

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 13-108

RE: C.R. NO. 13-97/J&GO

SUBJECT: CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MR. LAURENCE VETTER

MAY 20, 2004

The Honorable Peter M. Christian
Speaker, Thirteenth Congress
Federated States of Micronesia
Third Regular Session, 2004

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations, to which was referred C.R. No. 13-97 entitled:

"A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MR. LAURENCE VETTER TO BE THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA.",

begs leave to report as follows:

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

This nomination was transmitted to Congress by Presidential Communication No. 13-144, to which the nominee's resume and a letter of recommendation in support of the nominee and held a public hearing May 13, 2004 on the nomination. Mr. Vetter himself and several witnesses from the Department of Justice, the President's Office, the Office of the Public Auditor and the Department of Finance and Administration were in attendance.

In considering Mr. Vetter's nomination, your Committee is guided by three primary criteria; the nominee must (1) have the requisite skills and experience in the areas of management and policy-making; (2) possess the relevant legal background and (3) be sensitive to cultures and traditions of the FSM in enforcing the law and making policy decisions.

The information gathered on the nominee revealed that Mr. Vetter has served as a consultant or the head of various judicial development, legal training and commercial law development projects in several

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countries in Central and Eastern Europe. He currently serves as a consultant to a pilot court program in the Russian Federation and a judicial development project in the Republic of Albania. He has litigation experience in commerce and immigration matters and has done contract negotiations and legal drafting.

Mr. Vetter earned his JD at the University of Virginia School of Law in 1991.

At the public hearing, your Committee was informed that in his search for a new Secretary of the Department of Justice, the President advertised the position both domestically and internationally. The Acting Secretary of the Department of Justice and the President himself approached several Micronesian attorneys, but unfortunately none of them accepted the offer to be nominated to the position. Mr. Vetter is one of several applicants that responded to the international advertisement. The President personally interviewed him through telephone and selected him.

When asked specific questions relating to the third criteria, Mr. Vetter said that in his new "application of the law requires more than legal consideration; it involves consideration of societal norms and should reflect and be consistent with the FSM cultures and traditions".

Your Committee concluded that Mr. Vetter meets the three criteria required for an effective Secretary of the Department of Justice.

In his communication transmitting the nomination of Mr. Vetter, the President expressed the urgency of confirming a Secretary of Justice. Your Committee agrees that a full-fledged Secretary of Justice endorsed by Congress is urgently needed. Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.R. No. 13-97 and recommends its adoption.

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Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Dohsis Halbert
Dohsis Halbert, chairman

/s/ Roosevelt D. Kansou
Roosevelt D. Kansou, vice chairman

/s/ Alik L. Alik
Alik L. Alik, member

/s/ Henry C. Asugar
Henry C. Asugar, member

/s/ Jack Fritz
Jack Fritz, member

/s/ Peter M. Christian
Peter M. Christian, member

/s/ Ramon Peyal
Ramon Peyal, member