

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 686

By Harwell

A RESOLUTION to honor Masami Kinefuchi, Consul-General of Japan, and welcome him to the General Assembly.

WHEREAS, this body takes great pleasure in warmly welcoming a gentleman who works with purpose and conviction to facilitate economic and cultural exchange between two great nations, Japan and the United States; and

WHEREAS, this gentleman is Masami Kinefuchi, who serves with distinction as Consul-General of Japan in Nashville; and

WHEREAS, appointed on April 1, 2015, Masami Kinefuchi arrived to assume his duty as Consul-General of Japan in Nashville on April 28, 2015; as of April 1, 2016, he will have held his appointment for one year; and

WHEREAS, Consul-General Masami Kinefuchi has jurisdiction over five states in the South, Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee, where more than 400 Japanese companies operate and approximately 11,400 Japanese citizens reside; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure in Nashville, Masami Kinefuchi has improved consular-related services while maintaining his government's commitment to assisting Japanese companies by hosting business seminars and other relevant events; and

WHEREAS, further, he has worked to strengthen U.S.-Japan relations and maintain the close friendship between Japan and the United States, especially in the South; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee enjoys an especially strong relationship with Japan, thanks to a robust import-export trade and key Japanese investments in the State; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, Tennessee exports to Japan totaled \$1.87 billion, an increase of thirty-nine and one-half percent since 2010; top exports from Tennessee to Japan include:

medical equipment and supplies (\$530mm); motor vehicle parts (\$319mm); navigational, measuring, medical, and control instruments (\$220mm); electrical equipment and components (\$109mm); and basic chemicals (\$93mm); and

WHEREAS, in 2015, Tennessee imported \$7.2 billion worth of goods from Japan, an increase of eighty-three percent since 2010; major import products include: motor vehicles (\$2.3bn); motor vehicle parts (\$1.4bn); navigational, measuring, medical, and control instruments (\$407mm); agricultural, construction, and mining machinery (\$399mm); and other fabricated metal products (\$370mm); and

WHEREAS, in 2015, Nissan North America, the largest Japanese employer in Tennessee, announced plans to build a \$160 million supplier park, which will create more than 1,000 automotive supplier jobs at its vehicle assembly plant in Smyrna; and

WHEREAS, in addition to Nissan, the largest Japanese employers in Tennessee are Denso, Bridgestone, Calsonic, and Yorozu; and

WHEREAS, since 2011, Japanese-owned firms have completed seventy-four economic and community development projects in our State, resulting in a commitment to 12,416 jobs and a capital investment of \$3,443,092,556 in the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development's directory of foreign-owned businesses lists more than 180 Japanese-based businesses, employing more than 46,000 individuals, in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, a seasoned diplomat, Masami Kinefuchi entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan in 1983; he has held office both in Tokyo and overseas and has served as the Minister's Secretariat and in the offices of Political Affairs, Economic Matters, Economic Cooperation, and Culture and Information; and

WHEREAS, his recent overseas assignments were Minister and Deputy Chief of the Mission at the Embassy of Japan in Australia and Egypt; and

WHEREAS, before taking the office of Consul-General, Masami Kinefuchi served as Assistant Vice Minister at the Ministry of Justice in charge of immigration policy; and

WHEREAS, Consul-General Kinefuchi graduated from the National Defense Academy of Japan in 1981 and received a Master's Degree of Strategic Studies and International Economics from the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University; and

WHEREAS, Masami Kinefuchi plays a vital role in facilitating the exchange of commerce and culture between Japan and Tennessee, and he should be specially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor Masami Kinefuchi, Consul-General of Japan, welcome him to the General Assembly and the House Chambers, and extend to him our sincere gratitude for his dedication and professionalism as Consul-General of Japan in Nashville.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.