CONGRESS OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA
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COMMITTEE ON
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 21-55

RE: C.R. NO. 21-163/EX-AFF

SUBJECT: TO CONFIRM THE NOMINATION OF MRS. SHANTY SIGRAH ASHER TO SERVE AS THE FSM CONSUL GENERAL IN HONOLULU, HAWAII.

JULY 09, 2020

The Honorable Wesley W. Simina
Speaker, Twenty-First Congress
Federated States of Micronesia
Sixth Special Session, 2020

Dear Mr. Speaker:
Your Committee on External Affairs, to which was referred C.R. No. 21-163 entitled:

> "A RESOLUTION TO CONFIRM THE NOMINATION OF MRS. SHANTY SIGRAH ASHER TO SERVE AS THE CONSUL GENERAL OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA IN HONOLULU, HAWAII.",

begs leave to report as follows:

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

Your Committee is mindful of the need for experienced and educated individuals in the operations of its overseas diplomatic offices. The position of Consul General, like ambassadors, as top management deal with policy level decision making, interact with foreign government leaders and visits by dignitaries, but is also concerned with the day-to-day operations and contacts at the mission, advocating for our citizens and assisting them. It is therefore, important that this position is filled with an individual who has integrity and the highest level of competence. The nominee's resume is attached to this report for further review.

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Your Committee reviewed the qualifications of this nominee extensively, and held a hearing on this nomination on July 7, 2020. Present at the hearing was the nominee, representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Justice, a consultant from the Office of the President,and witnesses from the professional community who were able to speak to the nominee's abilities. The nominee has an excellent education holding both a masters degree and a law degree. The nominee has lived and worked in Hawaii for several years. She is very well informed about the issues relating to our citizens living in Hawaii. She is also very knowledgeable about the laws and government systems of the United States. At the beginning of the hearing the nominee stated she has always wanted to serve the people of the Federated States of Micronesia and was honored by being asked to fill the position of Consul General by the President. She stated that she knows of no conflict of interest that will prevent her from taking on this role and is able to begin service immediately. Several high level Department of Foreign Affairs representatives were present at the hearing, including the Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Beginning with the Secretary they all spoke of the nominee's dedication and strong work ethic. The nominee served for five years in the Department of Foreign Affairs as a Deputy Assistant Secretary prior to attending law school. While all missed the nominee's absence when she left to attend law school all commented on the great value this education would add to the Nation when the nominee returned to FSM. The Department of Justice representative also spoke regarding the nominee's competence while working on joint department human rights projects.

Your Committee requested the nominee give examples of her accomplishments that would highlight her strengths and competence to become the Consul General. The nominee related that she had been part of an effort to enroll over 50 FSM citizens for additional unemployment benefits during

the Coronavirus crisis. She had worked with community and government agencies, as well as, legal services to assist our citizens through this process. She also spoke about her efforts assist FSM citizens applying for the United States Real ID, including driver's licenses and Hawaii state identification cards. Her witnesses also spoke about her dedication to work one on one with FSM citizens in need. She has given much of her time to answer phone calls and questions from our citizens in need living in Hawaii. Many witnesses commenting she already exhibits the necessary spirit of service to assist our people living abroad.

The Committee also questioned the nominee in detail if she would be able to dedicate 100% of her time to the position of Consul General if she were to be confirmed. Specifically, the nominee has just been installed as member of the Hawaii State Board of Education. She is the first FSM citizen to hold this position. The nominee spoke at length regarding the need for our Nation to have a seat at the table regarding education, specifically to help address the challenges that our young people face coming into a U.S. education system for the first time. She stated that the board meetings are once a month and give her an opportunity to influence policy consistent with the work she would do as a Consul General.

The Department of Foreign Affairs spoke again regarding the nominee's skill and commitment. The Department representatives also included individuals from the Hawaii Consulate Office and it was emphasized that this Office needed quality leadership as soon as possible to meet the many challenges it faces today.

Witnesses also agreed that the nominee has the passion and caring to serve as Consul General. She is driven and persistent when pursuing equity and fighting discrimination, but patient with individual citizens while assisting them.

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The Committee asked the nominee what she believed to be the big challenges she would face as Consul General. The nominee stated that there is discrimination against our citizens and work must be done on many levels to combat this. This discrimination is especially harmful to our young people. Many of the FSM students in Hawaii have difficulty in navigating the education system as new arrivals and are being pushed out of the education system. Policies must change and programs to assist our students must be put in place. It is worth mentioning that the nominee has most recently worked with PREL and a witness from PREL spoke to the nominee's competence and diligence to assist FSM students. The nominee also spoke regarding the challenges our citizens face in landlord/tenant disputes, and in general, issues to do with lack of access to internet and technology.

The Committee requested that, if confirmed, the nominee explore ways to promote trade and commerce, increase assistance to our citizens and ensure that overseas election by the Consulate Office is free from bias and politics. The nominee stated that she would share all election information provided by the FSM National Election Office, and take all guidance from that office. The Committee was very impressed with how articulate the nominee was on all issues discussed. She has a strong educational background and this is coupled with experience that makes her unique for the role she has been nominated for. All witnesses were very supportive of her nomination. Your Committee also defers to the President and the Department of Foreign Affairs as to the decision to nominate this individual to the post of Consul General in Honolulu, Hawaii. Absent any contrary indication, your Committee strongly believes that the nominee should be confirmed, and so recommends that Mrs. Shanty Sigrah Asher be confirmed as the Federated States of Micronesia Consul General in Honolulu, Hawaii.

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Your Committee would like to offer the following technical amendment to read as follows:

1. Page 1, line 2, delete "Fourth Regular" and insert "Sixth Special", in lieu thereof.

Your Committee on External Affairs is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.R. No. 21-163, and recommends its adoption in the form attached hereto as C.R. No. 21-163, C.D.1.

Respectfully submitted,

Paliknoa K. Welly, chairman

Tiwiter Airtos, vice chairman

Isaac V. Figir, member

Victor V. Gouland, member

Esmond B. Moses, member

Dion G. Neth, member

Robson U. Romolow, member

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TWENTY-FIRST CONGRESS OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

FOURTH REGULAR SESSION, 2020 C.R. NO. 21-163, C.D.1

A RESOLUTION

To confirm the nomination of Mrs. Shanty Sigrah Asher to serve as the FSM Consul General in Honolulu, Hawaii.

WHEREAS, pursuant to Congressional Resolution No. 21-142, the President is resubmitting for the consideration of the Twenty-First FSM Congress, the nomination of Mrs. Shanty Sigrah Asher to serve as the FSM Consul General in Hawaii; and

WHEREAS, the nomination is subject to the advice and consent of the Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Shanty Sigrah-Asher is qualified to serve as the Consul General in Hawaii based on her educational attainment and professional experience; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Twenty-First Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia, [~~Fourth Regular~~] Sixth Special Session, 2020, that Congress hereby confirms the nomination of Mrs. Shanty Sigrah Asher to serve as the FSM Consul General in Honolulu Hawaii; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs, and Mrs. Santy Sigrah Asher.

Date: 6/3/20

Introduced by: /s/ Florencio S. Harper
Florencio S. Harper
(by request)