



Association of Pacific Island Legislatures

American Samoa
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
FSM, State of Chuuk
FSM, State of Kosrae
FSM, State of Pohnpei
FSM, State of Yap
Island of Guam
Republic of Kiribati
Republic of the Marshall Islands
Republic of Nauru
Republic of Palau
State of Hawaii

A RESOLUTION

APIL Resolution No. 41-GA-19

“Relative to advocating for the establishment of a stronger regional presence of the Veterans Affairs Department on Guam to serve the veteran populations of all APIL member states and to highlight the critical need for improved veterans services in the Western Pacific region.”

1 **WHEREAS**, the geopolitical environment has elevated the importance of the
2 member of APIL states within the Western Pacific as a critical hub for the United States
3 military, often referred to as the tip of the spear; and

4 **WHEREAS**, the central location of Guam in the Western Pacific makes it a logical
5 and efficient choice for establishing a regional hub for veterans services, serving not only
6 Guam but also in the neighboring island jurisdictions of the Commonwealth of the
7 Northern Mariana Islands and the Freely Associated States of Micronesia; and

8 **WHEREAS**, the establishment of a regional Veterans Affairs (VA) office in Guam
9 would reduce expenses associated with airfare and accommodation for veterans who
10 currently must travel to Hawaii for services, thereby easing the financial burden on veterans
11 and their families; and

12 **WHEREAS**, having a regional VA hub in Guam would enable veterans to receive
13 support from their family and community networks, which is often cost prohibitive when
14 traveling to Hawaii, thus enhancing the overall support system for veterans; and

15 **WHEREAS**, adjudication services for Guam veterans are currently provided in
16 Hawaii – which is seven hours flight time from Guam – the equivalent of a veteran in
17 Washington D.C. needing to travel to Anchorage, Alaska for services; and

18 **WHEREAS**, in the past, the Veterans Administration has set up adjudication services
19 on non-US soil in the Philippines despite the fact that Guam is the closest American soil to
20 Asia; and

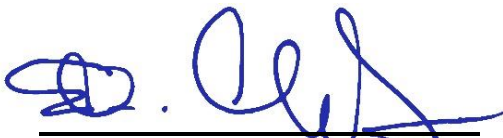
1 **WHEREAS**, a proportionally sized regional VA hub in Guam would provide a
2 greater range of medical support, including the ability to obtain medicines from the local
3 market, and critical mental health support services that are more effective in-person rather
4 than via virtual platforms; and

5 **WHEREAS**, the economic, efficiency, and effectiveness benefits of establishing a
6 regional VA hub in Guam would greatly enhance the services provided to veterans who
7 have honorably served; now, therefore,

8 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures, 41st General
9 Assembly, Republic of Palau, August 12-13, 2024, that this Assembly hereby strongly
10 advocates for the establishment of a stronger regional presence of the Veterans Affairs
11 Department in Guam to serve all the veterans of the APIL member states; and

12 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the APIL President shall certify and the APIL
13 Secretary shall attest to the adoption hereof and that copies of the same shall be transmitted
14 to the Director of the Veterans Affairs Department of the United States Government; the
15 Chief Executives and Presiding Legislative Officers of each member jurisdiction of the
16 Association of Pacific Island Legislatures.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED ON THE 13TH DAY OF AUGUST, 2024.


EDMUND S. VILLAGOMEZ
ACTING PRESIDENT


VICTOR BAMOG
ACTING SECRETARY

