

## VICTOR FORTUNO

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**From:** Lee Richardson [lrichardson@arlegalaid.org]

**Sent:** Thursday, March 29, 2007 3:40 PM

**To:** VICTOR FORTUNO

**Cc:** chgreen@LASHAW.ORG

**Subject:** 2007 LSC Regulatory Agenda

I realize this is a belated submission, but I would like to express my support of an e-mail sent to you on March 16th, 2007, by Chuck Greenfield, Executive Director of Legal Aid Society of Hawai'i.

As Mr. Greenfield states, Section 1626.10(a), as interpreted by the LSC Office of Legal Affairs in External Opinions # EX-2004-1004 and EX 2001-1010, erroneously denies eligibility to citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau who reside in the United States.

I will not restate the points set forth by the learned Mr. Greenfield as you have those in hand. Clearly a Catch-22 exist in this situation that must be corrected. What works for this population to get employment (an unexpired passport and a I-94 indicating unexpired employment authorization {without the requirement of a stamp that says they are a lawful permanent resident}) should be sufficient documentation to obtain Legal Aid. These folks simply do not fall into any of the alien categories mentioned in the appendix to 1626 and they shouldn't have to jump through hoops to get acknowledgement of the status they already have. Their current status is greater than a lawful permanent resident, yet they are being excluded from receiving services because of this oversight.

With from 6,000 to 10,000 Marshallese living in Springdale, Arkansas, I believe we have the largest concentration of Marshall Islanders in the continental United States within the area served by Legal Aid of Arkansas. This population continues to grow. From 2001 to 2005 alone, the public school enrollment from this population in one school district rose from 226 to 623.

I will be in attendance at the April board meeting in Little Rock and would be happy to provide additional information if this matter will be at issue.

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