

**Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce of Seattle
Annual Chinese New Year and New Members
January 17, 2012 (as prepared)**

Thank you Jeff (Pai, emcee). Thank you to President Wendy Liu and to David Cho for inviting me. It is always a pleasure to join you all at these Taiwanese chamber events. And Happy Chinese New Year to everyone!

I would like to formally greet my good friend Director General Andy Chin with the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office who joins us tonight. Director General Chin and I have worked on many projects together during his time here, including two archery tournament challenges between our respective offices. We are now tied up at one and one, so we'll see what happens this year. I am very grateful for the warm and productive relationship we have developed.

I would also like to acknowledge two guests from out of town, British Columbia chamber president Patty Chen and Ruth Chang, who is the director of the Taiwan Trade Center in Vancouver. Welcome to Seattle and the state of Washington. It was nice of you to make the drive down to join us.

The Taiwanese Chamber of Commerce of Seattle is to be commended on your 27th year. You are a growing organization that really links together the Taiwanese business community not only in Seattle, but throughout the Puget Sound area. Between the full chamber and the junior chamber you are a growing, active organization that just keeps on getting better. Congratulations, by the way, to incoming junior chamber President Justin Wei.

In addition to all of the networking that you do, I applaud both the full chamber and the junior chamber are participating in extensive community work. This includes food drives, volunteering and networking beyond the Taiwanese community. I am told that the junior chamber is also focusing on helping upcoming university graduates by offering seminars on resume writing, job searching and mentoring programs.

As most of you know I am a strong advocate of mentoring because it helps young people learn and grow from those who have already made their way. So in this room we can see that senior chamber members are serving as mentors to those in the junior chamber, which is in turn helping soon-to-be graduates get a good start. Through these relationships you share knowledge, resources, values and culture. I applaud you for that.

Our state's relationship with Taiwan continues to be strong and it is a testament to all of you who help maintain those ties. We continue to build together in tourism, education and trade, all of which are important to the economies of both Taiwan and to the state of Washington.

That aside, the work that you all do really does serve as a strong voice for the Taiwanese community throughout the Puget Sound. It is an important voice because it also speaks to the freedoms you enjoy here in America and to the democracy that rules Taiwan.

We in the state of Washington are world leaders in aerospace, technology, coffee, agriculture and online retail, to name a few. It is the strength and diversity of our many communities that helps to put us in these leading positions.

Having such a strong Taiwanese business community helps us to stay diverse and maintain our wonderful relationships with Taiwan and other Asian countries.

You are making our state and country a stronger place by building a vibrant community that works hard and shares success.

I would like to conclude by saying congratulations to the new members of the chamber, as well as to all of the new chamber members and officers. May the Chinese New Year – the Year of the Goat - have great promise and bring prosperity to each of you. Thank you.