
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO INCLUDE RESIDENT CITIZENS OF THE FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES AS "QUALIFIED ALIENS" UNDER THE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK OPPORTUNITY RECONCILIATION ACT IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR UNIQUE HISTORIC AND ONGOING SACRIFICES AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

1 WHEREAS, the Freely Associated States of Palau, the
2 Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of
3 Micronesia comprise a multitude of islands, languages, and
4 cultures throughout the Micronesian region of the Pacific Ocean;
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7 WHEREAS, the Freely Associated States were former Trust
8 Territories of the United States and, as sovereign nations,
9 continue to place their trust in the United States through the
10 Compacts of Free Association; and

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12 WHEREAS, the Compacts of Free Association between the
13 Freely Associated States and the United States of America
14 recognize the historic sacrifices and contributions of the
15 citizens of the Freely Associated States to the interests of the
16 United States, including the use of their island atolls for 67
17 nuclear tests from 1946 to 1958, the subjecting of Marshallese
18 people to human radiation experiments without their knowledge or
19 their consent, and the United States military's occupation of
20 their islands to ensure United States control of the Pacific;
21 and

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23 WHEREAS, under the Compacts of Free Association, the United
24 States continues to exercise exclusive military jurisdiction
25 over the lands and waters of the Freely Associated States and
26 continues to use their sovereign territory for military weapons
27 testing, including the use of their atolls as part of the United
28 States National Missile Defense Program's long-range
29 intercontinental ballistic missile defense system; and

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1 WHEREAS, for decades, the United States has failed to
2 establish economic independence within the Freely Associated
3 States, leading to a lack of adequate agricultural, educational,
4 and health infrastructure necessary for a self-sufficient
5 society; and
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7 WHEREAS, in addition to these sacrifices, the sons and
8 daughters of the citizens of the Freely Associated States
9 continue to lay down their lives in the interests of the United
10 States, representing some of the highest per-capita military
11 recruitment levels to the United States military compared to any
12 other jurisdiction, including each of the fifty states of the
13 United States; and
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15 WHEREAS, the people of the Freely Associated States have
16 also contributed greatly to Hawaii's understanding of the common
17 cultural heritage and pride of all Pacific Islanders, such as
18 through the traditional ocean navigation techniques kept alive
19 and rejuvenated by the late "Papa" Mau Piailug; and
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21 WHEREAS, despite the limited right to travel, reside, work,
22 seek educational opportunity, and seek medical treatment in the
23 United States, citizens of the Freely Associated States who find
24 themselves in the United States continue to encounter
25 substantial and varied forms of discrimination, including
26 cultural, economic, linguistic, and social barriers; and
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28 WHEREAS, one of the most egregious examples of such
29 discrimination is the treatment of citizens of the Freely
30 Associated States present in the United States under the
31 Compacts of Free Association as a result of the federal Personal
32 Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996,
33 which removed their previous eligibility for numerous federal
34 benefits, including Medicaid, Social Security, food stamps,
35 housing, and other social safety nets that all citizens and most
36 resident legal immigrants enjoy; and
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38 WHEREAS, this discrepancy has resulted in harsh and
39 disparate treatment of a significant number of Hawaii's resident
40 citizens of the Freely Associated States, including the denial
41 of medical access leading to adverse health consequences and
42 even death; now, therefore,
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1 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
2 Twenty-seventh Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
3 Session of 2013, that Congress is strongly urged to include
4 resident citizens of the Freely Associated States as "qualified
5 aliens" and restore their eligibility under the Personal
6 Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, in
7 recognition of their historic and ongoing sacrifices and
8 contributions to the United States unique to almost any other
9 jurisdiction in the world; and

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11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
12 Resolution be transmitted to the Governor; the President of the
13 United States; and members of Hawaii's congressional delegation.
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