

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO: 23-32

RE: P.C. 23-100/T&C

SUBJECT: FY 2024 BUDGET

SEPTEMBER 21, 2023

The Honorable Esmond B. Moses  
Speaker, Twenty-Third Congress  
Federated States of Micronesia  
Second Regular Session, 2023

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Transportation and Communication, to which was jointly referred Presidential Communication No. 23-100 begs leave to report as follows:

Presidential Communication No. 22-228 concerns the National Government's proposed budget for fiscal year 2024 as set forth in the National Government Fiscal Year 2024 Proposed Budget ("Budget Book"). Pursuant to rule 7, section 4(b) of the Official Rules of Procedure of the Twenty-Third Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia, your Committee has limited its review to those portions of the proposed budget relating to matters under its jurisdiction. These are:

- I. Department of Transportation, Communications and Infrastructure
  - a. Operations
    - i. Administration
    - ii. Marine Transportation
    - iii. Civil Aviation
    - iv. Communication
    - v. Infrastructure
    - vi. Project Management Unit

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II. Grants, Subsidies and Contributions:

a. Department of Transportation, Communications and Infrastructure

- i. Asia Pacific Telecommunity (APT);
- ii. International Telecommunication Union (ITU);
- iii. International Civil Aviation Organization;
- iv. Micronesian Shipping Commission;
- v. FSM Capital Energy (Utilities);
- vi. Fuel & Provisioning of Caroline Voyager & Navigator; and
- vii. FSM NG Computer Network Bandwidth Contract

b. Other Grants, Subsidies and Contributions:

- i. Caroline Islands Air subsidy

III. Capital and Human Resources Development

a. Department of Transportation, Communications and Infrastructure

- i. Operation & Dry-docking of Caroline Voyager & Navigator;
- ii. FSM National Government Computer Network (Internet and Equipment cost for centralizing computer services);
- iii. FSM National Government Facility Improvement;
- iv. FSM Capital Road Improvement; and
- v. States roads improvement maintenance

This report and all previous and subsequent reports by this committee should be treated as policy for this Nation as defined by the Congress. It is your Committee's intent that any commentary found in this report should be treated as policy for the guidance of the relevant departments, agencies and offices.

Your Committee conducted a public hearing on the proposed fiscal year 2024 budget on Monday, September 18, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. in the hearing room of the FSM Congress. The

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Committee is aware of two transmittals by then President David W. Panuelo and current President Wesley W. Simina on the Fiscal Year 2024 proposed budget for the Department of Transportation, Communications and Infrastructure.

**DISCUSSION OF FY 2024 BUDGET**

Your Committee decided to report out the fiscal year 2024 proposed budget, as transmitted by the President Simina with a few recommended changes. The figures given for each department, office and agency include the figures from the budget book for the total amount appropriated by law for FY 2023; the amount recommended by the Executive Budget Review Committee (EBRC) for fiscal year 2024 (then President Panuelo's transmittal); the amount revised by the President Simina; and the amount recommended by the Committee for Fiscal Year 2024.

Your Committee uses the table below to compare the figures appropriated in fiscal year 2023, the figures transmitted by then President Panuelo, and the revised figures transmitted by President Simina. The table below shows the comparison:

	<b>FY2023 appropriation (PL 22-204)</b>	<b>FY24 Recommended</b>	<b>FY24 Revised</b>	<b>FY24 Committee</b>
Personnel	\$921,408	\$953,755	\$992,232	\$1,005,782
Travel	\$252,331	\$264,379	\$171,449	\$171,449
Contractual	\$2,514,865	\$2,306,943	\$2,610,340	\$2,261,943
OCE	\$116,100	\$108,200	\$54,100	\$54,100
Fixed Asset	\$65,000	0	0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,869,704</b>	<b>\$3,633,277</b>	<b>\$3,828,121</b>	<b>\$3,493,274</b>

As currently reflected, the FY24 budget for the operation of the Department of Transportation, Communications and Infrastructure that the Committee recommended reflected a

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decrease of **\$376,430**, as compared to FY23 appropriation. It is the intent of your Committee to request supplemental funding in the near future to cover the decrease in the FY24 budget for the Department.

