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July 31, 2009

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Eni F.H. Faleomavaega
Chairman

The Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Washington, D.C.

**FALEOMAVAEGA WORKS WITH PACIFIC ISLAND
AMBASSADORS TO IMPROVE U.S. PROGRAMS AND
ACTIONS CRITICAL TO THE REGION**

The Chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment, Rep. Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, met with a delegation of Pacific Island representatives to discuss U.S.-Pacific relations, climate change and steps the United States should take to assist the societies most vulnerable to the impacts of global warming.

The delegation consisted of the Chair of the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS), Ambassador Marlene Moses of Nauru; Ambassador Yosiwo George of the Federated States of Micronesia; Ambassador Winston Thompson of Fiji; Ambassador Hersey Kyota of Palau; Ambassador Evan Paki of Papua New Guinea; Ambassador Colin Beck of the Solomon Islands; Chargé d'Affaires Charles Paul of the Marshall Islands and Chargé d'Affaires Viliami Malolo of the Kingdom of Tonga.

“Our meeting provided an excellent chance to discuss the key issues affecting U.S. relations with the Pacific Islands and the matters before the U.S. Congress having the greatest impact on the Pacific. In consultations the group held with Democratic Majority Leader, Rep. Steny Hoyer, as well as with Rep. Sablan of the Northern Mariana Islands, Rep. Berkley of Nevada, Rep. Engel of New York, Rep. Flake of Arizona and Rep. Watson of California, they had a chance to address these issues and stress the importance of refining and upgrading provisions of the Waxman Markey bill (the climate change legislation currently before Congress) designed to assist Pacific Islands and other vulnerable societies deal with the impacts of global warming,” said Faleomavaega.

“My Subcommittee also held a hearing on Wednesday, ‘Ushering in Change: A New Era for U.S. Regional Policy in the Pacific,’ in which Ambassador Moses briefed the Subcommittee on behalf of all members of PSIDS on the current state of U.S.-Pacific relations and how to make improvements,” added Faleomavaega.

“Ambassador Moses and other Ambassadors from the region participating in the hearing did an outstanding job, and I recommend that interested observers view it directly by going to http://www.hcfa.house.gov/hearing_notice.asp?id=1105. I am particularly grateful that Ambassador Moses spent so much time with us since she serves concurrently as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary and Permanent Representative of Nauru to the United Nations as well as Non-resident Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the United States of America, the Republic of Cuba, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.”

“I was also pleased to report to the group that my Subcommittee continues to take the lead in Congress in dealing with the impact of climate change on the most vulnerable societies, including the Pacific Islands. Last week, for example, the Subcommittee held its second hearing on this critical issue,” said Faleomavaega.

“At the hearing, we leading experts on climate change discuss the Waxman Markey bill and its provisions regarding assistance to those most vulnerable to the impacts of global warming. In particular, the Subcommittee reviewed Title IV of the legislation, which directs the State Department, in consultation with USAID, the Treasury Department and the EPA, to establish an international adaptation program, and creates a fund to carry out the program. For each year from 2012-2021, the bill designates 1% of revenues generated by emissions auctions under cap-and-trade programs for international adaptation. For 2022-2026, that amount would increase to 2% per year and then to 4% in 2027 and beyond. Unfortunately, it remains unclear precisely how much money these percentages will translate to, but most credible estimates place the amount far short of the \$7 billion envisioned by advocates and requested by developing countries.”

“In the coming weeks and months leading up to the critical December Copenhagen conference on climate change, I will continue to work with my friends from the Pacific, my colleagues on the Subcommittee and with other key Members of Congress on improving the legislation in this area. And I will use all the powers of my Subcommittee to hold the United States, the United Nations and other key international bodies accountable as those most vulnerable suffer the consequences of climate change,” Faleomavaega concluded.



Chairman Faleomavaega with Amb. Beck, Amb. Kyota, Amb. Moses, Amb. George, Majority Leader Hoyer, Amb. Paki, Amb. Thompson and Richard Schifter, former Deputy U.S. Ambassador to the UN Security Council.

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