

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 16-40

RE: C.R. NO. 16-16/H&SA

SUBJECT: URGING PRESIDENT TO TASK RELEVANT DEPARTMENTS AND OFFICES TO DEVELOP ACTION PLANS TO DEAL WITH CLIMATE CHANGE-INDUCED PROBLEMS PARTICULARLY FOR INHABIANTS OF LOW-LYING ATOLLS IN THE FSM.

OCTOBER 01, 2009

The Honorable Isaac V. Figir  
Speaker, Sixteenth Congress  
Federated States of Micronesia  
Second Regular Session, 2009

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Health and Social Affairs ("H&SA"), to which was referred C.R. No. 16-16 entitled:

"A RESOLUTION URGING THE PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA TO TASK THE RELEVANT DEPARTMENTS AND OFFICES OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT TO STRENGTHEN THEIR EFFORTS IN EXAMINING THE PROSPECT OF AND PREPARING ACTION PLANS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE-INDUCED DISPLACEMENT OF INHABITANTS OF THE LOW-LYING ATOLLS IN THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA.",

begs leave to report as follows:

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

Your Committee on Health and Social Affairs conducted a hearing on the resolution on September 24, 2009. Present at the hearing were representatives of the Office of Environment and Emergency Management (OEEM), a representative of the Office of the President and a representative of the Department of Justice.

Your Committee was please to receive an informative update on policies formed and steps currently underway related to dealing with climate change issues. Your Committee applauds the excellent work of the OEEM. However, as the Office comments, their work has only just begun.

Your Committee believes it is important to attack the problem both on the local and international fronts. Your Committee recommends significant revisions to the resolution offered by Vice Speaker Primo, to align Congress' directive with international language and with certain policies already adopted by OEEM, for which the Congress gives

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wholehearted support.

Although displacement of people living on low-lying atolls and coastal areas of high islands of the FSM is one possible dire outcome of climate change induced impacts, your Committee recognizes that it is an undesirable outcome and a "last option" plan. Rather than predetermine the plan that should be developed in the resolution, your Committee would urge the OEEM, working with other Departments and Offices of the National Government, to bring a range of plans to the Congress for consideration - including plans to deal with immediate emergency situations, plans for remedial measures, such as sea walls or other water diverting mechanisms that can be placed to reduce the potential impacts of climate change, and long-range plans to influence international policy on climate change and encourage programs for assisting those affected.

Your Committee appreciates that even planning cannot occur without resources, and that implementation of any adopted plan will require resource allocation. Your Committee urges the OEEM and other Departments to seek assistance and support from the international community, where available, and to return to the Congress if necessary, with their requests.

Should Congress support and adopt the resolution, your Committee would like to meet again with the OEEM and other Departments in three months time, to receive a preliminary report on progress toward development of the three types of plans needed.

Your Committee recommends the following amendments to the resolution.

AMENDMENTS TO THE RESOLUTION

1. Page 1, Title line 5, delete "for" and insert "with options for adaptation to" and delete "displacement of" and insert "impacts on" in lieu thereof.
2. Page 1, Title line 6, after "atolls" insert "and coastal areas of high islands".
3. Page 1, line 1, delete "rising sea water" and insert "sea level

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rise" in lieu thereof.

4. Page 1, line 3, after "atolls" insert "and coastal areas of high islands".
5. Page 1, line 4, delete "rising sea water" and insert "sea level rise" in lieu thereof.
6. Page 1, line 7, after "atolls" insert "and coastal areas of high islands".
7. Page 1, line 8, delete "rising sea water" and insert "sea level rise" and delete "rise" and insert "increase" in lieu thereof.
8. Page 1, line 9, after "atolls" insert "and coastal areas of high islands".
9. Page 1, line 10, delete "displacement" and insert "impacts" in lieu thereof.
10. Page 1, line 12, delete "displacement" and insert "impacts" in lieu thereof.
11. Page 1, line 15, delete "non-reversible displacement caused" and insert "the potential threats to our people, food sources, health, biodiversity, environment, safety and security posed" in lieu thereof.
12. Page 1, line 17, after "peoples" insert "and plans for methods of dealing with and adapting to these threats are needed".
13. Page 2, line 1, delete "people's plight in anticipating their separation of land and culture" and insert "potential climate change challenges to our most vulnerable communities" in lieu thereof.
14. Page 2, line 11, delete "rising sea water" and insert "sea level rise impacts" in lieu thereof.
15. Page 2, line 13, delete "similar".

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16. Page 2, delete lines 14 and 15 entirely.
17. Page 2, line 16, delete "other measures" and insert "developed including plans for dealing with impacts in the short term as well as in the long term advancing the Pacific Island Nations' demand for ambitious CO2 emission reduction commitments by developed countries and the creation of programs to assist affected populations, particularly in nations, such as the FSM, that are not responsible for the build of dangerous atmospheric green house gas levels" in lieu thereof.
18. Page 2, line 21, delete "displacement of" and insert "impact on" in lieu thereof.
19. Page 2, line 22, after "atolls" insert "and coastal areas of high islands".
20. Page 2, line 25, delete "that will address" and insert "with options for adaptation to" in lieu thereof.
21. Page 3, line 1, delete "displacement of" and insert "impacts on" in lieu thereof.
22. Page 3, line 2, after "atolls" insert "and coastal areas of high islands".
23. Page 3, line 3, after "aspects" delete "," and insert "and" in lieu thereof.
24. Page 3, delete lines 4 through 8, and insert "potential remedial measures that can be undertaken; and" in lieu thereof.

#### CONCLUSION

Based on its consideration of the merits of the resolution, your Committee on H&SA is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.R. No. 16-16, as amended and recommends its adoption in the form attached hereto as C.R. No. 16-16, C.D.1.