Your Committee makes the following recommendations:

I. Operations

a. Department of Transportation, Communications and Infrastructure

i. Administration, Office of the Secretary

	FY 23 Appropriation	FY24 Recomm	FY 24 Revised	FY 24 Committee Recommends
Personnel	137,539	\$160,053	165,253	\$178,800
Travel	12,236	\$27,084	13,542	\$13,542
Contract	10,000	\$10,000	10,000	\$10,000
OCE	40,000	\$40,000	20,000	\$20,000
Fixed Assets	5,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$204,775	\$237,137	\$208,795	\$222,342
#Positions	6		6	6

**Personnel:** There are six positions under this Office, with two new positions. The amount the Office of the Secretary is proposing is \$178,800. The amount reflected in the revised budget is \$165,253. During the deliberation of the budget, Consultant Carl Apis explain that the salary for the Executive Secretary II salary in the amount of \$15,122 was not included. Your Committee decides to include the salary of the Executive Secretary. Your Committee is aware that any adjustment to the FY24 budget is forthcoming and recommended \$178,800. The two new positions proposed under the Office of the Secretary were not considered.

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**Travel:** For FY23, an amount of \$12,236 was appropriated. The request for this fiscal year 2024 is \$13,542, which is revised submittal by President Simina. At the hearing, Consultant Carl Apis explained that the amount of \$13,542 is sufficient for now; however, he explained that with the increase in infrastructure projects they need more travels to coordinate with the stakeholders on these projects. Your Committee advised that the Department may request additional travel funds that are urgent in the next coming months, and recommends \$13,542 for now.

**Contractual Services:** In FY23, an amount of \$10,000 was appropriated. For this fiscal year 2024, an amount of \$10,000 is requested and recommended. Of the \$10,000, an amount of \$3,500 is requested for office equipment repair and \$6,500 for vehicle repair. Your Committee recommends \$10,000.

**Other Current Expenses:** In FY23, an amount of \$40,000 was appropriated. For this fiscal year 2023, an amount of \$40,000 is requested and recommended. An amount of \$8,100 for communication, \$8,000 for fuel, \$5,670 for printing and reproduction, \$4,050 for representation fund, and \$14,180 for supplies and materials. Your Committee heard from the witnesses that with the drastic cut in this category, their operation will be affected. Your Committee recommends \$20,000, for now with the understanding that it will consider more funding in the next session of Congress.

**Fixed Assets:** In FY23, \$5,000 was appropriated. For this fiscal year 2024, an amount of \$10,000 is requested by the Department, but the Budget Review Committee did not recommend any amount. The witnesses testified that they may need other fixed assets in the future, and accept the recommendation in the revised budget.

Your Committee recommends \$0.

ii. Division of Marine Transportation

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	FY 23 Appropriated	FY24 Recomm	FY 24 Revised	FY 24 Committee Recommends
Personnel	125,009	145,051	150,251	<b>\$150,251</b>
Travel	9,440	31,677	15,838	<b>\$15,838</b>
Contract	1,519,999	1,519,999	1,519,999	<b>\$1,519,999</b>
OCE	0	0	0	<b>\$0</b>
Fixed	0	0	0	<b>\$0</b>
TOTAL	1,654,448	1,696,727	1,686,088	<b>\$1,686,088</b>
#Positions	5	5	5	<b>5</b>

**Personnel:** The appropriated amount in fiscal year 2023 was \$125,009. The department is requesting an amount of \$159,393 for fiscal year 2024, but the revised budget reflects a \$150,251.

In this year budget book, the Personnel list is not included. However, in the previous report of your Committee, the Personnel under Marine Division consisted of the following: one Assistant Secretary position, one Transportation System Development Branch position, one Transportation Technical Branch position, one Ship Operation position, and the Manager, Safety position. Your Committee recommends **\$150,251**, with the understanding that any shortfall in the Personnel budget will be considered at the appropriate time.

**Travel:** An amount of \$9,440 was appropriated in fiscal year 2023. The revised amount for fiscal year 2024 is 15,838. Your Committee recommends **\$15,838**, for now with the understanding that supplemental funding for travel will be considered in the near future.

**Contractual Services:** The amount of funding that was appropriated in fiscal year 2023 was \$1,519,999. The amount the Department requested for this fiscal year 2024 is \$2,027,953.

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Contractual	FY23 appropriation	FY24 department proposed	FY24 recommend	FY24 revise	FY24 Committee
Consultant fee	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Consultant fee (Marine Engineer)	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
Housing (five staff)	33,600	33,600	33,600	33,600	33,600
Insurance	214,000	214,000	214,000	214,000	214,000
Sanoyas	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Seair	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
NK	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Transco	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
Waap	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
Sealand	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Medical check up (crews)	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
MS. Navigator crews	453,838	453,838	453,838	453,838	453,838
MS. Caroline Voyager crews	452,965	452,965	452,965	452,965	452,965
Shore side ship's support	35,596	35,596	35,596	35,596	35,596
Lady Minto	0	75,527	0	0	0
Overtime of crews on Lady Minto	0	5,000	0	0	0
Personnel contractual services (crews on CV) 45%	0	118,167	0	0	0
Personnel contractual services (crews on MN) 45%	0	114,860	0	0	0

