

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 21-45

RE: C.R. NO. 21-121/EX AFF

SUBJECT: TO CONFIRM THE NOMINATION OF MRS. SHANTY SIGRAH ASHER
TO SERVE AS THE FSM CONSUL GENERAL IN HONOLULU, HAWAII

APRIL 15, 2020

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

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on External Affairs, to which was referred C.R.
No. 21-121 entitled:

"A RESOLUTION TO CONFIRM THE NOMINATION OF MRS. SHANTY
SIGRAH ASHER TO SERVE AS THE FSM CONSUL GENERAL IN
HONOLULU, HAWAII.",

begs leave to report as follows:

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

Congressional Resolution No. 21-121 was transmitted to Congress
on January 5, 2020 through Presidential Communication No. 21-
207, and the nominee's bio data was enclosed with the said
communication. Your Committee conducted a public hearing on
Congressional Resolution No. 21-121 on Tuesday, March 17, 2020,
at 3:00 p.m. at the FSM Consulate Office in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Chairman Paliknoa K. Welly chaired the hearing. Those in
attendance included: the nominee, Foreign Service Officer Wainer
Louis, Foreign Service Officer Sass Gouland, Administrative
Specialist Angie Saimon, two contract service employees for the
FSM Consul General Office in Honolulu, Hawaii, and close

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relatives of the nominee. Initially, several members of your Committee on External Affairs had made prior arrangement to attend the hearing, unfortunately only Chairman Welly and staff attorney Alik K. Jackson travelled to Honolulu, Hawaii.

Your Committee reviewed the qualifications of this nominee extensively. The nominee is highly educated. The nominee holds a Bachelor of Science degree major in Pre-Law from Chaminade University in Honolulu, Hawaii; graduated in 2003. She also has a Masters of Science degree in Criminal Justice Administration from the same University; graduated in 2007. In 2018, the nominee graduated at the Thomas Jefferson School of Law in San Diego, California with a Juris Doctor.

The nominee is currently working for the Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) as an Education Law Specialist. Some of her duties and functions include: organizing and facilitating community outreach for Micronesians in Hawaii, representing Micronesian community members in conference, workshops and community talks to raise awareness amongst Hawaiian educators, government leaders, and the local community about Micronesians stories, struggles and contributions, and conduct legal research on social, economic and policy issues impacting Micronesians.

The nominee served as an Anti-Corruption Legal Specialist for the FSM Department of Justice in 2014 to 2015. In 2010 to 2014, the nominee served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Pacific Affairs, a division under the FSM Department of Foreign Affairs.

At the hearing, Chairman Welly gave the nominee an opportunity to comment on her nomination. As always, the nominee thanked the Chairman and staff for taking the time to travel to Honolulu, Hawaii. She appreciated very much the President's confidence in nominating her. She was very appreciative for the opportunity to sit in the hearing, and commented that she was surprised to learn that she was nominated. She commented that her legal studies along with her current work in Honolulu relate to consular services. In fact, her current work with PREL in

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Honolulu had enabled her or other educators to continue their dialoging on issues that are currently facing our citizens. She indicated that the first community outreach she undertook was the employment card for members of the Micronesian Community, which is a requirement for them to receive their driver licenses. She witnessed the support that she had involvement with on such issues. She was also indicated that if she is confirmed she will continue to strengthen the quality of education of our citizens. She was also involved in the education of many of our FSM citizens in Honolulu on the issue of discrimination where she talked at several schools, and had learned some of the challenges of our students. So beside her resume, her involvement in the community speaks volume of her qualifications to the position.

Chairman Welly commented that the nominee is without any doubt qualify for the position considering her past working experience with the Department of Foreign Affairs and her educational background.

He further inquired of the nominee if she has no problem working as a Consul General considering her profession in the legal area. The nominee commented that since February this year she has been doing pro bono work. If she is confirmed, this is a positive gesture given her current work with PREL and her legal background.

Chairman Welly also inquired of the nominee that if she is confirmed, she will serve under the pleasure of the President, and the future is not guarantee. She indicated that the position will be an addition to her resume to seek higher positions like Ambassador.

Another question the Chairman inquired of the nominee was how she was approached to serve as Consul General in Honolulu, Hawaii. She indicated that the President has approached her and asked her if she is interested to the post.

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The Chairman questioned the nominee on the salary of the position, is she okay with the salary. The nominee indicated that she had the opportunity to look into the salary, and she commented that as long as she is okay to support her family with the current salary, she is okay with the salary considering that there are other benefits that comes with the position.

The Chairman allowed the nominee to say anything to support her nomination. The nominee indicated that Honolulu is a challenge considering the many citizens of the FSM residing here. She indicated that her current work with PREL in Honolulu enable her to work with the Micronesian Community on their employment cards. She expressed the support that she had in these areas. In fact, she was going to meet with the Governor of Hawaii to be elected as a Board member of the Hawaii Education Board of Directors. She also indicated that if she is confirmed she wanted to highlight the fact that she has fought to strengthen the quality of education of our citizens. She also was involved in trying to educate many of the discrimination against FSM citizens here in Honolulu. She indicated that she was also invited to talk at schools, and had learned some of the challenges of our students. So beside her resume, her involvement in the community speaks volumes of her qualifications. The witnesses that were present in the hearing echoed their full support for the nominee.

Your Committee is mindful that this is a critical time for our Nation in the arena of international affairs. It would greatly benefit our Nation to have strong leadership for its overseas diplomatic missions. She has already proven herself to have the level of expertise regarding the policy issues that comes only with many years of international relations and diplomacy experience.

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Your Committee would like to offer the following amendment to C.R. No. 21-121 to read as follows:

- 1) Page line 13, delete "Third Regular" and insert "Fifth Special" in lieu thereof.

The nominee is well known for her efforts to promote the Federated States of Micronesia, and she is also known for the diligence in assisting our FSM students in Honolulu, as well as, her past experience within the Department. Your Committee has not received any subsequent communication that would cast doubt on the performance or integrity of the nominee.

The Committee is very satisfied with the nominee's performance, competency and integrity. Absent any contrary indication, your Committee believes that the nominee should be confirmed, and so recommends that Mrs. Shanty Sigrah Asher to be confirmed as the Consul General at the FSM Consulate Office in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Your Committee on External Affairs is in accord with the intent and purpose of C.R. No. 21-121, and recommends its adoption in the form attached hereto as C.R. No. 21-121, C.D.1.

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Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Paliknoa K. Welly
Paliknoa K. Welly, chairman

/s/ Tiwiter Aritos
Tiwiter Aritos, vice chairman

/s/ Isaac V. Figir
Isaac V. Figir, member

Victor V. Gouland, member

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

/s/ Dion G. Neth
Dion G. Neth, member

/s/ Robson U. Romolow
Robson U. Romolow, member