

1       A RESOLUTION recognizing the long-standing and successful economic and  
2 cultural partnership between Japan and the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

3       WHEREAS, Japan and the Commonwealth of Kentucky have shared a close  
4 economic partnership since at least 1985 when former Governor Martha Layne Collins  
5 began a series of trade missions to Japan. These missions resulted in the December 1985  
6 announcement by the Toyota Motor Corporation to choose Scott County as the site for  
7 Toyota's first wholly owned vehicle manufacturing plant in the United States; and

8       WHEREAS, other Japanese-owned businesses followed Toyota and began moving  
9 to Kentucky. Today, there are more than 200 Japanese-owned manufacturing, service,  
10 and technology facilities operating in Kentucky that employ over 45,000 Kentuckians  
11 statewide, making Japan the Commonwealth's biggest foreign investor; and

12       WHEREAS, the presence of Japanese companies in Kentucky has also fostered a  
13 network of American-owned suppliers, logistics partners, and local small businesses that  
14 provide high-quality components and raw materials used in the production process. This  
15 "ripple effect" creates an additional economic benefit for the communities where  
16 Japanese-owned businesses operate; and

17       WHEREAS, according to statistics from the United States Census Bureau,  
18 Kentucky exports more than \$1 billion in goods to Japan each year, including aircraft  
19 engines and parts; agricultural products like bourbon, beef, pork, and thoroughbred  
20 horses; pharmaceuticals; and machinery; and

21       WHEREAS, Kentucky annually imports more than \$5 billion in Japanese products  
22 ranging from blood fractions and immunological products to Japanese whisky, turbines,  
23 and motor vehicle parts; and

24       WHEREAS, although separated by thousands of miles, Kentucky and Japan also  
25 share close cultural ties; and

26       WHEREAS, among these cultural ties are a passion for producing world-renowned  
27 distilled spirits, a mutual love of horse racing, and increased people-to-people and

1 educational exchanges; and

2 WHEREAS, a highlight of the people-to-people exchanges is the successful Sister  
3 Cities program in which seven Kentucky and Japanese cities currently share sister city  
4 relationships: Elizabethtown and Koori-Machi, Frankfort and Shimamoto, Georgetown  
5 and Tahara, Lexington and Shinhidaka, Owensboro and Nisshin, Berea and Hokuto, and  
6 Morgantown and Nanao, with more sister city relationships planned for the future; and

7 WHEREAS, the relationship between Japan and Kentucky also extends to  
8 educational efforts, including multiple Kentucky universities that offer robust studies of  
9 the Japanese language and the country's culture, literature, and history. In addition,  
10 Japanese Saturday Schools are located in Elizabethtown, Lexington, and Highland  
11 Heights, Kentucky, with the Highland Heights location serving Northern Kentucky and  
12 the greater Cincinnati, Ohio, area, along with two more Saturday Schools on Kentucky's  
13 borders in New Albany and Evansville, Indiana, where students receive supplementary  
14 learning in Japanese language and culture;

15 NOW, THEREFORE,

16 *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the*  
17 *Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

18 ➔Section 1. The members of this honorable body recognize the strong economic  
19 and cultural ties between the Commonwealth of Kentucky and Japan, and express sincere  
20 appreciation for our ongoing friendship.

21 ➔Section 2. This honorable body encourages individual members to join the  
22 Kentucky Japan Caucus to look for opportunities to further advance the economic and  
23 trade relations between Kentucky and Japan.

24 ➔Section 3. The Clerk of the House of Representatives is directed to transmit a  
25 copy of this Resolution to Representative Vanessa Grossl for presentation to the  
26 Honorable Shinji Watanabe, Consul-General of Japan and Honorary Chair of the  
27 Japan/America Society of Kentucky 2026 Board of Directors.