

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 15-63

RE: C.R. NO. 15-65/J&GO

SUBJECT: CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MR. SEBERIANO O.
BARNABAS TO SERVE AS NATIONAL ELECTION
COMMISSIONER FOR POHNPEI STATE

NOVEMBER 22, 2007

The Honorable Isaac V. Figir
Speaker, Fifteenth Congress
Federated States of Micronesia
Second Regular Session, 2007

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations ("J&GO"), to which was referred C.R. No. 15-65 entitled:

"A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MR. SEBERIANO O. BARNABAS TO SERVE AS NATIONAL ELECTION COMMISSIONER FOR POHNPEI STATE.",

begs leave to report as follows:

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

Mr. Seberiano O. Barnabas has been nominated by the President of the Federated States of Micronesia to serve as the National Election Commissioner for the State of Pohnpei. Title 9, section 302(2)(a) of the Code of the Federated States of Micronesia sets out that this nomination is subject to the advice and consent of Congress. Before its own consideration of the nominee, your committee assumes that, as this nomination has been submitted by the President, the President has made a thorough review and screening of the nominee's abilities and qualifications for the position.

Mr. Barnabas' curriculum vitae is included in Presidential Communication 15-102 and is summarized here. Mr. Barnabas attended the University of Guam from 1983 until 1986 and the College of Micronesia, National Campus, at two different times, 1993 to 1994 and 1999 to 2001. The CV does not mention what degrees, diplomas or certificates the nominee earned, if any. Mr. Barnabas has had a variety of training, including Trial Counselor Training through the FSM Supreme Court.

Mr. Barnabas has served as the Pohnpei State National Election Commissioner since 2002. He is currently acting as a consultant in that position. From 1999 until 2002, he served as an electoral aide in the Pohnpei National Election Office. Previously, the nominee has been employed as Chief Clerk of the Kitti Municipal Court, a classroom teacher, a field researcher and a secretary/treasurer.

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PUBLIC HEARING

Your committee held a hearing on this nomination on the morning of 20 November 2007. The nominee appeared. Mr. Jonathan John, the National Election Director, was also present. Chairman Sitan was present, along with Senators Halbert, Nelson, Neth, Primo, Urusemal and Welly. The President's Chief of Staff also attended.

Mr. Barnabas stated that he accepts the nomination, noting "the Election Director is my boss and the election code is my Bible". He suggested the work of the Pohnpei office could be improved through upgraded registration.

Mr. John said he had not been consulted with regard to the state election nominees. He also said that the most recent Pohnpei election had gone well.

Senator Nelson commented he has been impressed by the professionalism of the nominee. Nevertheless, commented Senator Halbert, there is room for improvement. He noted that he had tried to get in touch with the Pohnpei National Election Commissioner on the most recent Election Day, only to learn that Mr. Barnabas was participating in a meeting at the Pohnpei Port Authority. This non-responsiveness, Senator Halbert suggested, should not be repeated.

CONCLUSION

Based on its consideration of the qualifications of the nominee, written comments received and the public hearing, your committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.R. No. 15-65 and recommends its adoption in the form attached hereto as C.R. No. 15-65.

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Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Peter Sitan
Peter Sitan, chairman

/s/ Fredrico O. Primo
Fredrico O. Primo, vice chairman

/s/ Tiwiter Aritos
Tiwiter Aritos, member

/s/ Isaac V. Figir
Isaac V. Figir, member

/s/ Dohsis Halbert
Dohsis Halbert, member

/s/ Moses A. Nelson
Moses A. Nelson, member

/s/ Paliknoa K. Welly
Paliknoa K. Welly, member