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Sea allowance		194,400			
<b>Total</b>	1,519,999	2,027,953	1,519,999	1,519,999	1,519,999

The Committee was informed that these line items were not recommended: \$194,400 requested for Sea allowance; \$75,527 for Lady Minto contractual; \$5,000 overtime for the crews on Lady Minto; \$118,167 for the \$45% salary increase for the crews on Caroline Voyager; \$114,860 for the \$45% increase for the crews on Micronesian Navigator. Nevertheless, your Committee will have to revisit these requests. Your Committee recommends **\$1,519,999**, as recommended.

**Other Current Expenses:** There was no appropriation in this category for the Marine Division in fiscal year 2023. No requested amount also for this new fiscal year. The Committee recommends **\$0**.

**Fixed Assets:** There was \$0 appropriated in this category in fiscal year 2023. For this fiscal year 2023, there is no request. Your Committee recommends **\$0**.

iii. Division of Civil Aviation

	FY 23 Appropriated	FY24 Recomm	FY 24 Revised	FY 24 Committee Recommends
Personnel	110,055	133,367	138,567	\$138,567
Travel	16,506	29,344	14,672	\$14,672
Contract	60,000	60,000	30,000	\$30,000
OCE	5,100	5,100	2,550	\$2,550
Fixed	0	0	0	\$0
TOTAL	191,661	227,811	185,789	\$185,789
#Positions	5	5	5	5

**Personnel:** In fiscal year 2023, an amount of \$110,055 was appropriated to fund 5 positions with their fringe benefits and COLA. For fiscal year 2024, the division requested \$133,367, but the revised budget reflects a higher amount



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of \$138,567. This amount is based on the 45% increase in salary. Your Committee recommends \$138,567.

**Travel:** In fiscal year 2023, an amount of \$16,506 was appropriated. This year, the division requested \$29,344, but was decreased to \$14,672. At the hearing, your Committee informed the witnesses to seek supplemental budget for travel within the next three months. Your Committee recommends \$14,672.

**Contractual Services:** An amount of \$60,000 was appropriated in fiscal year 2023. This year, the requested amount is \$60,000 to fund a Consultant to do trainings on ICAO requirements, and partially to fund the AIP Accountant because his funding is reimbursable through AIP funding. However, there was a revised amount of \$30,000. Your Committee will entertain any supplemental funding under this category, and for the meantime recommends \$30,000.

**Other Current Expenses:** An amount of \$5,100 was appropriated in fiscal year 2022. This year, the same amount is requested, but the revised budget reflects a \$2,550. Your Committee recommends \$2,550 for now and will consider supplemental funding if needed.

**Fixed Assets.** No appropriation in fiscal year 2023. This year, there is no request. Your Committee recommends \$0.

iv. Division of Communication

	FY 23 Appropriated	FY24 Recomm	FY 24 Revised	FY 24 Committee Recommends
Personnel	76,196	94,396	97,496	\$97,496
Travel	16,747	27,120	13,560	\$13,560
Contract	30,000	30,000	15,000	\$15,000
OCE	0	0	0	\$0
Fixed	0	0	0	\$0
TOTAL	122,943	151,496	126,056	\$126,056
#Positions	3	3	3	3

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**Personnel:** In the fiscal year 2023 budget, an amount of \$76,196 was appropriated to fund three positions. The three positions are: one Frequency Manager position, one Information Technology Specialist position, and the Assistant Secretary position. For this fiscal year, the division requested an amount of \$100,673, but the revised budget reflects \$97,496. Your Committee recommends \$97,496.

**Travel:** In fiscal year 2023, an amount of \$16,747 was appropriated. This year, the division requested \$47,936, but the revised budget reflects \$13,560. Your Committee recommends \$13,560, with the understanding that there will be supplemental funding in about three months-time for travel.

**Contractual Services:** An amount of \$30,000 was appropriated last year, but the revised budget reflects \$15,000. Your Committee recommends \$15,000, with the understanding that there will be supplemental funding in the future.

**Other Current Expenses:** There was no appropriation last year, and there is no funding requested this year. Committee recommends \$0.

