

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 16-122

RE: C.R. NO. 16-137/EDUCATION

SUBJECT: CONFIRMING THE NOMINATION OF MR. KASIO E. MIDA TO THE
COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA-LAND GRANT BOARD OF REGENTS

NOVEMBER 23, 2010

The Honorable Isaac V. Figir
Speaker, Sixteenth Congress
Federated States of Micronesia
Fifth Special Session, 2010

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Education, to which was referred C.R. No. 16-137
entitled:

"A RESOLUTION TO CONFIRM THE NOMINATION OF MR. KASIO E.
MIDA TO SERVE AS A MEMBER OF THE COLLEGE OF MICRONESIA
BOARD OF REGENTS.",

begs leave to report as follows:

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

Mr. Kasio E. Mida has been nominated by the President in accordance
with Section 207(1) of Title 2, as amended, of the Code of the
Federated States of Micronesia; his nomination is subject to the
advice and consent of Congress. C.R. No. 16-137 was transmitted to
Congress on September 22, 2010 through P.C. No. 16-280.

NOMINEE BACKGROUND

A Curriculum Vitea was not submitted with P.C. No. 16-280; however,
your Committee is familiar with Mr. Mida's background due to his long
career with the National Government.

Mr. Mida is from Faichuk in Chuuk State. He graduated from Xavier
High School and went on to attend Rockhurst College in Kansas City,
Missouri where he graduated in 1968 with a Bachelor of Arts in
Political Science.

Between 1968 and 1979, Mr. Mida worked as a Political Affairs Adviser
in the Truk (Chuuk) District Administration, as Personnel Specialist
in the Department of Personnel in the Trust Territory of the Pacific

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Islands (TTPI) Administration in Saipan, as the Personnel Officer in Truck District, and then as Administrative Officer with the Interim Congress of the FSM.

From 1979 to 1983, Mr. Mida served in the Cabinet of the first FSM Government as Personnel Officer for President Nakayama, and later Special Assistant to the President from 1983 to 1986. In 1986, Mr. Mida began a lengthy post as the FSM Counsel General to Honolulu until 2004, when he was appointed the FSM Ambassador to Japan. At present, Mr. Mida is the Chief of Staff to President Mori.

PUBLIC HEARING

Your Committee held a public hearing on C.R. No. 16-137 on November 17, 2010. In attendance at the hearing were: Chairman Joseph J. Urusemal; Floor Leader Joe N. Suka; Senator Peter Sitan; Senator Tony H. Otto; Senator Claude H. Phillip; Senator Setiro Paul; Marcellus Akapito, Special Assistant to the President; Burnis Danis, Department of Education; Dr. Singeru Singeo, Executive Director of Land Grant; Jim Currie, Vice President for Cooperative Research and Extension/COM-FSM; Ringlen P. Ringlen, Vice President for Student Services/COM-FSM; Joe Habuchmai, Vice President of Administrative Services; and current COM Land Grant Board Member Andrew Yatilman.

Chairman Urusemal opened the hearing by welcoming all of the witnesses, thanking them for their participation in the hearing, and invited general comments on the nominee.

Mr. Burnis Danis testified that the Secretary of Education was unable to attend the hearing, but that the nominee has the full support of the National Department of Education.

Executive Director Singeo explained that in his position, he should not provide comments on whether or not he recommends a nominee for the Board of Regents, but instead he would explain the duties and responsibilities of the Board. The Board decides the funding and distribution of funding among the College of Micronesia Land Grant Programs, and works on the long-term financial health and stability of the College. Director Singeo emphasized that it is important for board members to have an understanding of investments and the global financial market. Director Singeo explained that Mr. Mida recently attended an investment conference in Manila, and has served as a proxy for Mr. Yatilman in the last couple Board meetings. Mr. Singeo expects a very smooth transition if Mr. Mida's nomination is confirmed.

