Resolution No. 51-BOD-09, CD1

"Respectfully requesting that the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Insular Affairs, Antonio Marion Babauta, and his senior staff begin to undertake the required policy and planning review, development and implementation needed to establish an office in Guam by fall of 2011 in order to prepare for the Strategic Realignment of the United States Military Forces in the Pacific and to develop closer ties to the region, its people and its leadership through a Regional Strategic Framework that is post-colonial and emancipatory."

WHEREAS, President Barack Obama has nominated Anthony Marion Babauta as the next United States Assistant Secretary of the Interior, and that nomination has been confirmed by the United States Congress; and

WHEREAS, Assistant Secretary Babauta has worked for the United States House of Representatives Natural Resources Committee since 1998, most recently as "Staff Director" for the Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife, and in this position advised the full committee on United States Policy towards the United States Territories and other United States affiliated island nations; and

WHEREAS, Assistant Secretary Babauta has developed and maintained close professional and personal relationships with leaders throughout Micronesia; and

WHEREAS, Assistant Secretary Babauta was instrumental in advancing the renegotiated Compacts of Free Association with the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia, the Guam War Claims and the Political Advancement of Puerto Rico; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures recognizes that Assistant Secretary Babauta has attained an extraordinary level of competence, wisdom and knowledge regarding the growing complexity of currently long standing and emerging issues in the Insular Areas, Puerto Rico and the Micronesian islands in particular; and

WHEREAS, Assistant Secretary Babauta is the highest ranking Native American Pacific Islander serving his country as a member of President Obama's Cabinet, Assistant Secretary Babauta having been confirmed to this position by a majority vote of the United States Senate; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Association of Pacific Islands Legislatures believe that the nomination and confirmation of a Micronesian as the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Insular Affairs is not only appropriate but necessary to broaden the understanding of the Department of Interior
WHEREAS, Assistant Secretary Babauta supports work toward regional integration for organizations like the Association of the Pacific Islands Legislatures, the Micronesian Chief Executive Summit, and The Micronesian Center for a Sustainable Future; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the Association of Pacific Islands Legislatures expresses its sincere appreciation to President Barack Obama for the advancement of the issues of the Insular areas and the Micronesian States through the reestablishment of the position of Assistant Secretary of Interior for Insular Affairs, which clearly reflects a commitment to enhance communication, cooperation, development, sustainability, and security through collective action, shared progress and a post-colonial emancipatory regional strategic framework; and

WHEREAS, The United States Affiliated Islands of Micronesia are experiencing a period of rapid growth, urbanization, westernization and increasing significance to United States national security in the Pacific; and

WHEREAS, the Chief Executives of Micronesia, in response to these extraordinary challenges presented by the strategic realignment of United States Military Forces in the Pacific, and given the emerging and emergent opportunities within the region to preserve, leverage and integrate indigenous, natural, and human resource systems, have established the Micronesian Chief Executive Summit with membership from all nine jurisdictions, the MCES is now entering into its seventh year; and

WHEREAS, over the next 10 years, nearly Twenty Billion Dollars ($20,000,000,000) will flow through Guam in order to realign United States Military forces in the Pacific; and

WHEREAS, although Guam is the focal point of this strategic military realignment, it will have extraordinary impacts both negative and positive throughout all nine jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, in anticipation of the economic and educational opportunities that the realignment of United States Military Forces in the Pacific will bring, there will be a significant increase in out bound migration from the citizens of the FAS to Guam, seeking a better life for themselves and their families, over the next decade which could lead to a total population on Guam of nearly Forty Thousand (40,000) citizens from the FAS; and

WHEREAS, the issues, possibilities, potential conflicts and the opportunities associated with this complex series of interconnected social changes and adaptations can best be managed on the ground in the jurisdiction that these changes are taking place; and

WHEREAS, Assistant Secretary Babauta is a native son of Guam born and raised in the southern village Guam, Agat which lies by the Sea; and
WHEREAS, Assistant Secretary Babauta is uniquely positioned to manage the enormous
transformative change that is taking place in the region; and

WHEREAS, the President of the United States of American has given unique access to Assistant
Secretary Babauta to the White House Senior Staff and to the Presidents National Security Council; and

WHEREAS, because of these extraordinary set of opportunities and circumstances the Board of
Directors of the Association of Pacific Islands Legislatures respectfully request that the Assistant
Secretary begin the required policy review, development and implementation needed to establish a new
Office of Insular Affairs on Guam; and

WHEREAS, there are many issues and agreements, including some long outstanding, between the
United States and the Pacific Territories, Commonwealths, Freely Associated and Federated States; and

WHEREAS, those issues would be more equitably administered and will be addressed from a world
view which embraces the cultural milieu and context in which the citizens of the territories and the FAS
live their lives; and

WHEREAS, this new office could assume several responsibilities, including, being responsible for
the day-to-day monitoring of grant assistance under the Compact; and

WHEREAS, this new regional office could be the focal point for work performed by regional staff
for the U.S. delegations to the bilateral joint committees with the Republic of the Marshall Islands and
the Federated States of Micronesia, respectively, that will establish budgets for Compact funds, apply
performance measures and standards to Compact grants and oversee the trust funds that will be
established under the Compacts. Additionally, the Guam office will monitor the activities of other
federal agencies that provide programs and services in the freely associated states; and

WHEREAS, this newly recruited staff should be the best and brightest, it should include people of
color, indigenous people, women, and those trained in intercultural communication. This new staff
should be multidisciplinary, in order to address challenges and opportunities from a multidimensional
understanding and they should be trained to understand and seek social, economic and environmental
justice, while pursuing the interest and goals of the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the primary, secondary and administrative functions of this office should not be
outsourced to any non-state actors or NGOs outside of Micronesia. Instead capacity and talent should be
built and developed within the region using the resources emanating from the institutions of higher
education within the region; and

WHEREAS, Assistant Secretary Babauta could use this transformative realignment in OIA
operations to have Guam serve as the focal point of regional operations that devolves core services,
authority, and responsibility down to the jurisdiction being served; and

WHEREAS, Assistant Secretary Babauta could use this realignment to appoint a high level special
BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors on behalf of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures duly acknowledge the need for a more local location for the Office of Insular Affairs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Directors, on behalf of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures, do hereby encourage individual governments and legislatures of other Pacific islands to also adopt similar Resolutions; 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 President of the United States, the Secretary of State, and to the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Insular Affairs, to the governments of the Freely Associated States and to the Presiding Legislative Officers and the Chief Executive Officers of all members of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED ON THE 3RD DAY OF DECEMBER, 2010.