**Fixed Assets:** In fiscal year 2023, no appropriation. The department requested no funding for this fiscal year. Your Committee recommends \$0.

v. Division of Infrastructure

	FY 23 Appropriated	FY24 Recomm	FY 24 Revised	FY 24 Committee Recommends
Personnel	243,040	361,819	378,459	378,459
Travel	29,665	70,634	35,317	35,317
Contract	383,944	383,944	383,944	383,944
OCE	34,600	34,600	17,300	17,300

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Fixed	30,000	0	0	0
TOTAL	721,249	850,997	815,020	815,020
#Positions	12	12	12	12

**Personnel:** The appropriated amount in fiscal year 2023 was \$243,040 for twelve positions. For fiscal year 2024, the department is requesting \$337,969, but the revised budget reflects \$378,459 based on the 45% increase in salary. Your Committee recommends \$378,459.

**Travel:** An amount of \$29,665 was appropriated in fiscal year 2023. The division requested \$124,303, but the revised budget lower it to \$35,317. At the hearing, your Committee inquired whether the \$35,317 is sufficient. According to the witnesses, there are more infrastructure projects to be inspected at the state level and the funding of \$35,317 is enough for only the first quarter of fiscal year 2024. Your Committee recommends \$35,317, with the understanding that the division will request supplemental funding for travel after first quarter of fiscal year 2024.

**Contractual Services:** The amount appropriated in fiscal year 2023 was \$383,944. This year, the amount recommended is by the division is \$435,965, but the revised budget reflects \$383,944. Following are the specific items that are requested and recommended:

	Recom	Revised.
Contract	70,000	70,000
FSM Capital Insurance	19,000	19,000
Vehicle Insurance	6,479	5,479
FSM Capital Pressure washing site	32,000	32,000
Janitorial service/Ground Maintenance	231,465	231,465
Painting of parking lot and signage	25,000	25,000
Total	383,944	382,944

At the hearing, your Committee had inquired on the significant amount for Janitorial service and Ground Maintenance. The witnesses testified that these are

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services contracted out for the maintenance and cleaning up of the National Government facilities.

Your Committee recommends \$383,944.

**Other Current Expenses:** The fiscal year 2023 appropriation was \$34,600. The amount requested and recommended for this fiscal year is \$34,600, but was lowered to \$17,300. The witnesses testified that the amount of \$17,300 is not sufficient for the operations of the division, and hope the Committee will reconsider supplemental funding in the future. Your Committee recommends \$17,300.

**Fixed Assets:** An amount of \$30,000 was appropriated in fiscal year 2023. This fiscal year, the division requested an amount of \$245,000 for the following: \$185,000 for vehicles; \$54,000 for computer software, and \$6,000 for computer software in each of the states. Your Committee recommends \$0, and will reconsider future funding when there is supplemental funding request in this category.

vi. Project Management Unit

	FY 23 Appropriated	FY24 Recomm	FY 24 Revised	FY 24 Committee Recommends
Personnel	62,209	59,089	62,209	62,209
Travel	37,800	78,520	78,520	78,520
Contract	303,000	303,000	303,000	303,000
OCE	38,200	28,500	14,250	14,250
Fixed	20,000	0	0	0
TOTAL	461,209	469,109	457,979	457,979
#Positions	3	3	3	3

**Personnel:** The amount appropriated in fiscal year 2023 was \$62,209 to fund three positions, the Administrative Officer at \$20,626, the IT System Management & Research Specialist at \$19,553, and an Executive Secretary at 11,200. For this fiscal year, \$62,206 is the revised budget. Your Committee recommends \$62,209

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**Travel:** An amount of \$37,800 was appropriated in fiscal year 2023. For this fiscal year, PMU requested the \$78,520, and the revised budget reflects the same. Your Committee recommends \$78,520.

**Contractual Services:** In fiscal year 2022, an amount of \$303,000 was appropriated. For this fiscal year, the same amount is being requested. The following were requested and recommended:

	FY23 <u>Proposed</u>	FY23 <u>Recommend</u>
Contract Specialist	120,000	120,000
Employment Contract 2(15% Fringe Benefit)	36,000	36,000
Equipment Maintenance	3,000	3,000
Program Manager-contractual services	120,000	120,000
Staff housing for two engineers (\$1,000/monthly)	24,000	24,000
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	303,000	303,000

Your Committee recommends \$303,000.

**Other Current Expenses:** The amount appropriated in this fiscal year 2023 was \$38,200. The PMU is requesting \$28,500, but the revised budget reflects \$14,250. Your Committee recommends \$14,250.

**Fixed Assets:** In fiscal year 2023, \$20,000 was appropriated. For fiscal year 2024, the Unit is requesting \$8,500, but the revised budget reflects \$0. Your Committee recommends \$0.

