HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. 24-282

RESOLUTION

ESTABLISHING A COUNCIL FRIENDSHIP RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CITY COUNCIL OF YAMAGUCHI CITY, JAPAN, AND THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU.

WHEREAS, Yamaguchi City, the capital of Yamaguchi Prefecture, is a culturally significant destination renowned for its unique art, culture, and natural beauty located near the western edge of Japan's main island, Honshu; and

WHEREAS, modeled after the historical capital of Japan, Yamaguchi City is known as the "Kyoto of the West" and possesses a rich and longstanding history that stems from, among other things, its location as a crucial stopping point between Hiroshima and Kyushu, which enabled the flourishing of international commerce and interactions with missionaries during the 14th through 16th centuries; and

WHEREAS, Yamaguchi City retains many prominent features from its historic past, such as the iconic five-story pagoda of Rurikoji Temple, and visitors from around the world are drawn to the city's elegant temples, castle ruins, ancient roads, gardens, hot spring baths, and cherry blossom trees; and

WHEREAS, Yamaguchi City also remains one of the intellectual and cultural hubs of Honshu Island, boasting prominent local universities and the state-of-the-art Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media, a multi-million dollar facility that hosts artistic exhibitions, performances, movie screenings, and workshops for children; and

WHEREAS, Yamaguchi City, with an estimated population of 190,000 as of 2022, shares common public policy goals with the City and County of Honolulu ("Honolulu"), including the promotion of tourism and the desire to encourage diversity and hospitality while preserving its unique environment and local culture; and

WHEREAS, Honolulu and Yamaguchi City share a long history and strong bond, beginning with the *kanyaku imin* and the immigration of over 10,000 contract laborers from Yamaguchi Prefecture to Hawai'i between 1885 and 1894; and

WHEREAS, over the years, the people of Yamaguchi and the five Yamaguchi Kenjinkai (community associations organized by descendants of Yamaguchi Prefecture that promote and perpetuate the prefecture's culture and traditions) in Hawai'i have engaged in continuous cultural exchanges, including annual fisheries training off the coast of Hawai'i by a Yamaguchi high school, reciprocal hosting and reception of

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delegations and tour groups, attending each other's various anniversary events, and study abroad and academic exchanges with Kaua'i Community College, among others; and

WHEREAS, the Honolulu Yamaguchi Kenjinkai has helped facilitate the important ongoing relationship between Yamaguchi City and Honolulu; and

WHEREAS, through the efforts of Honolulu Yamaguchi Kenjinkai and other affiliate groups, the State of Hawai'i and Yamaguchi Prefecture established a Sister-State Agreement on August 27, 2022, to "foster mutually beneficial interchange, strengthen the existing bonds of friendship and goodwill, encourage the growth of economic and educational opportunities, and promote the interchange of culture"; and

WHEREAS, the Yamaguchi City Council has also expressed an interest in establishing a Council Friendship relationship with the City Council ("Council") in order to foster a legislative association between the lawmaking bodies of both cities; and

WHEREAS, the Council welcomes the opportunity to establish a Council Friendship relationship with the Yamaguchi City Council; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that, in the spirit of aloha, it supports the establishment of a Council Friendship relationship with the City Council of Yamaguchi City, Japan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council Chair of the City and County of Honolulu is authorized to enter into an agreement with the Council Chair of Yamaguchi City, Japan, to formalize the Council Friendship relationship; and

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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor; the Managing Director; the Mayor of Yamaguchi City, Japan; and the Council Chair of Yamaguchi City, Japan.

INTRODUCED BY:

Tony Weh

DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

DEC 3 2024

Honolulu, Hawai'i

Councilmembers

Report Title:
Council Friendship Relationship; City Council of Yamaguchi City, Japan; International Relations; Cultural Exchange

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.