

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 21-38

RE: C.R. NO. 21-99/H&SA

SUBJECT: APPROVING A GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$821,849 FROM  
THE U.S. DHHS, CDC.

JANUARY 31, 2020

The Honorable Wesley W. Simina  
Speaker, Twenty-First Congress  
Federated States of Micronesia  
Third Regular Session, 2020

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Health and Social Affairs to which was  
referred C.R. 21-99, entitled:

"A RESOLUTION APPROVING AND ACCEPTING A GRANT IN THE AMOUNT  
OF \$821,849 FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN  
SERVICES, CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, TO  
FUND THE PROJECT ENTITLED: "TO ACCELERATE THE PREVENTION  
AND CONTROL OF HIV, VIRAL HEPATITIS, SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED  
DISEASE AND TUBERCULOSIS IN THE FEDERATED STATES OF  
MICRONESIA AND U.S. PACIFIC ISLANDS".,

begs leave to report as follows:

The intent and purpose of the resolution are expressed in  
its title.

Your Committee held a hearing on January 29, 2020. The  
witnesses present included: Secretary Livinson Taulung,  
Immunization Program Manager Carter Apaisam, MCH Program  
Dionisio Saimon, MCH Financial Specialist Vicky Wilkauler,  
CD Medication Director Mayleen Ekiek, Financial Specialist  
Takiko Ifamitik, AO DHSA Scott Mori, FP Coordinator Stanley

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Micky and Jun Bacalondo representing the Justice  
Department.

Chairman Perman welcomed the witnesses and members and  
asked Secretary Taulung to open up the hearing. Secretary  
Taulung noted that this is a grant for funding to continue  
the Program that has been in effect for 5 years.

Dr. Ekiek noted that this program has been in operation for  
many years. The Program supports prevention activities in  
the states. She mentioned that the program is currently on  
hold, waiting for the resolution to pass in order to  
continue services. She stressed that they cannot continue  
their activities without funding. She noted that all  
January activities are pending approval of the resolution.  
There are approximately 10,000 cases of hepatitis in the  
FSM. The program also funds STD education.

Senator Urusemal inquired as to how much of the funding was  
being used for personnel. Dr. Ekiek responded that  
approximately half of the funding, \$400,000 is for  
personnel. Senator Urusemal asked if the programs are  
having an impact on the Nation. Dr. Ekiek shared that they  
now have screening for hepatitis on island. She noted that  
the FSM has a low prevalence of HIV. She also stressed  
that with regards to STD education, they provide education  
and condoms, however, it is up to individuals to decide if  
they are going to use them. She also shared that they have  
testing for several other STDs available locally. She  
stated that the multi-resistant strain of TB in Chuuk has  
been eradicated and they are doing a mass screening in  
March in Chuuk.

Chairman Perman inquired as to the equipment cost being  
zero. Dr. Ekiek responded that previous grants were used  
for equipment for local testing and they procure equipment  
as needed. Currently they have the necessary equipment for  
testing for this grant. She noted that if Congress can  
fund reagents and testing supplies, that would be helpful.

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Secretary Taulung noted that regarding Hepatitis, there is improvement, there are less people showing complications from Hepatitis. He said that some people are tested outside the FSM. Generally speaking, Hepatitis has the worst outcomes. This funding is vital and they are saving lives with this funding.

Chairman Perman inquired as to some of the line items listed. He noted there is \$30,000 for supplies listed. He inquired as to the large amount for personnel, equal to almost half of the grant. He also noted that there was another large amount listed for travel. He asked if the travel was within the FSM. Dr. Ekiek agreed that a large portion was used for personnel, due to the nature of the grant, it requires a lot of people on the ground. She noted that most of the travel is within the FSM, however, there are mandatory meetings that require travel outside of the FSM.

Dr. Ekiek shared that the 2019 data for Pohnpei was 18 cases of TB and Chuuk had 77 cases. Pohnpei cases are mostly adults, however in Chuuk, some are in the less than 5 years old category and a few in the 5-10 year olds.

Floor Leader asked if there was data regarding STD rates for each state. Dr. Ekiek stated that she did not have the data here, but she will provide it.

There was a discussion regarding the new law and the annual grant reporting requirements to Congress. Chairman Perman noted that as Chairman of Health and Social Affairs, he needs to be provided with current and accurate data. He noted that he attends conferences and meetings for which he requires this information and he needs to have data to support grant requests in an expeditious manner.

Your Committee on Health and Social Affairs is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.R. No. 21-99, and recommends its adoption in the form attached hereto.

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Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Ferny S. Perman  
Ferny S. Perman, chairman

/s/ Tiwiter Aritos  
Tiwiter Aritos, vice chairman

/s/ Esmond B. Moses  
Esmond B. Moses, member

/s/ Derensio S. Konman  
Derensio S. Konman, member

Aren B. Palik, member

/s/ Florencio S. Harper  
Florencio S. Harper, member

/s/ Joseph J. Urusemal  
Joseph J. Urusemal, member