

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 16-6

RE: COMMITTEE TO WAIT ON THE PRESIDENT

MARCH 22, 2010

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

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee to Wait on the President consisting of Chairman Fredrico O. Primo and Senators Joseph J. Urusemal, Paliknoa K. Welly and Peter Sitan was duly appointed on March 20, 2010.

The Committee met with the President at 8:30 a.m. on Sunday, March 21, 2010. Also on attendance were: Vice President Alik Alik; Special Assistant to the President on Legislative Affairs, Pelsesar Petrus; Chief of Staff, Kasio E. Mida and Director of S.B.O.C, Fabian Nimea. Staff Attorney Marsha R. Kennedy staffed the Committee.

The Sunday meeting convened with a prayer offered by Special Assistant to the President on Legislative Affairs, Pelsesar Petrus.

Chairman Primo greeted the President and members of his cabinet and informed the President that the Congress had convened for a special session and was ready to transact business.

The President thanked the Congress and listed the following items as priorities for this Special Session: nominations, treaties and grants, and pending legislation.

Nominations

The President stated that there are currently three openings for justices in the FSM Supreme Court. The President stated that his office will be submitting nominations. President Mori wants to fill the opening for Chief Justice immediately. Senator Sitan stated that it is important for nominations especially those for judges to go to the states since they are lifetime appointments.

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The President also stated that filling the Consul General vacancy in Honolulu is a priority.

The President noted that his nomination of Ihlen Joseph needs to be acted upon. Senator Sitan mentioned that the nomination of Ihlen Joseph had been assigned to the incorrect committee and needs reassigning. If this nomination is not acted upon during this session, it will expire.

Treaties and Grants

President Mori informed your Committee that the following grants should be of priority: the Japanese grant for solar power; \$1 million from China which is ready for transfer but needs to be accepted by the government; and a \$14 million EIB grant for matching projects from the Compact. The President also stated that the landmines treaty and the anti-whaling treaty should be of priority.

Mr. Nimea, Director of S.B.O.C. stated that the \$14 million matching funds from the EIB is 50-50 matching and this funding will be provided for ongoing projects.

With regards to the landmines treaty, President Mori stated that he could not understand why the FSM would not join for humanitarian reasons and for the protection of its own citizens despite the diplomatic note received from the U.S. Government. It was explained that the reasoning of the diplomatic note is that since the U.S. is in charge of the FSM's defense, if the FSM ratifies the treaty, its citizens (including those serving in the U.S. Military) cannot be sent to places where they might be harmed by landmines. Mr. Mida, the President's Chief of Staff, also noted that the majority of United Nations members including the Republic of the Marshall Islands and Palau the Republic of Palau have already ratified this treaty.

Mr. Mida also noted that the U.S. is now not as vehemently opposed to the FSM's membership, as portrayed in the diplomatic note. However, this sentiment has not been put into writing. The Committee also expressed its concern over the way that this matter has been handled since the diplomatic note was delivered to the FSM Embassy.

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Pending Legislation

President Mori stated that the following legislation should be of priority: C.B. 16-08, regarding government regulation of telecommunications; C.B. 16-63, regarding financial disclosures for elections; and C.B. 16-85 regarding the appropriation of \$9.2 million for infrastructure projects for the state and national governments.

President Mori noted that C.B. 16-08 is important because it is necessary to balance government and private telecommunications interests. President Mori stated that even with privatization, it will be important to have a government regulation arm for telecommunications.

Concerning C.B. 16-63, Senator Sitan noted that he wants the Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations to take the financial disclosures bills to the states.

The Committee stated that the delay regarding the \$9.2 million is the specific language used in the law since FSM law specifically states that the national government share shall be 10%. The President remarked that future bills would have the specific shares enumerated.

Other Important Issues

President Mori stated that it is important for Congress to consider his request for a State of the nation address to be made in May in accordance with FSM law.

President Mori mentioned that there also are some urgent reasons for supplemental budget requests which will be submitted.

Senator Sitan requested that the President's Office please submit their list detailing the President's priorities to the Congress.

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The meeting was brought to a close with mutual expressions of appreciation and good wishes.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/ Fredrico O. Primo
Fredrico O. Primo, Chairman

/s/ Joseph J. Urusemal
Joseph J. Urusemal, member

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

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