier for FAPA to campaign for Taiwan issues since then.

⁴³ Gallup, March 18, 2021. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/1627/china.aspx>

Chicago Council of Foreign Affairs

American Views of China and Taiwan

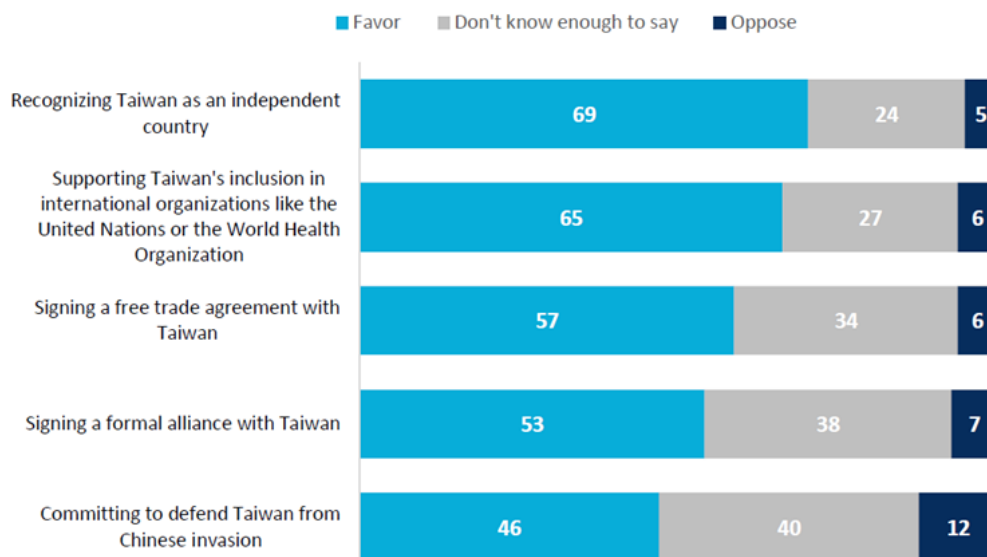
Generally speaking, which of the following descriptions do you feel best reflects the relationship between the United States and the countries below? (%)



July 7-26, 2021 | n=1,482
CHICAGO COUNCIL SURVEYS

US Policies toward Taiwan

Taiwan has been self-governed since 1949, but China claims it as part of its territory. The United States supports Taiwan's right to self-government and does not recognize China's territorial claims on Taiwan. Would you favor or oppose the following US policies toward Taiwan? (%)



July 7-26, 2021 | n = 1,049
CHICAGO COUNCIL SURVEYS

(Chicago Council of Foreign Affairs, August 26, 2021 ⁴⁴)

⁴⁴ Chicago Council of Foreign Affairs, August 26, 2021.
<https://www.thechicagocouncil.org/research/public-opinion-survey/first-time-half-americans-favor-defending-taiwan-if-china-invades>

The first poll shows that the American majorities (60%) view Taiwan either as an ally that shares US values and interests (30%) or a necessary partner that the US must cooperate with (30%). The result proves my statement that supporting Taiwan fits US values and interests. China, on the other hand, is considered by the American majority (61%) as either a rival (32%) or an adversary (29%). The Americans' negative opinion on China will make pro-China lobbying harder and pro-Taiwan lobbying easier as I described.

However, it is worth noting that a considerable population (34%) answered "don't know" to the relationship between the US and Taiwan, meaning that there is still a space for organizations like FAPA to educate the American public on Taiwan issues. A much smaller population (15%) voted for "don't know" when it came to the US-China relations, which demonstrates that the US public has a stronger, mostly negative, opinion on China. This comparison illustrates that the driving force of the shift in public opinion on Taiwan issues is mostly negative attitudes towards China rather than positive attitudes towards Taiwan.

The second poll shows that the American majority favors recognition of Taiwan as an independent country (69%), the inclusion of Taiwan in international organizations (65%), a US-Taiwan free trade agreement (57%), and a formal US-Taiwan alliance (53%). The result demonstrates that the US public wants closer relations with Taiwan and more supportive actions for Taiwan.

* * * * *

Conclusion

In this paper, I examined the success of the Taiwan Travel Act campaign by applying three factors that were referenced in Professor Chen Yu-Wen's previous study (2007). These factors are FAPA's ability to find champions in Congress, the administration's support, and the nature of the issues.

Finding champions in Congress has always been FAPA's strength. The champions' substantial contributions can be observed in the whole TTA legislation process. The Congress members' values and beliefs, their friendships with FAPA, and their sense of achievement and expertise are the determinants for their championships.

