
SENATE RESOLUTION

ENCOURAGING THE FACILITATION OF A PATH TO CITIZENSHIP FOR
IMMIGRANTS FROM PARTIES TO THE COMPACTS OF FREE
ASSOCIATION.

1 WHEREAS, from 1946 to 1958 the United States conducted
2 sixty seven nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands, including
3 above-ground testing and detonation of a bomb with a magnitude
4 of over 1,000 times that of the Hiroshima bombing; and
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6 WHEREAS, partially as compensation for the loss of life,
7 poor health conditions, displacement, and loss of land use due
8 to nuclear testing, the Compacts of Free Association (COFA)
9 between the United States, the Federated States of Micronesia
10 (Yap, Pohnpei, Chuuk, Kosrae), the Republic of Palau, and the
11 Republic of the Marshall Islands were established starting in or
12 around 1986; and
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14 WHEREAS, the United States has a continuing military
15 interest and presence in the region and COFA provides the United
16 States sole access to and substantial military and veto power
17 over areas of these island nations, which are considered of
18 great strategic value; and
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20 WHEREAS, COFA allows citizens of COFA nations to live and
21 legally work in the United States without visas as "non-
22 immigrants"; and
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24 WHEREAS, while citizens of COFA nations present in the
25 United States are eligible to receive some social and health
26 services that other immigrants and United States citizens can
27 receive, they are ineligible for other services including
28 Medicaid; and
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30 WHEREAS, under United States immigration law there is no
31 path to United States citizenship for citizens of COFA nations;
32 now, therefore,
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1 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-second
2 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2023,
3 that the United States Congress is encouraged to facilitate a
4 path to citizenship for immigrants from the Federated States of
5 Micronesia, the Republic of Palau, and the Republic of the
6 Marshall Islands; and
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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that United States Immigration and
9 Customs Enforcement is requested to refrain from deporting the
10 aforementioned immigrants; and
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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
13 Resolution be transmitted to the Majority Leader of the United
14 States Senate, Speaker of the United States House of
15 Representatives, members of Hawaii's congressional delegation,
16 and Director of United States Immigration and Customs
17 Enforcement.

