

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 19-73

RE: C.R. NO. 19-105/EX AFF

SUBJECT: CONFIRMATION OF THE NOMINATION OF MR.  
ASTERIO R. TAKESY TO SERVE AS THE FSM  
AMBASSADOR PLENIPOTENTIARY TO THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN WASHINGTON,  
D.C.

NOVEMBER 17, 2015

The Honorable Wesley Simina  
Speaker, Nineteenth Congress  
Federated States of Micronesia  
Third Special Session, 2015

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on External Affairs, to which was referred  
C.R. No. 19-105, entitled:

"A RESOLUTION TO CONFIRM THE NOMINATION OF MR.  
ASTERIO R. TAKESY TO SERVE AS THE FSM AMBASSADOR  
PLENIPOTENTIARY TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
IN WASHINGTON, D.C.",

begs leave to report as follows:

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

On August 31, 2015, the President, through Presidential  
Communication No. 19-150, transmitted Congressional  
Resolution No. 19-105 to Congress. The said resolution is  
the nomination of Mr. Asterio R. Takesy to serve as FSM  
Ambassador Plenipotentiary to the United States of America  
at the Embassy in Washington, D.C. Attached with P.C. No.  
19-150 is the nominee's resume.

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Your Committee held a hearing on the said resolution on October 10, 2015, at the UN Permanent Mission in New York, New York. In attendance were Vice Chairman Robson U. Romolow, member David W. Panuelo and staff Alik Jackson and Lynn Narruhn. The witnesses included Ambassador Jane Chigiyal, UN Mission staff Jim Lippwe, Clement Mulalap and Martin Zvachula, Mr. Jeem's wife (Lerina) and the nominee.

Vice Chairman Robson Romolow chaired the hearing. He thanked Ambassador Jane Chigiyal and staff for accommodating the request of your Committee to use the UN Permanent Mission Office for the hearing of Mr. Asterio Takesy.

Your Committee gave the nominee an opportunity to comment on his nomination. The nominee thanked Ambassador Jane Chigiyal for availing the Office for the hearing. He apologized for the absence of his wife and staff to provide moral support on his nomination hearing. He then explained that he was approached by the President to take the post after he submitted his formal resignation letter, which is a one step in forming the cabinet of the current administration. The nominee indicated that he has worked with the Government most of his life, especially in the consular service. He is more than happy to continue working as the FSM Ambassador to the United States. He also wishes the record to reflect that he fully supports the nomination of Khandi Elieisar for the DCM post at the FSM Embassy in Washington, D.C.

Your Committee inquired of the nominee what he could do with Mr. James Naich who is his former DCM. The nominee stated that his statement regarding Mr. Elieisar is as a nominee and not to negate Mr. James Naich. The nominee stated that the nomination of Mr. Khandi Elieisar is a decision by the President, which we should follow. As for

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Mr. James Naich, his qualities cannot be replaced. Unfortunately, the system now is that if the DCM was under the public service system, we should have not faced this situation. The nominee expressed his feeling with the President that Mr. James Naich should be given an opportunity to undergo a transition period at the Embassy until the DCM position is filled. In fact, the nominee informed your Committee that he had advised Mr. Naich of several positions that he could apply. The onus rests with Mr. Naich, even though the nominee has laid out the possibility of employment to Mr. Naich. The nominee further indicated that the budget for the FSM Embassy in Washington, D.C. is not sufficient to accommodate Mr. James Naich's services. So the Embassy is not in a position to continue the service of Mr. James Naich due to limited funding.

The nominee has served as the Secretary of the FSM Department of Foreign Affairs, then as the Executive Director of the Joint Committee on Compact Negotiation thereby gaining profound knowledge of the Compact and the negotiation process that led to it. He served for six years as the Chief Executive Officer of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), an international agency focusing the on the environment, where he was in charge of 70 professional employees. This allowed him to acquire expertise on issues such as climate change. He has served at the Washington Embassy as a staff member, and has lived for extensive periods in the U.S. He is thoroughly aware of the issues facing FSM citizens, especially immigration and free entry under the Compact to the extent those provisions are impacted by Freely Associated States' citizens receiving public assistance in the U.S.

If confirmed the nominee stated he will advocate a pro-active foreign policy and recommend to the President active measures to improve the diplomatic image of the Federated

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States of Micronesia. He also believes that diplomacy should be not just from the perspective of the Department of Foreign Affairs, but the entire Nation.

Your Committee is very impressed by the nominee's experience. The nominee appears to have a good grasp of the important issues relevant to the position of an Ambassador, including those facing FSM migrants, issues relating to international environmental matters and the Compact. The nominee is well versed and very well qualified. Your Committee supports the nominee for this position.

Your Committee has not received any communication that would cast doubt on the performance or integrity of the nominee. Absent any contrary indication, your Committee strongly believes this nominee should be confirmed, and so recommends confirmation of Mr. Asterio R. Takesy to serve as the FSM Ambassador Plenipotentiary to the United States of America in Washington, D.C.

Your Committee wishes to offer an amendment to the C.R. No. 19-105 to read as follows:

1. Page 1, line 18, delete "Second Regular", and insert "Third Special" in lieu thereof.

Your Committee on External Affairs is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.R. No. 19-105, and recommends its adoption in the form attached hereto as C.R. No. 19-105, C.D.1.

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Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Paliknoa K. Welly  
Paliknoa K. Welly, chairman

/s/ Robson U. Romolow  
Robson U. Romolow, vice chairman

/s/ Isaac V. Figir  
Isaac V. Figir, member

Victor V. Gouland, member

/s/ Berney Martin  
Berney Martin, member

/s/ Bonsiano F. Nethon  
Bonsiano F. Nethon, member

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