
HOUSE 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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26 WHEREAS, the federal government estimates that there are
27 currently over twenty-five thousand COFA migrants living in
28 Hawai'i; and
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1 WHEREAS, COFA migrants contribute to the vibrancy of
2 indigenous cultural practices in the State, helping to keep
3 native cultural traditions alive in the modern day as best
4 illustrated by the late Mau Piailug of Satawal and his entire
5 genealogy, whose contributions of their own traditional ocean
6 navigation resulted in a cultural revolution for Native
7 Hawaiians to reconnect with a part of their culture that was in
8 danger of being lost; and

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10 WHEREAS, citizens from the Freely Associated States
11 volunteer to serve in the United States Armed Forces at per
12 capita rates higher than citizens in most states; and

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14 WHEREAS, despite these hardships and challenges, COFA
15 migrants participate in economic activities by providing labor,
16 consuming goods and services, and paying fees and taxes to the
17 government, such as an estimated contribution of \$336,200,000 to
18 the Hawai'i Gross Domestic Product in 2017; and

19
20 WHEREAS, COFA island families and individuals residing in
21 these countries should be fairly treated in recognition of their
22 contributions and the special and unique relationship between
23 the Freely Associated States and United States; and

24
25 WHEREAS, the area in which the Freely Associated States are
26 located is incredibly strategic, lying directly on the way from
27 the United States to Asia and Australia, and whoever controls
28 those waters controls American access to the entire Indo-Pacific
29 region; and

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31 WHEREAS, these states were all integral to the Allied
32 victory in the Pacific Theatre of World War II, with the
33 Gilbert, Marshall, Mariana, and Palau Island campaigns serving
34 as the first steps in the drive across the central Pacific by
35 the United States Pacific Command; and

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37 WHEREAS, these victories were crucial in neutralizing
38 Japanese bases in the central Pacific, supporting the Allied
39 drive to retake the Philippines, and providing bases for a
40 strategic bombing campaign against Japan; and



1 WHEREAS, the People's Republic of China has aggressively
2 sought to expand their influence in the Pacific through
3 investment and economic assistance to the region; and
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5 WHEREAS, COFA allows the United States to operate armed
6 forces in the Freely Associates States and utilize land for
7 operating bases and, in turn, guarantees that the United States
8 is responsible for protecting these affiliate countries; and
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10 WHEREAS, the United States provides these countries access
11 to many of the United States' domestic programs, including
12 disaster response and recovery programs under the Federal
13 Emergency Management Agency; some United States Department of
14 Education programs including the Pell Grant; services provided
15 by the National Weather Service, United States Postal Service,
16 Federal Aviation Administration, and Federal Communications
17 Commission; and United States representation to the
18 International Frequency Registration Board of the International
19 Telecommunication Union; and
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21 WHEREAS, the financial provisions of the Compacts with the
22 Federated States of Micronesia and Republic of the Marshall
23 Islands are set to expire in 2023; and
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25 WHEREAS, the financial provisions of the Compact with the
26 Republic of Palau is set to expire in 2024; and
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28 WHEREAS, negotiations were anticipated to be completed by
29 the end of 2020 but have stalled and remain incomplete; now,
30 therefore,
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32 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
33 Thirty-first Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
34 of 2022, that this body recognizes the contributions and
35 accomplishments of the COFA community in Hawai'i and the broader
36 United States of America; and
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38 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body condemns racial or
39 cultural discrimination, violence, and defamation against COFA
40 citizens; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body recognizes the geo-
2 strategic importance of these nations to the national security
3 of the United States and Hawaii against foreign adversaries,
4 particularly in light of current aggressive and illegal
5 posturing and exertion of influence by the People's Republic of
6 China in the region; and

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

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14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this body respectfully requests
15 the United States Congress to continue to support economic and
16 scientific assistance to the Freely Associated States; and

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

23
24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
25 Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States,
26 Majority Leader of the United States Senate, Minority Leader of
27 the United States Senate, Speaker of the United States House of
28 Representatives, Minority Leader of the United States House of
29 Representatives, United States Secretary of State, United States
30 Secretary of Defense, United States Secretary of Homeland
31 Security, Director of United States Citizenship and Immigration
32 Services, members of Hawai'i's congressional delegation,
33 Governor, Director of Labor and Industrial Relations, Director
34 of Health, Director of Public Safety, Interim Superintendent of
35 Education, Chairperson to the Hawaii Advisory Committee to the
36 United States Commission on Civil Rights, Chief Executive
37 Officer of We Are Oceania, Secretary General of the Pacific
38 Islands Forum Secretariat, Chair of the University of Hawai'i at
39 Mānoa Center for Pacific Island Studies, President of the East-
40 West Center, President of the Pacific Forum, Director of the
41 Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, and
42 heads of state and Consulate Generals of the Republic of Palau,

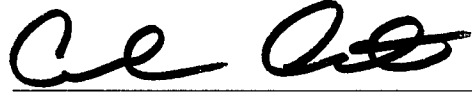


H.R. NO. 160

1 Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Federated States of
2 Micronesia.

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OFFERED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of two distinct, stylized cursive initials or names, positioned above a horizontal line.

MAR 11 2022

