
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

CELEBRATING THE TIES BETWEEN HAWAI'I AND THE FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES AND URGING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO APPOINT A LEAD NEGOTIATOR TO REVITALIZE AND FINALIZE THE STALLED RENEGOTIATION OF THE COMPACTS OF FREE ASSOCIATION PRIOR TO THE COMPACTS' EXPIRATION.

1 WHEREAS, the fifty-five immigrants from Micronesia who
2 arrived aboard The Stormbird in 1877 were some of the first
3 plantation labor migrants to Hawai'i; and
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5 WHEREAS, historians note that the number of Micronesian
6 migrants brought to work on plantations increased to over
7 fifteen hundred in the next few years; and
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9 WHEREAS, King Kalākaua and Queen Kapi'olani regularly
10 invited Micronesian chiefs and community leaders to birthday
11 celebrations and events at 'Iolani Palace as a sign of
12 appreciation and hospitality; and
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14 WHEREAS, the geographical and anthropological description
15 of Micronesia is a western categorization of Pacific Island
16 communities, and the term does not fully capture the complex and
17 diverse nature of the cultures in the region; and
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19 WHEREAS, the Compacts of Free Association (COFA) are
20 international agreements between the United States of America
21 and the independent nation states of the Republic of Palau,
22 Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Federated States of
23 Micronesia, collectively known as the Freely Associated States;
24 and
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1 WHEREAS, the federal government estimates that there are
2 currently over twenty-five thousand COFA migrants living in
3 Hawai'i; and
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5 WHEREAS, COFA migrants contribute to the vibrancy of
6 indigenous cultural practices in the State, helping to keep
7 native cultural traditions alive in the modern day as best
8 illustrated by the late Mau Piailug of Satawal and his entire
9 genealogy, whose contributions of their own traditional ocean
10 navigation resulted in a cultural revolution for Native
11 Hawaiians to reconnect with a part of their culture that was in
12 danger of being lost; and
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14 WHEREAS, citizens from the Freely Associated States
15 volunteer to serve in the United States Armed Forces at per
16 capita rates higher than citizens in most states; and
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18 WHEREAS, despite these hardships and challenges, COFA
19 migrants participate in economic activities by providing labor,
20 consuming goods and services, and paying fees and taxes to the
21 government, such as an estimated contribution of \$336,200,000 to
22 the Hawai'i Gross Domestic Product in 2017; and
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24 WHEREAS, COFA island families and individuals residing in
25 these countries should be fairly treated in recognition of their
26 contributions and the special and unique relationship between
27 the Freely Associated States and United States; and
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29 WHEREAS, the area in which the Freely Associated States are
30 located is incredibly strategic, lying directly on the way from
31 the United States to Asia and Australia, and whoever controls
32 those waters controls American access to the entire Indo-Pacific
33 region; and
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35 WHEREAS, these states were all integral to the Allied
36 victory in the Pacific Theatre of World War II, with the
37 Gilbert, Marshall, Mariana, and Palau Island campaigns serving
38 as the first steps in the drive across the central Pacific by
39 the United States Pacific Command; and
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41 WHEREAS, these victories were crucial in neutralizing
42 Japanese bases in the central Pacific, supporting the Allied



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1 drive to retake the Philippines, and providing bases for a
2 strategic bombing campaign against Japan; and

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4 WHEREAS, the People's Republic of China has aggressively
5 sought to expand their influence in the Pacific through
6 investment and economic assistance to the region; and

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8 WHEREAS, COFA allows the United States to operate armed
9 forces in the Freely Associates States and utilize land for
10 operating bases and, in turn, guarantees that the United States
11 is responsible for protecting these affiliate countries; and

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13 WHEREAS, the United States provides these countries access
14 to many of the United States' domestic programs, including
15 disaster response and recovery programs under the Federal
16 Emergency Management Agency; some United States Department of
17 Education programs including the Pell Grant; services provided
18 by the National Weather Service, United States Postal Service,
19 Federal Aviation Administration, and Federal Communications
20 Commission; and United States representation to the
21 International Frequency Registration Board of the International
22 Telecommunication Union; and

23
24 WHEREAS, the financial provisions of the Compacts with the
25 Federated States of Micronesia and Republic of the Marshall
26 Islands are set to expire in 2023; and

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28 WHEREAS, the financial provisions of the Compact with the
29 Republic of Palau is set to expire in 2024; and

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31 WHEREAS, negotiations were anticipated to be completed by
32 the end of 2020 but have stalled and remain incomplete; now,
33 therefore,

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35 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
36 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
37 of 2022, the Senate concurring, that this body recognizes the
38 contributions and accomplishments of the COFA community in
39 Hawai'i and the broader United States of America; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body condemns racial or
2 cultural discrimination, violence, and defamation against COFA
3 citizens; and

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5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body recognizes the geo-
6 strategic importance of these nations to the national security
7 of the United States and Hawaii against foreign adversaries,
8 particularly in light of current aggressive and illegal
9 posturing and exertion of influence by the People's Republic of
10 China in the region; and

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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body urges the President
13 of the United States and United States Congress to appoint a
14 lead negotiator to revitalize and finalize the stalled
15 negotiations of the Compacts of Free Association before any
16 portion of those compacts expire; and

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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body respectfully requests
19 the United States Congress to continue to support economic and
20 scientific assistance to the Freely Associated States; and

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22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body urges the Governor to
23 implement programs and training to combat discrimination against
24 Pacific Island communities, including expanding language access
25 and countering bullying against COFA students in public schools;
26 and

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28 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
29 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the
30 United States, Majority Leader of the United States Senate,
31 Minority Leader of the United States Senate, Speaker of the
32 United States House of Representatives, Minority Leader of the
33 United States House of Representatives, United States Secretary
34 of State, United States Secretary of Defense, United States
35 Secretary of Homeland Security, Director of United States
36 Citizenship and Immigration Services, members of Hawai'i's
37 congressional delegation, Governor, Director of Labor and
38 Industrial Relations, Director of Health, Director of Public
39 Safety, Interim Superintendent of Education, Chairperson to the
40 Hawaii Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on
41 Civil Rights, Chief Executive Officer of We Are Oceania,
42 Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat,



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1 Chair of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Center for Pacific
2 Island Studies, President of the East-West Center, President of
3 the Pacific Forum, Director of the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific
4 Center for Security Studies, and heads of state and Consulate
5 Generals of the Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall
6 Islands, and Federated States of Micronesia.

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OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'A. A.', written over a horizontal line.

MAR 11 2022

