

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 17-02

RE: COMMITTEE TO WAIT ON THE PRESIDENT

JULY 27, 2011

The Honorable Isaac V. Figir
Speaker, Seventeenth Congress
Federated States of Micronesia
First Special Session, 2011

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee to Wait on the President, consisting of members Joseph J. Urusemal, Wesley W. Simina, Yosiwo P. George, and Chairman Peter M. Christian, was duly appointed on July 25, 2011.

The Committee met with President Manny Mori and Vice-President Alik L. Alik on July 26, 2011. Also in attendance were senior government officials and staff.

Chairman Christian informed the President that Congress was fully organized and ready to transact business, and that its two new members had been duly seated.

The President welcomed the members of the Committee and congratulated Senator Simina and Senator George on their election. He expressed his wish that Congress focus on two issues during this special session: first, his nominations, and second, pending grant awards. He expressed his hope that because most of his nominees were already known to Congress, Congress could easily decide whether it was appropriate for them to continue.

The President also hoped Congress would be able to indicate whether it supported his proposal to mark the 25th anniversary of our Nation's independence. He noted that this year's National Prayer Day, to be held in Yap, would be the last one to complete the four-year cycle of its celebration in each of the states.

He stated that there would be no supplemental budget request from the Executive this session, because there are no further domestic

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RE: COMMITTEE TO WAIT ON THE PRESIDENT

JULY 27, 2011

funds available to appropriate. He has stopped all travel, and his nominees are at Congress's disposal for nomination hearings.

Chairman Christian thanked the President. He expressed his hope that Congress and the Executive would make good on their promises to work together cooperatively. He stated Congress would do its best to address the issues raised by the President within the limited time of the session. He requested clarification on whether the members of the cabinet had resigned.

The President said that all members of his cabinet have submitted courtesy resignations and that he had accepted some. The Committee requested a list showing which resignations have been accepted. There was some discussion of the appropriate process to be followed. The President indicated that he had been advised that there was a deadline of August 9 for his acceptance of resignations, and after that date cabinet members would either have to leave or be hired under a special contract with the appropriate department.

The members of the Committee and the President agreed that there needed to be a clarification and review of transition procedures for the benefit of the next president.

Senator Urusemal, Senator Simina, and Senator George each greeted the President, Vice President, government officials and staff, and conveyed greetings from their respective states.

Vice President Alik joined the President in thanking the members for their attendance. He added that in addition to the issues raised by the President, the human trafficking protocol was also a priority. Senator George agreed that this was an important issue, and that model legislation should be drafted for the states to implement. Senator Simina agreed that although treaties are important, the most important task is for the Nation and states to develop their own laws on this issue. Chairman Christian stated that any action should reflect the fact that this was an issue the Nation was sincerely interested in and should not be driven by international pressure. Senator Urusemal said that he and Speaker had raised this issue with citizens on a recent trip to the outer islands of Yap.

The President commended the involvement of citizens in remote areas in such discussions, and stated his wish that funding be provided to make aircraft available for such visits, as requested

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JULY 27, 2011

as part of the FY 2012 budget. Chairman Christian suggested the improvement of runways in such areas was a more pressing need.

Senator Urusemal inquired as to the status of the five-year review of the Amended Compact. The President stated his intention to invite members of Congress to a lunch to discuss the review with appropriate staff, perhaps towards the end of our session or immediately afterwards.

Chairman Christian expressed his hope that the focus would be on looking forward to the next five years rather than just auditing past procedures. He also suggested a review of current laws within the next four years, to identify those that had outlived their usefulness.

Senator Simina asked how the Executive was addressing the issue of migration to the United States, raised by some members of the US Congress. The President responded that he had not received any formal communication on this issue, but that he was intending to appoint a task force to address it and that he hoped members of Congress would be able to be involved.

Senator Simina also asked if the Executive could communicate to Congress an update on the status of resolutions passed at the economic symposium held earlier this year. Chairman Christian asked for a similar update on the progress of the Korean fisheries negotiations.

The President asked if he could raise an issue related to the upcoming inauguration, and asked for input on the dress code. The consensus was that public officials and members should wear island shirts, with plain colors rather than a pattern.

Chairman Christian thanked the President and Vice President for their time and stated he would inform Congress of their discussion.

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

Respectfully submitted,

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 17-02

RE: COMMITTEE TO WAIT ON THE PRESIDENT

JULY 27, 2011

/s/ Peter M. Christian
Peter M. Christian, chairman

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

/s/ Wesley S. Simina
Wesley W. Simina, member

/s/ Yosiwo P. George
Yosiwo P. George, member