The administration's support, on the other hand, has little to do with FAPA's campaigns. It is mostly influenced by US interests and public opinions. Also, administrations never actively support Taiwan by initiating any pro-Taiwan campaign. The most favorable administration's position for Taiwan is not to stall any pro-Taiwan act. FAPA has been good at framing Taiwan issues according to US interests and values. It becomes easier for FAPA to advocate for Taiwan when the public opinion in the US favors Taiwan over China.

I conclude that all three factors are important, yet FAPA is only capable of finding championships, framing issues, but not influencing the administrations. Also, I identified three essential determinants behind these three factors, US values, interests, and public opinions. They dictate the Congress representation and the administration's policy on Taiwan issues and lay the foundations of FAPA's legitimacy in pro-Taiwan campaigns. This fact also demonstrates that the US political system and its decision-making process effectively reflect public interests in Taiwan issues, not the wills of pro-Taiwan interest groups

I carefully examined the factors through interviews and research. However, the validity of some determinants and the relations among factors remain unchecked. I found out that some members of Congress enjoy being a Taiwan expert, but it remains unclear whether such a sense of expertise is a critical factor of their motivation, or it is just a byproduct of their long support for Taiwan. Also, I witnessed the power of Congress members' friendship with FAPA in the TTA campaign. How to effectively build and maintain friendships with members of Congress requires further studies. Or perhaps, it is more of an art than science.

I concluded that partisanship plays no significant role in either Congress's or the administration's support for Taiwan. There is no clear evidence indicating that either one political party instructs its members of Congress to vote for or against a pro-Taiwan bill for the party's preference. Also, the administration's change of attitude on Taiwan issues is caused by the change of US strategic interests and public opinions, not the values and beliefs of a single political party or US president. However, many poll results demonstrate that Republican voters generally have more positive views on Taiwan and more negative views on China than Democrat voters ⁴⁵.

⁴⁵ The Pew research of March 4, 2021, indicates that Republicans feel more "cold" toward China

Although the voters' preferences have not yet been reflected on their representatives and elected officials' stands on Taiwan issues, it is worth continuing observations that whether Taiwan will become a partisan issue in the US or not.

Finally, I addressed the importance of US public opinions, but its relationships with other factors remain unclear. It is difficult to say whether public opinions shape US values or are shaped by US values. Also, I can hypothesize that the US majorities are rational, so they form their opinions based on US interests. In that sense, US interests are a determinant for public opinions. However, I can also assume the US majorities easy to be manipulated. The administration can influence public opinions through all kinds of campaigns. In that sense, the administration's position influences public opinions, not the other way around. To conclude, public opinion is a major factor in FAPA's campaign, but its formation is a great mystery beyond the scope of this study.

Advocating for Taiwan has never been easy. FAPA's success in the TTA campaign is an uplifting example for not only Taiwanese but also other internationally disadvantaged countries or ethnicities. The FAPA's success might not be completely replicable because every organization is unique, and every campaign is particular, but understanding its success factors provides a direction for other Taiwan advocates and other struggling groups.

I always ask myself: how could I fight for Taiwan? I finished my military training in Taiwan. I know that if Taiwan is under attack, I will be honorably enlisted to defend my country. But I am sure that there are ways other than digging trenches and carrying a rifle to fight for Taiwan. It is wise to be prepared for war, and it is wiser to fight for Taiwan in peacetime so that war could be prevented. My favorite quote from Winston Churchill's famous speeches during World War II always encourages me:

(79/100) than Democrats (61/100). https://www.pewresearch.org/global/2021/03/04/most-americans-support-tough-stance-toward-china-on-human-rights-economic-issues/pg_2021-03-04_us-views-china_0-02-1/

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs study of August 26, 2021, also indicates that more Republicans (60%) support sending US troops to defend Taiwan than Democrats (50%). <https://www.thechicagocouncil.org/research/public-opinion-survey/first-time-half-americans-favor-defending-taiwan-if-china-invades>

We shall go on to the end,
We shall fight in France,
We shall fight on the seas and oceans,
We shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air
We shall defend our Island, whatever the cost may be,
We shall fight on the beaches,
We shall fight on the landing grounds,
We shall fight in the fields and in the streets,
We shall fight in the hills,
We shall never surrender.
- Winston Churchill

The British were facing a more imminent threat from Nazi Germany when prime minister Churchill gave this speech, but their determination to defend their island and to never surrender is identical to the of the Taiwanese. Indeed, modern warfare could take in any form or any place. Taiwanese need to fight on the beaches and landing grounds, when necessary, they also need to fight on the battlefield of cyber security, information warfare, and diplomacy. When Churchill's speech encouraged me to fight in the hills, I did not realize it could include the US Capitol Hill. In that sense, FAPA has done a great job fighting on the Hill for Taiwan.

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