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COM-FSM Vice President Joe Habuchmai, along with Vice Presidents Ringlen Ringlen and Jim Currie, explained they were attending in place of COM-FSM President James who is off-island. Mr. Habuchmai thanked Mr. Yatilman for his many years of service on the Board; his strong communication skills, and timely transmission of information to COM-FSM were appreciated and a good atmosphere of trust and cooperation existed during his service. Regarding the current nominee, Mr. Habuchmai testified that based on the credentials of Mr. Mida, COM-FSM strongly supports the nominee for the position on the COM Board of Regents. Mr. Mida currently serves as the National Government representative on the COM-FSM Board of Regents, and it is the position of COM-FSM that it works most efficiently and effectively when the same person serves as both the National Government representative to the COM-FSM Board of Regents, and as the FSM Representative on COM Board of Regents (Land Grant).

Current Board of Regents-Land Grant Member Andrew Yatilman testified that he has been on the Board for quite a long time, and has enjoyed the position and the opportunity to work with his fellow members from Palau and the Marshall Islands. In response to questions by the Committee, Mr. Yatilman explained that he also served on both the COM Board of Regents (Land Grant) and the COM-FSM Board of Regents simultaneously. Mr. Yatilman explained that the COM-FSM Board has in the past advocated that the FSM Representative to the COM Board (Land Grant) should automatically also serve as the National Government representative to the COM-FSM Board, but that Congress has not wanted to make that change in the law. Mr. Yatilman explained that since Mr. Mida is the current National Government representative to the COM-FSM Board, it makes sense that he also serve on the COM Board (Land Grant); Mr. Yatilman is in full support of the nominee.

Mr. Mida opened his remarks by thanking the Committee for the opportunity to appear, and thanking all present for their time and support. Mr. Mida offered a summary of his knowledge of the land grant program. FSM receives approximately \$1.2 million in land grant funds annually, plus another \$400,000-\$500,000 in special project money. System-wide there are 55 jobs maintained through the land grant program. All FSM States have Extension Programs in categories such as: nutrition, youth development, community resources, environment, food production, food preparation/quality/safety. The States of Yap, Pohnpei and Kosrae also have active Research Programs at this time, including subjects related to agriculture and aquaculture. Each National Government (FSM, Marshall Islands, and Palau) contributes \$25,000 annually to the land grant programs; the Board receives \$5,000 to assist with Board meetings and travel.

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When asked about the required time commitments of the Board meetings, Mr. Mida replied that he feels confident that he has the necessary time and energy to serve on the Board. He travels very infrequently in his current position as Chief of Staff to President Mori. Should he serve on both the Board of Regents for College of Micronesia (Land Grant) and COM-FSM, that will involve a total of eight board meetings a year; however, at least three of those usually occur in Pohnpei, reducing the necessary travel commitment. Mr. Mida does not sit on any other boards than those already mentioned.

When asked about why the current board member was not re-nominated, Mr. Mida replied that his nomination should not be seen as reflecting negatively on the good performance of Mr. Yatilman. The COM-FSM Board pushed for protecting the link between the two Boards; since Mr. Mida is currently serving on the COM-FSM Board, he has also been nominated for the COM (Land Grant) Board.

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Your Committee notes that Mr. Mida has served in various positions with the National Government since the FSM achieved independence; his long history of service is commendable. Your Committee is confident that the nominee has the necessary education, experience and skills to serve as the FSM representative to the College of Micronesia (Land Grant) Board of regents.

Your Committee recommends the following amendments to C.R. No. 16-137:

1. Page 1, line 10, after "Micronesia" insert "-FSM".
2. Page 1, line 18, delete "Regular and insert "Special" in lieu thereof.

CONCLUSION

Your Committee on Education is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.R. No. 16-137, and recommends its adoption in the form attached hereto C.R. No. 16-143, C.D.1.

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Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Joseph J. Urusemal
Joseph J. Urusemal, chairman

/s/ Claude H. Phillip
Claude H. Phillip, vice-chairman

/s/ Dohsis Halbert
Dohsis Halbert, member

Setiro Paul, member

/s/ Fredrico O. Primo
Fredrico O. Primo, member

/s/ Joe N. Suka
Joe N. Suka, member

/s/ Peter S. Sitan
Peter S. Sitan, member