

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 24-02

RE: C.R. NO. 24-07/R&D

SUBJECT: TO CONFIRM THE NOMINATION OF MR. MARCELLUS J. AKAPITO TO SERVE AS A BOARD MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL OCEANIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (NORMA), REPRESENTING THE STATE OF CHUUK.

MAY 22, 2025

The Honorable Esmond B. Moses
Speaker, Twenty-Fourth Congress
Federated States of Micronesia
First Regular Session, 2025

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Resources and Development, to which was referred C. R. No. 24-07, entitled:

"A RESOLUTION TO CONFIRM THE NOMINATION OF MR. MARCELLUS J. AKAPITO TO SERVE AS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD DIRECTORS OF THE NATIONAL OCEANIC RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY (NORMA), REPRESENTING THE STATE OF CHUUK."

begs leave to report as follows:

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

C.R. No. 24-07 was transmitted to Congress through Presidential Communication No. 24-11. Your committee held a hearing on C.R. No. 24-07 on May 19, 2025, during the First Regular Session of the Twenty-Fourth Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia.

The hearing was attended by Members of Congress: Chairman Johnson A. Asher, Senator Fabian Nimea, Senator Andy Choor, Senator Victor

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Gouland, and Senator Jeremy Mudong. The hearing was also attended by witnesses including the nominee, Mr. Marcellus J. Akapito, Acting Executive Director of NORMA, Mr. Rocco Reeves Samuel, consultant Eugene Pangelinan and NORMA Board member Patrick Mackenzie, Mrs. Elina P. Akinaga, Secretary of the Department of Resources and Development, Deputy Secretary Sohs John from the Department of Finance and Administration, and President's Representative Belan Yoma.

Brief Summary of Nominee's Qualifications

The nominee graduated at the University of Guam in 2003 with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology. He currently serves as the Executive Director of the Chuuk Visitors Bureau since September 2022. He served as Executive Director of the Chuuk Conservation Society from September 2015 to August 2022. He served as Special Assistant to the former FSM President Emmanuel Mori from August 2010 to September 2015. The nominee served as the Vice Principal of Student Affairs at the Saramen Chuuk Academy from 2008 to 2010. In 2008 to 2010, the nominee served as the Student Activity Coordinator for COM-FSM at the Chuuk campus. He served as the Assistant to the Executive Director of the Chuuk Recreation Office in 2000 to 2003. The nominee started his public service at the Saramen Chuuk Academy, Chuuk State as a Classroom Teacher in 1995 to 2000.

The nominee is also involved in the community as a co-founder of the Fefen Wokopwun farmers network on Fefen Island in 2018, served as the Co-Chair of the Fefen Island Covid 19 Task Force, served as a member of the Sacred Heart Parish Council in Fefen Catholic Church, served as a member of the Chuuk Local Food Community, actively involved in the Chuuk Track and Field Association from 2003 to 2011, and served as the Chairman of the PATA Micronesia Chapter Executive Board.

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Committee Hearing

Your chairman opened the hearing and yielded the floor to the nominee to comment on his nomination. The nominee greeted the members of the committee, and commented that he is very honored to appear in front of the committee. He thanked the President for his confidence in nominating him to serve as a board member on the NORMA Board representing the state of Chuuk. The nominee expressed his excitement to serve on the NORMA board, a board that engaged in the deliberation of the FSM'S biggest resources. He informed the committee that a lot of his work involved planning and management, and with his planning and management skills, he is ready to work with the NORMA Board as well as the management of NORMA in safeguarding the FSM's biggest resources.

The acting executive director Mr. Rocco Reeves Samuel echoed the Management of NORMA's strong support for the nominee, and also informed the committee that long time acting executive director for the Authority, Mrs. Liman Helgenberger is off-island attending a meeting in Niue. Secretary Elina P. Akinaga also appealed to the committee to confirm the nominee, and indicated the she knew the nominee because he is her former teacher. Mr. Patrick Mackenzie, one of the board members of NORMA board explained the current composition of the board, which is four, and explained that without a full board, it is very difficult to have quorum and transact business; he therefore urged the committee to confirm the nominee. Consultant Eugene Pangelinan also expressed his congratulatory comment to the new chairman of the committee, Chairman Johnson Asher, and confirmed the difficulty in transacting business, especially finalization of decisions during bilateral negotiations. He commented that the bilateral negotiations with the fishing companies will be scheduled soon during the month of July 2025, and urged the expeditious action of the committee on the nomination. The members of your committee also expressed strong support for the nominee.

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Your Committee notes that there was a communication dated May 8, 2025, from the Governor of Chuuk State, the Honorable Alexander Narruhn, to President Wesley W. Simina regarding the endorsement of the State of Chuuk on the nomination of Mr. Marcellus J. Akapito.

Chairman Asher thank the witnesses and the nominee for availing themselves to be present at the hearing.

Conclusion

The Committee on Resources and Development has reviewed C.R. No. 24-07, and considered all testimony from the May 19, 2025, hearing. Your Committee on Resources and Development is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.R. No. 24-07, recommends that it be placed on the resolution calendar and adopted in the form attached hereto as C.R. No. 24-07.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Johnson A. Asher
Johnson A. Asher, chairman

/s/ Peter M. Christian
Peter M. Christian, member

/s/ Andy Choor
Andy Choor, member

/s/ Victor V. Gouland
Victor V. Gouland, member

/s/ Fabian S. Nimea
Fabian S. Nimea, member

/s/ Merlynn Abello-Alfonso
Merlynn Abello-Alfonso, member

/s/ Jermy W. Mudong

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Jermy W. Mudong, member