

SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 19-03

RE: COMMITTEE TO WAIT ON THE PRESIDENT

AUGUST 14, 2015

The Honorable Wesley W. Simina  
Speaker, Nineteenth Congress  
Federated States of Micronesia  
Second Special Session, 2015

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee to Wait on the President, consisting of members David W. Panuelo, Isaac V. Figir, Twiter Aritos, and Paliknoa K. Welly, was duly appointed on August 14, 2015. David W. Panuelo was designated as the Chairman.

The Committee met with the Vice President on August 14, 2015 at 11:00 a.m. Chairman Panuelo greeted the Vice President, members of the cabinet and staff on behalf of Congress and thanked them for the opportunity to meet. Chairman Panuelo reported that Congress was in session and was ready to transact business.

The Vice President greeted the Committee and gave a summary of the issues and areas the President requested that Congress make a priority during this short special session:

Compact Grant Infrastructure Appropriations: The two measures regarding Compact Infrastructure projects passed first reading during the previous special session. The Vice President stated that it was important to have these measures passed by the JEMCO meeting, which convenes next month. The Committee responded that it understood the urgency of this issue and is prioritizing it for this special session.

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Typhoon Relief for CNMI victims of Typhoon Soudelor: The Vice President requested that this be prioritized to show the Nation's support for our regional neighbors in their time of need. The Committee stated that it would report this request to the Congress as a whole.

Pending nominations for the Executive Branch: The Vice President emphasized the need to fully constitute the Executive Branch in order to operate effectively and move forward with the important work of the Nation. The Committee reiterated the constraints it is working under with this short session, and stated that nevertheless, Congress intends to work over the weekend to complete as many hearings as possible on the nominations.

The Vice President advised the Committee that the newly revised and submitted budget for FY16 has an overall budget request total approximately the same as the previous administration, however, there have been several changes regarding funding at the department/agency level. The Committee noted to the Vice President that it will review this in detail starting at its Ways & Means hearing this afternoon. Individual Committees will continue to do their work and may call for additional hearings.

Another item that the Vice President indicated that is a priority for this special session was a supplemental budget request of \$1 million for the airline services for our South Pacific regional partners, in particular Air Nauru. There had been a previous years' budget appropriation for this purpose that had lapsed, and it is understood that this year may be a more appropriate time to utilize this funding by our new airline partner. The Committee stated it would report this as a priority for the session, however, due the limited time it was unclear if action could be taken this special session.

The Vice President noted that adjustments on the public project allottees from the bills passed in the just previous session needed to be made. The Committee stated that they were well aware that some technical revisions needed to be made and were undertaking to have that done already.

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Finally, the Vice President asked that Congress entertain the proposed legislation for FSM Telecommunications for an interest free loan in the amount of \$2.8 million. The Committee advised the Vice President that this issue may take some oversight to understand, and that more information and investigation was needed.

The Committee thanked the Vice President for his presentation of the agenda items, and made an additional request that the revenue projects be updated and explained. The relevant cabinet members stated that the domestic revenue projects show a shortfall in actual collections, however, the collections for NORMA and MRA should be finalized in September at closer to the original projected amounts. The Committee stated that it will also be following up regarding these calculations.

The meeting concluded with mutual agreement to move forward on the above issues in a timely manner and with diligence. As your Committee had very limited time to prepare this report before the afternoon split session it kindly requests to supplement the written report with an oral summary with additional details.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ David W. Panuelo  
David W. Panuelo, chairman

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

/s/ Tiwiter Aritos  
Tiwiter Aritos, member

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

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