

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 15-01

RE: C.B. NO. 15-10/J&GO

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT TO TITLE 9 TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF DAYS THE SPECIAL POLLING PLACES WILL REMAIN OPEN FOR SPECIAL ELECTIONS

MAY 21, 2007

The Honorable Isaac V. Figir
Speaker, Fifteenth Congress
Federated States of Micronesia
First Regular Session, 2007

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations ("J&GO"), to which was referred C.B. No. 15-10 entitled:

"TO FURTHER AMEND TITLE 9 OF THE CODE OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA, AS ENACTED BY PUBLIC LAW NO. 14-76 AND AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW NO. 14-98, BY AMENDING SECTION 605 TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF DAYS THAT THE SPECIAL POLLING PLACES LOCATED OUTSIDE OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA REMAIN OPEN FROM SEVEN DAYS TO ELECTION DAY ONLY, TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF HOURS THOSE SPECIAL POLLING PLACES REMAIN OPEN; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

begs leave to report as follows:

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

Section 605 of Title 9 currently authorizes the establishment of special polling places on Guam and Hawaii that shall remain open for seven days, with the seventh and final day being the FSM Election Day. During the most recent national election that took place in March 2007, the special polling places on Guam and Hawaii remained open for seven days.

Your committee held a public hearing on Friday 18 May, 2007. The National Election Director ("Director") was a witness at this hearing. Your committee sought to investigate, among other things, the effectiveness and necessity of opening the special polling places for seven days.

The Director reported that the special polling places were sparsely utilized during the seven days leading up to the most recent election day in early March 2007. He added that FSM voters who reside in Guam and Hawaii were more likely to vote in the evening, after their working day, than during the day. The Director communicated that, based on the voter turnout at the special polling places during the most recent election, it would be more effective to leave the special polling places open for one day only, but to extend the voting hours of that day into the evening, to allow voters to access the polls

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after their working hours.

Your committee has given careful consideration to this matter, and agrees that voters' needs would best be met by special polling places that are open for one day only, but with hours that extend until 9:30 in the evening.

Your committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.B. No. 15-10 and recommends its passage on First Reading, and that it be placed on the calendar for Second and Final Reading in the form attached hereto as C.B. No. 15-10.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Peter Sitan
Peter Sitan, chairman

/s/ Fredrico O. Primo
Fredrico O. Primo, vice chairman

Tiwiter Aritos, member

Isaac V. Figir, member

/s/ Dohsis Halbert
Dohsis Halbert, member

Moses A. Nelson, member

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