

**U.S.-Taiwan Relations and the Taiwan Relations Act:
Assessing a Steady Anchor in a Sea of Troubles**

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During the three and half decades since the U.S. ended formal diplomatic relations and a security treaty with the Republic of China government in Taiwan, discussions in the United States concerning U.S.-Taiwan relations have included recurrent predictions of, or calls for, a reduction or elimination of the U.S.'s support for Taiwan's security. While such assessments and advocacy have prompted spirited counterarguments invoking U.S. interests and values, some of the credit for the durability and stability of the U.S.'s security commitment goes to a legal instrument adopted in conjunction with the elimination of formal bilateral ties in 1979: the Taiwan Relations Act and its peculiarly "entrenching" effect on U.S. policy.