

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 15-95

RE: C.R. NO. 15-92/R&D

SUBJECT: NOMINATION OF MR. RENSLEY SIGRAH AS THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE ON THE NATIONAL OCEANIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY.

APRIL 01, 2008

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

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Resources and Development, to which was referred C.R. No. 15-92, entitled:

"A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MR. RENSLEY SIGRAH TO BE A MEMBER ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NATIONAL OCEANIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (NORMA).",

begs leave to report as follows:

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

Presidential Communication No. 15-128 transmitted the nomination of Mr. Rensley Sigrah to Congress along with ten other Presidential nominations on February 4, 2008. Biographical information concerning Mr. Sigrah's qualifications was provided to this Committee in the form of a "resume" on February 18, 2008. A public hearing was held on March 28, 2008.

Presidential Communication 15-128 urges Congress to favorably consider this nomination as a member of NORMA representing the National Government. The resume outlines Mr. Sigrah's qualifications.

At the outset it is noted 24 FSMC 201 requires that all nominations for membership on NORMA receive the advice and consent of Congress. The President is required to appoint one member from each of the States "in consultation with the Governor" and "one at large member." Proposed Resolution C.R. No. 92 recites that Mr. Sigrah is nominated "to serve on the Board of NORMA as the National Government representative."

The written information provided to your Committee subsequent to Presidential Communication 15-128 reveals that Mr. Sigrah has a Bachelor of Science degree in the field of Business Administration and a Masters Degree in Management and Organizational Development. His record of public service includes employment as the Deputy Director of Education for Kosrae State, nearly fourteen years as Kosrae State

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Director of Finance and Treasury and a short time as Assistant General Manager of Kosrae Utilities Authority before becoming the Federated States of Micronesia Public Auditor/Auditor General. Between 1999 and 2007 Mr. Sigrah served as the elected Governor of the State of Kosrae.

In addition to his academic and public service history, Mr. Sigrah has a number of present and past affiliations to add to his resume. Included is membership on EPIC and CEC, the Board of Governors of the Pacific Islands Development Bank, the Micronesian Islands Chief Executive Council and the FSM FDA.

Your Committee held a public hearing on March 28, 2008 for the purpose of reviewing and discussing all of the President's nominations to NORMA, of which Mr. Sigrah's nomination was one. According to the Executive Director of NORMA, Bernard Thoulag, Mr. Sigrah's background in management responsibilities with the Kosrae and National Governments should enable the nominee to perform the responsibilities of NORMA.

Chairman Neth noted an absence of any specific reference to experience with the fisheries industry in the nominee's resume. Mr. Thoulag stated that despite that apparent lack of qualifications in fisheries, he believed the nominee's years of service as Governor of Kosrae would necessarily have exposed him to some fisheries issues. He expressed his belief that the nominee can make a positive contribution to the work of the Authority and expressed his support for the President's nomination.

Senator Joseph Urusemal observed that it has long been the practice in the FSM of nominating someone from Foreign Affairs to serve as the National Government member on NORMA. He asked Mr. Thoulag to respond. The witness acknowledged that was true. He stated that the functions of NORMA are National in nature and that its responsibilities frequently overlap with National foreign affairs interests. He cited international fisheries agreements and international boundaries delimitation treaties as examples. Mr. Thoulag described current issues involving continental shelves and the potential for expanding the Nations EEZ as additional examples of NORMA activities that benefit from a foreign affairs perspective.

Your Committee agrees that Mr. Sigrah's educational, working and political background should qualify him as a member of the National

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Oceanic Resource Management Authority but wishes to express its concern over the nominee's lack of significant fisheries experience. Further, your Committee is also concerned with the apparent departure by the President from the established practice of nominating someone from the National Government Foreign Affairs Department as the National Member of NORMA.

Your Committee on Resources and Development is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.R. No. 15-92 and recommends its adoption, with reservations.

Respectfully submitted,

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

/s/ Setiro Paul
Setiro Paul, vice chairman

/s/ Resio S. Moses
Resio S. Moses, member

/s/ Peter Sitan w/reservation
Peter Sitan, member

/s/ Joe N. Suka
Joe N. Suka, member

Joseph J. Urusemal, member

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