

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 16-127

RE: C.R. NO. 16-142/EDUCATION

SUBJECT: CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MR. LYNDON L.
CORNELIUS TO THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE
COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA-FSM

JANUARY 19, 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. 16-142
entitled:

"A RESOLUTION TO CONFIRM THE NOMINATION OF MR. LYNDON L.
CORNELIUS TO SERVE AS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF
THE COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA-FSM, REPRESENTING KOSRAE STATE.",

begs leave to report as follows:

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

Mr. Lyndon L. Cornelius has been nominated by the President in
accordance with Section 706(1) of title 40 of the Code of the
Federated States of Micronesia; his nomination is subject to the
advice and consent of Congress. C.R. No. 16-142 was transmitted to
Congress on October 7, 2010 through P.C. No. 16-300.

NOMINEE BACKGROUND

A Curriculum Vitae was submitted with P.C. No. 16-300 and is
summarized briefly herein.

Mr. Cornelius attended Malem Elementary School, Kosrae High School,
and received his Diploma from Niobrara County High School; he then
went on to attend Cerritos Junior College and received his Bachelor of
Arts degree from Hawaii Pacific College in Honolulu, Hawaii. Mr.
Cornelius also attended two years of Linguistics Training at the East-
West Center in Honolulu. Mr. Cornelius has also attended an

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impressive list of trainings, workshops and conferences over the past thirty-five years; the Committee notes his dedication to continuing education.

Mr. Cornelius has a lengthy employment history of public service, including as a Teacher at Kosrae High School; Trial Counselor at Micronesia Legal Services; Vocational Rehabilitation Coordinator and later Administrative Officer at the Kosrae State Department of Education; Senator in the Kosrae State Legislature, where he held the position of Chairman of the Committee on Health, Education & Social Affairs; and Associate Justice and later Chief Justice of the Kosrae State Court.

Mr. Cornelius has served on many Boards in Kosrae State, including the Kosrae Island Credit Union Board of Directors; Kosrae Island Cooperative Association; CCM Board of Regents; and the Executive Service Appeals Board. Mr. Cornelius has served as a Member on the Board of Regents of the College of Micronesia-FSM since 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 public hearings on C.R. No. 16-142 on November 22, 2010 and January 12, 2011. In attendance at the hearings were: Chairman Joseph J. Urusemal; Floor Leader Joe N. Suka; Senator Paliknoa K. Welly; Senator Dohsis Halbert; Senator Tony Otto; Spensin James, President of COM-FSM; Lieutenant Governor Churchill Edward, Member of the 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.

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 the continued service of the nominee on the Board.

Spensin James, President of the College of Micronesia-FSM introduced the four Vice Presidents in attendance with him at the hearing, and expressed the Administration's full support for the nominee. Mr. James stated that the College currently enjoys collaborating with the

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Board on important matters, and that the current Board has shown impressive leadership over these recent years. Mr. James supports maintaining the current composition of the Board.

The four Vice Presidents of the College also offered comments in support of Mr. Cornelius' nomination to serve a second term. Ms. Thoulag spoke of the strong working relationship the College currently enjoys with the Board. Mr. Currie reiterated those comments, stating that the current Board is a great Board to report to, and challenges the College Administration with positive outcomes. Mr. Habuchmai expressed his support to keep the current Board composition as it is; a lot of the positive changes and progress occurring today is due to the work of these Board Members. Mr. Ringlen echoed those comments; stating that the current Board is in the best position to continue to work on the financial stability of the College as the Compact funding decreases in the coming years.

Mr. Cornelius was unable to attend the first hearing, held on November 22, 2010, and provided written comments to the Committee Chair indicating his willingness and interest to continue to serve on the Board. Mr. Cornelius also highlighted some of the current work of the Board, including addressing the high turnover of faculty at the College, and problems retaining qualified faculty. Mr. Cornelius indicated that the current Board has authorized a job audit to be conducted to see if compensation at the College is fair and comparable with Colleges within the region. Mr. Cornelius stated that maintaining the current Board composition would assist in keeping the momentum going on dealing with this major issue.

The Committee was able to meet with Mr. Cornelius in person on January 12, 2011. Mr. Cornelius reiterated that the current Board is working on addressing the problem of faculty turnover and salary, and is looking at what other colleges in the area are doing in that regard; Palau for example has the lowest faculty turnover rate in the region.

In response to questions by the Committee, Mr. Cornelius indicated that another issue the Board is addressing is the future of FMI, and that a comprehensive master plan is being formulated. Mr. Cornelius informed the Committee that one of the obstacles is that FMI students are not eligible for the Pell Grant; if the facility expanded and/or restructured to a vocational school, the funding options could include Pell Grants.

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The future of the Chuuk Campus was also noted as a concern by the Committee; Mr. Cornelius stated that the current Board is in full support of a permanent site for the Chuuk Campus.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Your Committee notes that Mr. Cornelius has a long and impressive history of education and public service. 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.

Your Committee recommends the following amendment to C.R. No. 16-142:

- 1. Page 2, line 7, 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. 16-142, as amended herein, and recommends its adoption in the form attached hereto, C.R. No. 16-142, C.D.1.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Claude H. Phillip, vice-chairman

Dohsis Halbert, member

/s/ Setiro Paul
Setiro Paul, member

Fredrico O. Primo, member

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

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/s/ Peter S. Sitan
Peter S. Sitan, member