CONGRESS OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA
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COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY AND
GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 21-70

RE: C.R. NO. 21-186/J&GO

SUBJECT: CONFIRMATION OF THE NOMINATION OF MR. SAMSON E. PRETRICK TO THE POSITION OF DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL

OCTOBER 02, 2020

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

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations, to which was referred C.R. No. 21-186, entitled:

> "A RESOLUTION TO CONFIRM THE NOMINATION OF SAMSON E. PRETRICK TO SERVE AS THE DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF PERSONNEL OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA.",

begs leave to report as follows:

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

Samson E. Pretrick has been nominated by the President for the position of Director of the Office of Personnel of the Federated States of Micronesia. This nomination is subject to the advice and consent of Congress pursuant to Article X, section 2(d), of the Constitution.

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Work Experience
Mr. Pretrick is an experienced public servant. He has served as Deputy Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs from 2012-2019. He was the FSM Ambassador to the Republic of Fiji from 2008 to 2012 and Consul General in Guam from 2000-2008. He was the First Secretary for Political and Economic Affairs in the FSM Embassy in Washington D.C. from 1996 to 2000.

Testimony During the Hearing
Your committee held a hearing on October 1,2020. Present at the hearing was the nominee, Chief of Staff, Leo Falcam and Dweight Edward, Administration Office of Presonnel. Mr. Pretrick noted that he has been in the foreign service for some time. In the new role, he feels it is a new area, but he has relevant experience as heads of foreign missions overseas. He has been responsible for the administration of the department and overseas missions. He has dealt with administrative matters. He has worked with the Office of Personnel. He acknowledges that it will be something different, but he feels confident that he will be able to fill the position well. He is ready to take on the responsibility.

Chairman Romolow noted that this could be perceived as a demotion from an ambassadorship. He asked the nominee how he feels about this situation.

The Nominee testified that the question is not an easy one. Chairman is correct, it could appear as though the appointment is a demotion, however, the appointments are at the pleasure of the administration and therefore are prepared to be called to any position at the pleasure of the administration. As such, this is the situation currently. He feels the administration is within their right to decide who they want to hold the appointed positions.

Chairman Romolow inquired as to the nominees performance as Deputy

Secretary of foreign affairs. He noted the similarities of the positions, although the new position manages the whole government and all employees. He inquired as to how the nominee would deal with potential failures as he adjusts to the responsibilities of the new position and what weaknesses he can identify from past positions.

The nominee noted that there were challenges to working through the system, and he noted that sometimes they were stifled in the direction they tried to go, He noted they always tried their best. He notes that he has always tried to learn from past mistakes. He pledged to work with his staff, with the administrator and others. He plans to sit down with them to learn about the regulations, to see what can be done to improve, what needs to be changed, to ensure the employees receive the overall benefit. He plans to collaborate with the staff.

Chairman Romolow noted that Dwight Edward has been running the office for some time. He inquired as to how he would be feeling about this appointment. He asked how the nominee feels about working with limited staff after coming from a large department with assistant deputy secretaries who provide daily advice on the operation of the department. Now he would be scaled down to about 4 staff, which would limit his support, with thousands of employees he will have to deal with. Chairman asked about the nominees working relationship with Mr. Edward.

The nominee responded that he will work closely with Mr. Edward and he respects the work he has done over many years. He acknowledges that he will be a great resource and he will rely on his expertise as to what has been done in the past and the need for new policies and laws. He also acknowledged that there are hard working staff in the office, even though the numbers are limited. He see this as an opportunity to look at the need for additional staff, how many people they need to facilitate the work of the department, addressing the

personnel issues that are faced by national employees. He acknowledged that there are limited support resources for staff in other states. He stressed the need for additional staff within the office.

Chairman noted that he has a lot of experience working with the nominee and he supports the appointment. He noted that he also sees a lack of dissemination of information within the states because of lack of personnel on the ground. There is no sharing of vacancies within the various offices. He requested the nominee look into how he will address this issue within all of the states. He also noted that there needs to be more strict screening of qualified applicants. He also requested the nomine consider working with the employees regarding benefits and other issues. He noted that he has seen the same issues each year during budget season. Staff are promoted and not receiving their new salary. Congress appropriates funds, but people are not receiving the correct pay. Surveillance, national police, this is a significant issue. He noted that benefits such as housing are not consistently applied to everyone. He noted that the office is understaffed and he understands this, and he will support additional staff to ensure the office is running efficiently.

Dwight Edward testified that it is the President's decision as to who is appointed. He noted that the employees know their duties and responsibilities. He notes that anyone that is confirmed will work with the staff in the office. The staff will support whomever is nominated.

The Chief of Staff noted that the Office of the President supports the nominee's appointment to the new position that was established with the support of Congress. He notes that Congress worked with the executive and noted the importance of forming a stand-alone office. The Department of Personnel is important to identify issues and create a productive workforce. He notes the nominee is more than

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qualified for the responsibility. Chief of Staff notes the dedicated work of the nominee in foreign affairs, and also that this could appear as a demotion for the nominee. He notes the importance of the experience the nominee has in foreign affairs, and stated that he is the right person to set up the autonomous office. He has the credentials in education and qualifications are understood by all, in addition to his tenure and experience with the management of offices in foreign nations. He notes the support of himself and the President and requests the support of Chairman and the Congress.

The Chairman expressed appreciation to everyone for attending the hearing.

Your Committee is satisfied with the qualifications, experience, and dedication of the nominee and believes this nominee should be confirmed.

Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.R. No. 21-186 and recommends its adoption in the form attached hereto.

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Respectfully submitted,

Robson U.Romolow, chairman,

Peter M. Christian, vice chairman

Tiwiter Aritos, member

Isaac V. Figir, member

Ferny S. Perman, member

Wesley W. Simina, member

Paliknow K. Welly, member

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TWENTY-FIRST CONGRESS OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION, 2020 C.R. NO. 21-186

A RESOLUTION

To confirm the nomination of Mr. Samson E. Pretrick to serve as the Director of the Office of Personnel of the Federated States of Micronesia.

WHEREAS, the President of the Federated States of Micronesia has nominated Mr. Samson E. Pretrick to serve as the Director of the Office of Personnel of the Federated States of Micronesia; and

WHEREAS, this nomination is subject to the advice and consent of Congress pursuant to Section 2(d), Article X, of the Constitution of the Federated States of Micronesia; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Pretrick is an experienced public servant, having served as Deputy Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs from 2012 to 2019, FSM Ambassador to the Republic of Fiji from 2008 t0 2012, Consul General in Guam from 2000 to 2008, and First Secretary for Political and Economic Affairs in the FSM Embassy in Washington, D.C. from 1996 to 2000; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Pretrick is qualified to serve as the Director of the Office of Personnel; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Twenty-First Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia, Seventh Special Session, 2020, that Congress hereby confirms the nomination of Mr. Samson E. Pretrick to serve as the Director of the Office of Personnel of the Federated States of Micronesia; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Governor of each state of the Nation and Mr. Samson E. Pretrick.

Date: 8/20/20

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