

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 18-134

RE: C.B. No. 18-135 (W&M)

SUBJECT: FUNDING FOR ATHLETES' PARTICIPATION
IN MICRONESIAN GAMES 2014

MARCH 31, 2014

The Honorable Dohsis Halbert
Speaker, Eighteenth Congress
Federated States of Micronesia
Third Special Session, 2014

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Ways & Means, to which was referred C.B. No. 18-135, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE THE SUM OF \$300,000 FROM THE GENERAL FUND OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 2014, FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING FUNDING FOR THE ATHLETES FROM THE FOUR STATES TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2014 MICRONESIAN GAMES, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The intent and purpose of this bill is expressed in its title.

A public hearing was held on March 28, 2014 regarding the above captioned bill. Representatives from the President's Office, the Pohnpei Sports Committee, the Department of Finance and Administration, the Department of Justice, the Pohnpei Sports Commission, and FSMNOC were in attendance.

Your Committee notes that the 2014 Micronesian Games, being hosted in Pohnpei, is an important regional event. Countries throughout the Pacific, including Guam, Palau, and others, will be sending athletes to compete in 14 sporting events. It is important that all four

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 18-134

RE: C.B. No. 18-135 (W&M)

SUBJECT: FUNDING FOR ATHLETES' PARTICIPATION
IN MICRONESIAN GAMES 2014

MARCH 31, 2014

states of the FSM are able to send a robust number of athletes to attend this wonderful event.

Your Committee notes with some displeasure that while these games have been planned for some time, it was only recently brought to the attention of Congress that there might be budgetary shortfalls by the states in sending athletes. The current measure was brought before Congress by a member, and not by request of the President. Your Committee would have preferred that Congress had been kept abreast of the need for the National Government to supplement funding earlier.

Your Committee was concerned by the fact that the member who brought this legislation to Congress is also a member of the NOC. As such, your Committee wondered if action on this bill would run afoul of the Udot case or would otherwise be improper. The issue was raised and put to the witnesses, which included the Department of Justice and representative of the President's Office. None of the witnesses expressed concern that this action by Congress would run afoul of Udot or otherwise be improper. Having unequivocally raised the matter to the witnesses, your Committee is thus satisfied this action by Congress would be proper.

Your Committee also raised the issue of why a "per diem" amount was included in the proposed budget for Pohnpei athletes. Representatives from the NOC and Pohnpei Sports Committee testified that "per diem" is a term of art in athletics. They testified that while Congress may normally associate the term "per diem" with travel, in athletics the term "per diem" generally applies to the daily living expenses of athletes (such as food and lodging) even when they are not travelling abroad. Your Committee is satisfied with this response.

Your Committee is dismayed that the legislatures of several states have thus far appropriated no money to support the travel of their athletes (Yap and Kosrae) or an inadequate sum (Chuuk's \$50,000). Pohnpei is the exception, appropriating \$169,193. Your Committee applauds Pohnpei's recognition that time is of the essence. In particular, your Committee observes that it is beneficial to the athletes to be able to book plane reservations in advance.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 18-134

RE: C.B. No. 18-135 (W&M)

SUBJECT: FUNDING FOR ATHLETES' PARTICIPATION
IN MICRONESIAN GAMES 2014

MARCH 31, 2014

It is with this in mind that your Committee recommends the passage of this bill with an additional \$25,000 for each state. Your Committee hopes the legislatures of the lagging states will move swiftly to fill the rest of the monetary needs of their athletes.

Your Committee also notes that there may be a problem with the current legislation being restricted to "providing funding for the athletes" and omitting the necessary coaches and support staff that would travel with the athletes. Thus, your Committee recommends removing the restrictive language "the athletes" from the bill. Finally, your Committee has decided that this travel bill should include funds for Yapese to travel to International Cultural festivals.

Thus, your Committee recommends amending the bill as follows:

1. Title, line 1, delete "\$300,000" and insert "\$400,000" in lieu thereof.
2. Title, line 3, delete "the athletes" and insert "travel" in lieu thereof.
3. Title, line 4, after "Games" insert "and for international festivals".
4. Page 1, line 1, delete "\$300,000" and insert "\$400,000" in lieu thereof.
5. Page 1, line 5, delete "the athletes" and insert "for travel" in lieu thereof.
6. Page 1, line 6, after "Games" insert "and for international cultural festivals".
7. Page 1, line 8, delete "\$75,000" and insert "(a) Micronesian Games...\$70,000 (b) International cultural festivals...30,000"
8. Page 1, line 9, delete "75,000" and insert "100,000" in lieu thereof
9. Page 1, line 10, delete "75,000" and insert "100,000" in lieu thereof
10. Page 1, Line 11, delete "75,000" and insert "100,000" in lieu thereof

Your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.B. No. 18-135 and recommends its passage on First Reading and that it be

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 18-134

RE: C.B. No. 18-135 (W&M)

SUBJECT: FUNDING FOR ATHLETES' PARTICIPATION
IN MICRONESIAN GAMES 2014

MARCH 31, 2014

placed on the Calendar on Second and Final Reading in the form
attached hereto as C.B. No. 18-135, C.D.1.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Isaac V. Figir
Isaac V. Figir, chairman

Peter M. Christian, member

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

/s/ Tony H. Otto
Tony H. Otto, member

/s/ David W. Panuelo
David W. Panuelo, member

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

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