APIL Resolution No. 32-GA-01, CD1

“Relative to expressing support for the establishment of a Regional Health Care Network to function as a model for progressive multi-sectoral partnerships, that incorporate advanced medical care with holistic and indigenous systems of care for jurisdictions within the Blue Continent.”

WHEREAS, the jurisdictions that constitute the membership and union of the Association of Pacific Islands Legislatures (APIL), although spread across more than 2.5 million nautical miles, have differing political relationships with the United States Government yet function as essentially one shared economy; and

WHEREAS, recognizing the Pacific region’s vast expanse of ocean that binds and unites the member states of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures, its members affirm this union as part of the “Blue Continent”; and

WHEREAS, every island, village, and family throughout the Blue Continent knows the pain and suffering from the untimely death of a neighbor, family member, or loved one due to complications or illnesses arising from a Non-Communicable Disease (NCD); and

WHEREAS, the non communicable disease crisis is a drain on the economic progress and the financial resources of governments, businesses, and families; and

WHEREAS, in May 2008, the 193 Member States of the World Health Organization (WHO) approved a six-year plan to address non-communicable diseases, especially the rapidly increasing burden in low- and middle-income countries; and

WHEREAS, during the 64th session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2010, a resolution was passed to call for a high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and treatment NCDs with the participation of heads of state and government; and
WHEREAS, the resolution also encouraged United Nations Member States to address the issue of non-communicable diseases at the 2010 Review Summit for the Millennium Development Goals; and

WHEREAS, the Pacific Island Health Officers Association (PIHOA) passed resolution 48-01 in May of 2010 which was entitled, “Declaring a Regional State of Health Emergency to the Epidemic of Non-Communicable Diseases in the United States-Affiliated Pacific Islands”; and

WHEREAS, at the 5th Micronesian Traditional Leaders Conference held in November of 2010 in the Republic of Palau, the members declared an NCD Emergency in Micronesia; and

WHEREAS, the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures declared an NCD crises at its meeting in December of 2010; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization 2011 Country report on the NCD crisis provides that sixty to seventy percent of all deaths in Micronesia are caused by NCDs with only five percent caused by injury; and

WHEREAS, the seriousness of this issue alone has prompted the focus of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures and utilization of its resources towards addressing the scope and depth of this crisis; and

WHEREAS, the lack of access to affordable health care and services in the region has led, in part, to anomalously high mortality rates over the past decade along with stagnant or declining quality of life for patients suffering from the effects non-communicable diseases; and

WHEREAS, the APIL recognizes that, amongst its member jurisdictions, concerted efforts are needed to usher in a period of action that focuses on providing access to affordable health care, constructing adequate medical facilities and clinics, institutionalizing programs to develop local medical professional capacities, and supporting community-based efforts to achieve greater comprehension of the benefits of a healthy lifestyle at all age levels; and

WHEREAS, such endeavors will be concrete steps towards raising the health and well-being of the island communities, providing optimum environments for longer and healthier lifestyles, and investing in the future generations of those who make the islands their homes; and
WHEREAS, these actions will also work toward incorporating the perpetuation of holistic medicinal practices and sacred knowledge from elders, both of which are values which are a part of pacific island traditions and customs; and

WHEREAS, the APIL believes that to address the current crisis, efforts by all stakeholders including those from the government, individual and federal sources, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and the community must be coalesced if progress is to be made to bridge the gap caused by the lack of affordable health care, inadequate access to facilities and professionals, and insufficient programs to educate future generations about healthy lifestyle decisions; and

WHEREAS, the APIL expresses its faith that Pacific Island communities will benefit and embrace a multidimensional approach that respects island culture, with candor and openness, using the tools of consensus and collaboration; through multi-sectoral partnerships involving supportive corporate partners, non-profit organizations, governments, health care providers, health insurance providers, community based, regional, and international foundations and organizations; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Executives and public policy makers of the Blue Continent have longed called for the establishment of a Regional Health Care Network to function as a model for progressive multi-sectoral partnerships, that incorporate advanced medical care with holistic and indigenous systems of care; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Blue Continent through the Association of the Pacific Island Legislatures appreciates President Barack Obama’s efforts to “re-pivot” the U.S. Government’s attention in the Pacific, an announcement the President made in 2011 during the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum; and

WHEREAS, the APIL believes that the critical nature of our Pacific issues requires a serious and sustained effort in Washington, DC, to supplement the work of our elected representatives to the U.S. House of Representatives and our appointed representatives serving in the diplomatic corps; and
WHEREAS, the APIL considers that a sustained effort will further develop our
relationships with U.S. decision makers in the executive and legislative branches of government,
as the APIL pursues to advance solutions to address critical needs in the Pacific; and

WHEREAS, the President of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures will lead an
effort to search for professional and technical assistance to represent the interests of APIL, to
collaborate with our members on our critical issues, and to assist the APIL in developing a
comprehensive strategy to effectuate positive change amongst APIL members; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures, 32nd General
Assembly, Honolulu Hawaii, June 25-27, 2013, that the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures
hereby expresses support for the establishment of a Regional Health Care Network to function as
a model for progressive partnerships, one that will incorporate advanced medical care with
holistic and indigenous systems of care for jurisdictions within the Blue Continent, collect data,
research best practices, identify and pursue partnership opportunities at the local and regional
levels, establish and design programs to leverage partnerships, and consider developing and
implementing pilot programs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the APIL does hereby endorse the concept of
greater regional cooperation and coordination among the island governments represented in the
APIL for the provision of affordable and accessible quality health care to their respective
constituents, based on the following principles: broad-based membership, utilizing a preferred
provider network with strong local presence, rational utilization management, shared
administrative costs, with emphasis on preventative care, promotive of individual accountability,
and with incentives for better cost management and quality outcomes of care; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly calls upon the Leadership of
the APIL and the APIL’s Secretariat to communicate with the United States Department of
Interior and other organizations, as appropriate, to seek out technical assistance and financial
support for a study to develop a sustainable Regional Health Care Plan according to the
abovementioned principles and a pilot project to create an Accountable Care Organization
(ACO) modeled after such ACOs recognized by the United States Centers for Medicare and
Medicaid Services in one of the Freely Associated States that is best situated to host the pilot; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the APIL respectfully requests and encourages its member entities to share with the APIL Secretariat the appropriate information and data that would be needed to complete the abovementioned study of the Regional Health Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the APIL respectfully requests and encourages its member entities to partner with health care organizations in the private sector, particularly those with a strong presence in the Region, in planning and implementing the pilot ACO project, and in identifying and pursuing opportunities for similar collaboration to build local service delivery capacity in their jurisdictions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the APIL Secretariat shall at the next APIL Board of Directors meeting consider presenting a Regional Health Care Network program design as indicated by the study and report on the preliminary results of the ACO pilot project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the APIL President shall certify, and the APIL Secretary shall attest to the adoption of this Resolution and that copies of the same shall be transmitted to the Chief Executives and the Legislative Presiding Officers of each member jurisdiction of the Association of the Pacific Island Legislatures.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED ON THE 27th DAY OF JUNE, 2013.

JUDITH T. WON PAT ED.D.
PRESIDENT

CHANG B. WILLIAM
SECRETARY