



EMBASSY OF THE
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03 September 2007

Ms Mattie Cohen
Senior Assistant General Counsel
Office of Legal Services
Legal Services Corporation
3333 K Street NW
Washington DC 20007

Re: Support for Legal Representation of Micronesians Residing in the US

Dear Ms Cohen:

The purpose of this comment on the Proposed Regulation is to record the unqualified support of the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia for the restoration of the services of the Legal Services Corporation to the citizens of the Freely Associated States who are present in the United States pursuant to their status under the Compact of Free Association, as expressed and enacted by US Public Law 108-188.

Micronesia's history with the LSC goes all the way back to 1974, at which time we were a Trust Territory administered by the US. At that time there were not so many Micronesians living in the US, but the Corporation formed a subsidiary, Micronesian Legal Services Corporation, that over the years and to this day is a mainstay in providing essential legal services to those of our people in Micronesia who cannot afford legal assistance otherwise. The first Chief Justice of our new Nation's Supreme Court was Mr Edward King, a veteran of MLSC.

As another side of the service to our people, the Corporation has afforded invaluable training to uncounted Micronesians in the Rule of Law. The most prominent example among them today would be the Honorable Andon L Amaraich, current Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Federated States of Micronesia, a son of Chuuk, who worked with the MLSC at an earlier stage of his distinguished career.

In 1974, it may not have been so important whether the relatively few Micronesians in the US could access LSC services in this country, but the situation has steadily and dramatically changed in the ensuing years. Precise demographics are elusive, but a general picture emerges that, in 1986, when the original Compact of Free Association was put in place, there were probably no more than 15,000 Micronesians present in the US, living or going to school. Most of them were concentrated in Guam and Hawaii.

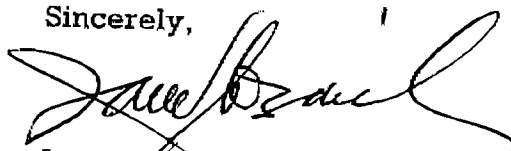
When the 1986 Compact was being negotiated LSC heavily lobbied the FSM to support US Congress inclusion of its programs in the documents under negotiation. This resulted in a very clear provision in the Compact Act, PL 99-239. Years later we learned, only after our renegotiations had concluded in 2003, that LSC had decided it was not required to serve the steadily growing Micronesian population living in the US.

The concentration relative to Guam and Hawaii persists today, but in the meantime the numbers have grown, and continue to grow. Today we have a reasonable basis to assume that, throughout the US on a surprisingly widespread basis, there are probably upwards of 30,000 citizens of the FSM alone, present in the US. This is a sizable percentage of our National population of roughly 120,000.

Obviously, we cannot overstress the importance to our people of the provision of the Compact Act that affords them access to the services of your Corporation. We choose, at this time, not to argue about the intention of the original negotiators or who may have, along the way, asserted some different conclusion. Rather, I wish to express very sincere appreciation to the Members of the LSC Board who have supported the outcome represented by the Proposed Regulation.

Thank you so much for your absolutely essential services to our people, both in Micronesia and in the United States.

Sincerely,



James A. Naich
Charge d'Affaires, ad interim