

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 16-5

RE: COMMITTEE TO WAIT ON THE PRESIDENT

JANUARY 28, 2010

The Honorable Isaac V. Figir
Speaker, Sixteenth Congress
Federated States of Micronesia
Third Regular Session, 2010

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee to Wait on the President consisting of Chairman Peter Christian and Senators Paliknoa K. Welly, Peter Sitan and Joseph J. Urusemal was duly appointed on January 25, 2010.

Your Committee met with Vice President Alik (as President Mori is en route returning from Israel) at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 26, 2010.

Also in attendance were Special Assistant to the President on Legislative Affairs, Pelsesar Petrus; Special Assistant to the President on Public Information, Patrick Blank; Chief of Staff, Kasio E. Mida; Francis Itimai, Secretary of TC&I; Johnson Asher, Acting Secretary for the Department of Justice; Midion Neth from PMG; Dr. Vita Skilling, Secretary of the Department of Health and Social Affairs; Angie M. Lambert from the Department of Finance; Jane Chigiyal from Foreign Affairs; Namio Nanpei from CDA; Josiah Waguk from the President's Office; Joey Sapelalut, Public Defender and Marcelino Actuoka from PMU. Staff Attorney Marsha R. Kennedy staffed the Committee.

Chairman Christian greeted the Vice President and members of his cabinet and informed the Vice President that the Congress had convened and was ready to transact business.

The Vice President thanked the Congress and listed the following items as priorities for this Regular Session: nominations, the proposed supplementary budget, submitted bills and grants. The Vice President also noted that he is conscious of having cabinet members here to assist Congress in this Session.

Executive's Priorities

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Bills

The Vice President requested that the Congress work to pass the bills submitted by the Executive branch.

Nominations

Vice President Alik requested that the three outstanding nominations be placed on the agenda for this Session.

Supplemental Budget

Vice President Alik noted that the main issue for this session should be the supplementary budget especially the docking of the Voyager.

The Vice President also noted that although the Executive Branch supports a state and national leadership conference there is no funding to do so.

Grants

Vice President Alik noted that there is a grant from China and a \$700,000 grant from Italy regarding solar power that need to be acted on this Session.

There are also two additional grants which will be submitted when finalized.

Committee Concerns

Your Committee also noted its main concerns namely:

Fuel

Senator Sitan expressed a concern regarding the distribution of fuel. He requested that the Department of Resources and Development complete a report on this issue.

Finances

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Senator Christian noted that finance, particularly the delays in processing and payments, is a main concern. He suggested that perhaps the government needs to be "right-sized" after its previous downsizing.

The Vice President noted that even after the government downsizing that the departments have had additional responsibilities added to them.

Senator Urusemal noted that he does not have any problems with the Department of Finance after learning, through experience, that certain channels yield unfruitful but a call to Ms. Lambert normally yields a quick response.

Senator Urusemal indicated that he was concerned about the \$2 million grant previously approved by Congress. He had hoped that the states would be using this money for power generation by now.

Senator Urusemal also raised some concerns regarding the recent Presidential veto.

Mr. Nanpei from the Coconut Development Authority was questioned whether the price of copra is still \$0.15/lb. He stated that it still was. Your Committee noted that his department may be called in to brief the Members of Congress on the copra forecasts. Mr. Nanpei noted that copra is not prepared until a ship is known to be coming due to storage issues.

Your Committee also questioned the Executive's cabinet regarding the Yap ship. Mr. Itimai, Secretary of the Department of Transportation and Communication stated that the ship is currently down but scheduled to leave on the 21st for a field trip.

Chairman Christian also questioned regarding the recent media on the H1N1 vaccinations. Dr. Skilling, Secretary of Health and Social Affairs, noted that there are all sorts of untrue rumors surfacing regarding the virus not being real and the vaccines not working. She will work to counter this bad media beginning with an article in the paper. Dr. Skilling also noted that there are enough vaccinations for the target groups.

The meeting was brought to a close with warm gratitude and mutual expressions of appreciation and good wishes for a successful Session.

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Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Peter M. Christian
Peter M. Christian, Chairman

/s/ Joseph J. Urusemal
Joseph J. Urusemal, Member

/s/ Paliknoa K. Welly
Paliknoa K. Welly, Member

Peter Sitan, Member