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II. Grants, Subsidies and Contributions

a. Department of Transportation, Communications and Infrastructure

	FY 23 Appropriated	FY24 Recomm	FY 24 Revised	FY 24 Committee Recommends
1. Asia Pacific Telecommunity (APT)	\$6,075	\$6,075	\$0	\$0
2. International Telecommunication Union (ITU)	\$25,867	\$12,934	\$0	\$0
3. International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)	\$45,075	\$22,538	\$0	\$0
4. FSM Capital Energy (Utilities)	\$600,000	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$150,000
5. Micronesian Shipping Commission (MSC)	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0	25,000
6. Fueling & Provisions of Caroline Voyager and Navigator	1,345,830	1,345,830	\$672,915	\$672,915

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7. FSM NG Computer Network Bandwidth contract	181,920	\$90,960	\$0	\$0
8. FSM National Computer Network	\$0	\$0	\$0	0
9. Arrears due to FAA 2018	\$20,000	\$0	\$0	\$0

<b>OTHER GRANTS, SUBSIDIES AND CONTRIBUTIONS</b>				
1. ICAO arrears	\$174,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
2. Caroline Island Air- subsidy	255,000	\$0	\$0	\$100,000
<b>Total sum</b>	<b>\$2,678,767</b>	<b>\$1,130,422</b>	<b>\$822,815</b>	<b>\$947,915</b>

The funding for the FSM Capital Energy (Utility) is insufficient. The actual costs for FSM Capital Energy (Utilities) are as follows:

- 1. FSM National Complex \$49,000
  - 2. Official Residences \$ 4,900
  - 3. David & Setik \$ 500
  - 4. DECCEM \$ 850
  - 5. Finance Warehouse \$ 3,000
  - 6. Trans National Unit \$ 1,000
- Total \$59,250 estimate payment per month

Your Committee will revisit the necessary funding for the FSM Capital Energy (utility) in the near future.

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The witnesses expressed their concern on the decrease in the funding for the fuel and provisioning of the National vessels. The request for the use of the National vessels is increasing, yet the funding is decreased for this fiscal year. During the inaugural speech of President Simina, he vividly explained that the service of the National vessels provides a high way to the outer islands. Your Committee will revisit the funding for the fuel and provisioning of the National vessels during the next session of Congress.

Your Committee decided to reinstate the funding for the Micronesian Shipping Commission in the amount of \$25,000. The witnesses explained that the FSM Government will soon chair the Board of Directors of the Micronesian Shipping Commission.

For CIA, there was no request, but your Committee recommends \$100,000 for its subsidy. It was discussed during the hearing that the Corporation cannot survive without the supplemental funding from the National Government. The Corporation has one plane that service the outer islands of Pohnpei and Chuuk States, and there is expectation of more service of the Y12 in the coming months.

The total appropriated in fiscal year 2023 under Grants, Subsidies and Contributions category was \$2,678,767. The amount recommended by the Committee for fiscal year 2024 is \$947,915, a drastic cut of \$1,730,852, as compared to fiscal year 2023 appropriation.

### III. Capital and Human Resources Development

#### a. Department of Transportation, Communications and Infrastructure



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i. Operation & Dry-docking of Caroline Voyager & Navigator

FY 23 Appropriated	FY24 Recomm	FY 24 Revised	FY 24 Committee Recommends
2,300,000	\$0	\$0	\$0

ii. FSM National Government Computer Network

FY 23 Appropriated	FY24 Recomm	FY 24 Revised	FY 24 Committee Recommends
\$100,000	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000

iii. FSM National Government Facilities Improvement

FY 23 Appropriated	FY24 Recomm	FY 24 Revised	FY 24 Committee Recommends
\$115,685	\$60,000	\$0	\$0

iv. States road maintenance/improvement.

FY 23 Appropriated	FY24 Recomm	FY 24 Revised	FY 24 Committee Recommends
\$1,200,000	\$0	\$0	\$0

The total appropriated in fiscal year 2023 under Capital and Human Resources Development category was **\$9,027,385**, as reflected in Public Law No. 22-153, as amended by Public Law No. 23-13. The amount recommended by the Committee for fiscal year 2024 is **\$25,000**, a decrease of **\$9,002,385**, as compared to fiscal year 2022 appropriation.

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CONCLUSION

Your Committee on Transportation and Communication recommends authorizing those portions of the FY 2024 budget relating to matters under its jurisdiction, subject to the availability of funds, as determined by your Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Victor V. Gouland  
Victor V. Gouland, chairman

In-coming member, vice chairman

/s/ Quincy Lawrence  
Quincy Lawrence, member

/s/ Marlynn Abello-Alfonso  
Marlynn Abello-Alfonso, member

/s/ Joseph J. Urusemal  
Joseph J. Urusemal, member

/s/ Robson U. Romolow  
Robson U. Romolow, member

Florencio S. Harper, member