

PO Box 4324  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96812

August 21, 2007

Mattie Cohan  
Senior Assistant General Counsel  
Office of Legal Affairs  
Legal Services Corporation  
3333 K Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20007

Dear Mattie Cohan:

I am submitting this statement in support of the Legal Services Corporation's decision to change its regulations regarding restrictions on legal assistance to citizens of the Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Belau who reside lawfully in the United States (the Freely Associated States, or F.A.S.). The proposed change of policy relates to 45 CFR Part 1626 identified in the *Federal Register*, Vol. 72, No. 148, dated Thursday, August 2, 2007, pp. 42363-42366.

I am a citizen of the Republic of Belau and have lived in Hawaii since the late-1980s. I first came to Honolulu to work on my graduate education at the University of Hawaii but have decided to settle down in Hawaii for the time being in order, partly, to assist in the organization and empowerment of the growing communities of Freely Associated States citizens who have migrated to Hawaii.

Between February 2005 and November 2007, I served as the chairperson of the Micronesian Community Network, an organization we created in Honolulu in 2005 to assist in organizing and empowering the F.A.S. communities in many areas of their lives. I currently serve as the chairperson of the Education Committee of Micronesian Community Network where I help to create, as well as support, opportunities for educational advancement of F.A.S. peoples in Hawaii. I am also currently a teacher at a local community school within the Hawaii Department of Education.

In these capacities, I continue to witness the increasing numbers of F.A.S. migrant communities in Hawaii. Along with such increase of numbers of peoples, naturally come growing demands for legal services of all kinds. Like many migrant communities everywhere, F.A.S. citizens begin lives in the US with little financial resources and so their involvements in the legal arena increase their likelihood of victimization from unscrupulous employers and other parties who have little to no investments in helping Micronesians.

The proposed LSG policy changes are well intentioned, practical because they will help F.A.S. citizens lawfully residing in the US with access to legal services, and will significantly improve the quality of their lives. The Compacts of Free Association were meant to assist both the entities of the former Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and its peoples become self-reliant. Migration of these peoples to the United States and its territories were seen to be integral to that

goal, alongside nation-building efforts back in those islands. I feel strongly that changing LSG policy to reflect its pre-1996 regulations that allowed F.A.S. citizens legally residing in the United States to seek Legal Aid services would be the just and right thing to do and would greatly aid many Micronesians living in the United States.

Thank you very much for allowing me to submit this statement in support of LSG's proposed policy changes. Also, thank you very much for your help in making it easier for us to obtain US federal resources/services to make life in this country meaningful and worthwhile.

Sincerely yours,

Richard N. Salvador