

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 13-188

RE: C.R. NO. 13-145/T&C

SUBJECT: NOMINATION OF MS. JANE CHIGIYAL
TO FSM TELECOMMUNICATION BOARD

NOVEMBER 02, 2004

The Honorable Peter M. Christian
Speaker, Thirteenth Congress
Federated States of Micronesia
Fourth Regular Session, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Transportation and Communications to which was referred C.R. No. 13-145, entitled:

"A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MS. JANE J. CHIGIYAL TO BE THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE FSM TELECOMMUNICATION CORPORATION.";

begs leave to report as follows:

The intent and purpose of the resolution are expressed in its title.

The nomination of Ms. Jane J. Chigiyal to be the national government representative on the board of directors (Board) of the FSM Telecommunication Corporation was transmitted to Congress via Presidential Communication No. 13-216. It states that the nominee holds a Master's Degree in international relations and trade and has held increasingly responsible positions in the FSM Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) for over twelve years.

Your Committee held a public hearing on Friday, October 29, 2004 to review and discuss the nomination. In attendance were representatives from FSM Telecommunication Corporation, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Transportation, Communication and Infrastructure (TC&I) and the President's Office. The nominee could not attend the public hearing.

The chairman thanked the witnesses from the respective departments and also the representatives from FSM Telecommunication Corporation. A concern was raised over Ms. Chigiyal's lack of background with technical telecommunication issues. The chairman asked the President's representative why the President had not nominated someone from TC&I given his or her knowledge of the technical issues involved. A representative from Telecommunication Corporation stated that most members of the Board do not possess technical knowledge coming into the position, and that FSM Telecommunication Corporation offers a

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"three day course" on issues relating to the Corporation for all new members.

Tony Otto from the President's Office explained that the nominee could not attend the public hearing due to her off-island medical appointment. He indicated that the nominee, however, sent a letter addressed to him, in which she explained the reason for her absence and her views on the nomination. In her letter, the nominee stated that, in her current position with the Department of Foreign Affairs, where she currently heads the Division of the Americas and Europe, she is responsible for issues and matters relating to telecommunication assistance. She believes that she can contribute to the policies of the FSM Telecommunications. Further, she would like to see that telecommunication services and telecommunication technology are affordable and widely accessible to everybody and fully utilized for the purposes of advancing education and telemedicine. Further, she commented that, while there are many positive features of telecommunication technology, we have to be mindful of the negative impacts, which need to be regulated.

Your Committee further invited comments from the witnesses who were present during the public hearing. A representative of the FSM Telecommunication Corporation stated that he had no official comment on the nomination, for two reasons. First, he did not know the nominee. Second, it is his pleasure to work with anyone nominated by the President and confirmed by Congress.

The Secretary of TC&I spoke favorably on the nomination. He commented that the content of the nominee's letter is a sign that she was well versed in telecommunication issues and she knows what FSM Telecommunication Corporation should be doing. He stated that the nominee should be well suited for the nature of the work required by this position. The Secretary of DFA stated that the nominee has worked with some of the bilateral aspects of telecommunication issues, such as the fiber optic cable deal being negotiated with the United States, and she was in charge of telecommunications affairs of the FSM with Europe. He further stated he did not know why the nomination came from his department, and added that the position would give the candidate the ability to broaden her expertise. He commented that a female candidate is an advantage that might boost interest for women in the public to seek public service careers.

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Your Committee inquired as to the reason for the change of the current National Government representative on the Board. Tony Otto stated that Mr. Valerio Hallens is the current representative of the National Government on the Board and his term will be expiring on October 30, 2004.

Your committee is concerned about the nominee's lack of technical qualifications as well as her junior standing within the National Government. Your committee thinks that it is important that Board members possess a good grasp of business concepts. Your committee agreed with others on the importance of inhousing the participation of women in the government, but that this was too important a position for that to be the prime motivating factor, and hoped that was not the case here.

Based upon the information and comments received, your committee on Transportation and Communication is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.R. No. 13-145 and recommends its adoption.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Moses A. Nelson
Moses A. Nelson, chairman

/s/ Dion G. Neth
Dion G. Neth, vice chairman

/s/ Tiwiter Aritos
Tiwiter Aritos, member

Peter M. Christian, member

Claude H. Phillip, member

/s/ Ramon Peyal
Ramon Peyal, member