A BILL FOR AN ACT

To amend Title 40 of the Code of the Federated States of Micronesia by adding a new subchapter VI within chapter 3 to establish a National Merit Scholarship Program allowing selected high school valedictorians the opportunity to attend the college of their choice, and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA:

Section 1. Purpose. The Federated States of Micronesia hereby establishes a National Merit Scholarship Program. The intent of the Program is to provide selected high school valedictorians the opportunity to attend the college or university of their choice by paying their tuition and fees for their undergraduate education for four years.

Section 2. Title 40 of the Code of the Federated States of Micronesia is hereby amended by adding a new subchapter VI within chapter 3 entitled "National Merit Scholarship Program."

Section 3. Title 40 of the Code of the Federated States of Micronesia is hereby further amended by adding within the new subchapter VI of chapter 3 a new section 381 as follows:

"Section 381. Definitions

(1) 'Valedictorian' means an individual graduating at the top of the class;

(2) 'National Merit Scholar' means an individual who:

(a) Is a citizen of the Federated States of Micronesia;

(b) Attended a high school within the Federated
States of Micronesia;

(c) Graduated or will graduate as valedictorian of his or her high school class;

(d) Plans to enroll in or attend any college or university within twelve months after high school graduation; and

(e) Was selected in accordance to the procedures set forth in Section 383."

Section 3. Title 40 of the Code of the Federated States of Micronesia is hereby further amended by adding within the new subchapter VI of chapter 3 a new section 382 as follows:

"Section 382. Benefits

Individuals selected as National Merit Scholars shall receive the following benefits:

(1) Recognition as a National Merit Scholar under the Federated States of Micronesia National Merit Scholarship Program;

(2) Payment of undergraduate tuition and fees (but not living expenses, books or other incidental expenses) for four years to attend the college or university of his/her choice; and

(3) Round trip transportation to and from the college or university that the National Merit Scholar will attend at the beginning of the academic program and upon the scholar’s graduation.”
Section 3. Title 40 of the Code of the Federated States of Micronesia is hereby further amended by adding within the new subchapter VI of chapter 3 a new section 383 as follows:

"Section 383 – Selection

(1) The Secretary of Education shall administer the National Merit Scholarship Program.

(2) Each year, depending upon funds available for that year, the Secretary shall publicize the amount of funds available and the estimated number of National Merit Scholar slots for the upcoming academic year, and invite applications from individuals meeting the requirements of Section 381(2)(a) through (d).

(3) No application shall be accepted from individuals who graduated more than 12 months before the date of the application.

(4) No later than 30 days from the closing date of receipt of applications, the Secretary shall announce the appointment of the National Merit Scholars.

(5) In case there are more applications than there are funds available, the applications shall be ranked according to Scholastic Aptitude Test ("SAT") scores, and the appointments shall be made accordingly, starting from the application with the highest SAT score.

(6) The Secretary is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to implement, administer and otherwise
further the intent of this Program."

Section 4. This act shall become law upon approval by the President of the Federated States of Micronesia or upon its becoming law without such approval.

Date: 5/20/09

Introduced by: /s/ Dohsis Halbert

Dohsis Halbert