

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 15-76

RE: C.R. NO. 15-79/EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

SUBJECT: CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MR. YOSIWO P. GEORGE TO SERVE AS AMBASSADOR OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

FEBRUARY 12, 2008

The Honorable Isaac V. Figir
Speaker, Fifteenth Congress
Federated States of Micronesia
Third Regular Session, 2008

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on External Affairs Committee, to which was referred C.R. No. 15-79 entitled:

"A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MR. YOSIWO P. GEORGE TO SERVE AS AMBASSADOR OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.",

Your Committee on External Affairs to which was submitted the matter of the nomination of Yosiwo George as Ambassador of the Federated States of Micronesia to the United States of America in Washington, DC, begs leave to report as follows:

Your committee is reminded once again that no overseas diplomatic post is as important in light of the special relationship between the FSM and the US. Your committee is also mindful of recent mishaps involving FSM passports at the embassy in Washington that may have caused some strain in that relationship, which it is of the utmost importance for the new ambassador to attend to.

At the outset your committee notes the outstanding qualifications of the nominee. A former Governor of Kosrae, former member of Congress, former Chief Justice of Kosrae, and most importantly former FSM Ambassador to the United Nations there is no question whatsoever that the nominee is qualified for the position,

Your committee held a confirmation hearing with the nominee on February 5, 2008. Present were Chairman Welly, Vice-Chairman Aritos, Speaker Figir, Vice Speaker Moses, Floor Leader Suka, Senators Neth, Urusemal, Sitan, Nelson, and Paul. Witnesses included the nominee, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs and various Foreign Affairs staff. Also present were the nominees for Ambassador to Japan, John Fritz, and for Deputy Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Ismael Dobich.

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Since qualifications were not an issue, the hearing focused on two matters:

- motivation; and the
- nominee's age

The nominee stated that he wished to serve his country as ambassador, and that it was his ambition to do so. He is currently the Executive Director of MICARE, but he believes that that organization can function without him.

Several senators made reference to the nominee's age, however, according to the nominee he is still in excellent health and does not see any reason why he cannot serve the country. He is 66.

The nominee in his testimony showed impressive knowledge of world affairs. Of particular interest to the committee was the nominee's position of the possible downgrading or closure of the mission in New York, with a resulting expanded role for the Washington Embassy. The nominee feels that the FSM had struggled long and hard for the international recognition that resulted in UN membership. It will therefore not be a good idea to damage that international standing by even just downgrading the UN mission.

Asked whether he would like to have an input in the nomination of consuls-general and DCM, in the US, the nominee stated that insofar as these positions reported to the Ambassador, yes, he should have an input.

In response to a hypothetical question whether in the case he were rejected as Ambassador he would seek a DCM position in the same mission, the nominee stated definitely not. Such a practice would be inadvisable.

The Secretary of Foreign Affairs testified that he supported the President's nomination.

Your committee is impressed by the nominee's credentials and his testimony. The committee appreciated the responses at the hearing, which show a thoughtful and knowledgeable person, and wished the Executive Branch could take note of these responses.

