

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 16-125

RE: C.R. NO. 16-140/EDUCATION

SUBJECT: CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MRS. MARY BERNGUN
FIGIR TO THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE COLLEGE OF
MICRONESIA-FSM

JANUARY 18, 2011

The Honorable Isaac V. Figir
Speaker, Sixteenth Congress
Federated States of Micronesia
Sixth Regular Session, 2011

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred C.R. No. 16-140
entitled:

"A RESOLUTION TO CONFIRM THE NOMINATION OF MRS. MARY
BERNGUN FIGIR TO SERVE AS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF
REGENTS OF THE COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA-FSM, REPRESENTING
YAP STATE.",

begs leave to report as follows:

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

Mrs. Mary Berngun Figir has been nominated by the President in
accordance with section 706(1) of title 40 of the Code of the
Federated States of Micronesia; her nomination is subject to the
advice and consent of Congress. C.R. No. 16-140 was transmitted to
Congress on October 7, 2010 through P.C. No. 16-298.

NOMINEE BACKGROUND

A Curriculum Vitea was submitted with P.C. No. 16-298 and is
summarized briefly herein.

Mrs. Figir attended Gagil Elementary School and graduated from Yap
High School; she then went on to attend the University of Guam,
graduating with a Bachelor of Arts, and later earned a Master of
Public Health from the University of Hawaii.

Mrs. Figir has a lengthy employment history of public service,
including as a Nurse at Yap Hospital; Teacher at Yap High School;

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JANUARY 18, 2011

Student Counselor at the College of Micronesia; Director of Health Services at Yap State Department of Health from 1984 to 1990; Local Handicraft Promoter from 1995 to the present; and Trial Counselor at the Office of the Public Defender from 2001-2008. Mrs. Figir is also very active in the Yap Community, and belongs to the Yap Women Association; Mental Health and Substance Abuse Board; and the EPA. Mrs. Figir has previously served on the Xavier High School Board of Directors (1985-1987), and has substantial international travel experience, including a Rights of Women tour in the United States, and attending the 1st Right of the Child Conference in Sydney, Australia.

Mrs. Figir has served as a Member on the Board of Regents of the College of Micronesia-FSM since September 2007 and has been nominated to serve a second term, as permissible under section 708(2) of title 40 of the Code of the Federated States of Micronesia.

PUBLIC HEARING

Your Committee held a public hearing on C.R. No. 16-140 on November 22, 2010. In attendance at the hearing were: Chairman Joseph J. Urusemal; Floor Leader Joe N. Suka; Senator Paliknoa K. Welly; Senator Dohsis Halbert; Spensin James, President of COM-FSM; Lieutenant Governor Churchill Edward, Member of Board of Regents COM-FSM representing Pohnpei State; Jim Currie, Vice President for Cooperative Research and Extension/COM-FSM; Ringlen P. Ringlen, Vice President for Student Services/COM-FSM; Joe Habuchmai, Vice President of Administrative Services/COM-FSM; and Jean Thoulag, Vice President of Instructional Affairs/COM-FSM.

Chairman Urusemal opened the hearing by welcoming all of the witnesses, thanking them for their participation in the hearing, and invited general comments on the nominee.

Current Board Member Lieutenant Governor Edward expressed his full support for the nominee. Mr. Churchill was confirmed by Congress to serve on the Board of Regents of the College of Micronesia-FSM in December 2009; based on his experience working with the nominee since that time, Mr. Edward supports Mrs. Figir's continued service on the Board as the Board continues the process of taking the college to the next level.

Spensin James, President of the College of Micronesia-FSM, offered his comments for the record. Mr. James thanked the Committee for the opportunity to comment on the nominee, and introduced the four Vice Presidents also in attendance, noting that all four wished to come to

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the hearing in order to show their support for the nominee. Mr. James stated that the College currently enjoys a very cooperative experience working with the current Board, of which Mrs. Figir is a Member; the current Board has shown impressive leadership over these recent years.

The four Vice Presidents of the College also offered comments in support of Mrs. Figir's nomination to serve a second term. Ms. Thoulag spoke of the supportive assistance and direction that the current Board provides to the College; specifically that Mrs. Figir is consistently well informed, up to date on all current reports, and asks the College great questions during the meetings. Mr. Currie echoed those comments, stating that the current Board challenges the College Administration, which is beneficial to the College as a whole. Mr. Habuchmai offered further endorsement of the nominee, and specifically that Mrs. Figir's input is valuable because of her familiarity with the College. Mr. Ringlen expressed his support to keep the current Board composition as it is; because of the decrement in Compact funding, maintaining the same Board will be useful as the Board continues to look ahead and plan for the financial future of the College.

Mrs. Figir opened her remarks by thanking the Committee for the opportunity to appear, and thanking all present for their time and support. Mrs. Figir spoke of her enjoyment serving on the Board the past three years, and her willingness to continue to serve on the Board.

Mrs. Figir disclosed that she is also a Board Member of the Board of the new Caroline College and Pastoral Institute (CCPI) in Chuuk. Mrs. Figir stated that she did not believe there was a conflict in serving on the two boards; CCPI currently enrolls about two dozen students who will continue their studies in the South Pacific to become priests. The Board at CCPI serves in an advisory capacity only; Bishop Amando Samo is the sole decision maker at the Institute. Mrs. Figir expressed a willingness to step down from the CCPI Board if the Committee felt there was a conflict in interest; her current term at CCPI ends in August 2011.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Your Committee notes that Mrs. Figir has a long history of public service and service to her community. Your Committee is confident that the nominee has the necessary education, experience and skills to continue to serve on the Board of Regents of the College of Micronesia-FSM.

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JANUARY 18, 2011

Your Committee further feels confident that there is no conflict of interest concerning Mrs. Figir serving on multiple boards; the College of Micronesia-FSM and CCPI are two institutions of higher learning with very divergent goals and curriculums, and would not be in competition with each other in the recruitment of students.

Your Committee recommends the following amendments to C.R. No. 16-140:

1. Page 2, line 13, delete "Fifth Special Session, 2010" and insert "Sixth Regular Session, 2011" in lieu thereof.

CONCLUSION

Your Committee on Education is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.R. No. 16-140, and recommends its adoption in the form attached hereto C.R. No. 16-140, C.D.1.

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Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Joseph J. Urusemal
Joseph J. Urusemal, chairman

/s/ Claude H. Phillip
Claude H. Phillip, vice-chairman

Dohsis Halbert, member

/s/ Setiro Paul
Setiro Paul, member

/s/ Fredrico O. Primo
Fredrico O. Primo, member

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

/s/ Peter S. Sitan
Peter S. Sitan, Member