



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

Resolution No. 49-BOD-02, CD1

“To respectfully inform the President of the United States that the members of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures expresses its strong opposition to the creation of a Northern Islands National Monument.”

1 **WHEREAS**, a Northern Islands National Monument encompassing the 200-mile EEZ
2 surrounding Uracas, Maug, and the Asuncion Islands is under consideration to be designated as a marine
3 sanctuary or monument; and

4 **WHEREAS**, a similar designation was given to the islands north of Hawaii which is now
5 designated as Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument that was created by President George W.
6 Bush on June 15, 2006, under the 1906 Antiquities Act; and

7 **WHEREAS**, as expressed under the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Senate Joint
8 Resolution No. 16-4, the designation of a CNMI marine monument would be a permanent and nearly
9 irrevocable federal action that rightfully should require the consideration of the needs and opinions of the
10 People of the CNMI and the potential of lost opportunities for the economic benefit to the CNMI; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the designation of the CNMI marine monument will limit access to these islands to
12 researchers, tourists, or whoever else as determined by a federal agency, which will serve to exclude a
13 majority of the People of the CNMI and their descendents from access to this area in perpetuity; and

14 **WHEREAS**, the issue of creating a CNMI national monument is highly controversial, sensitive,
15 and has been a source of divisiveness in our community as is evident in our local and regional news media;
16 and

17 **WHEREAS**, it is the sense of members of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures that the
18 majority of citizens of the CNMI do not endorse this proposal; and

19 **WHEREAS**, the Governor of the CNMI has already responded to the Pew Charitable Trust in a
20 letter dated March 19, 2008 and in a letter dated April 29, 2008 addressed directly to the President of the
21 United States respectfully declining the suggestion of designating any marine sanctuary or monument in the
22 Northern Marianas Islands; and

1 **WHEREAS**, the CNMI has already specifically identified the islands of Uracas, Maug, and
2 Asuncion as wildlife conservation areas with the waters surrounding them already acting as de-facto
3 Marine Protected Areas, accessible only upon satisfaction of conditions determined by the People of the
4 CNMI; and

5 **WHEREAS**, the islands of Uracas, Maug, and Asuncion are already in pristine condition and their
6 surrounding waters support a healthy and vibrant ecosystem without needing the "full protection" of a
7 federal designation; and

8 **WHEREAS**, the members of the Association of the Pacific Island Legislatures affirm that the
9 People of the CNMI have a strong affinity to these islands and their surrounding waters, and have a deep
10 sense of their connection to the culture, traditions, and the unique identity of the people; and

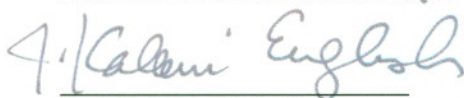
11 **WHEREAS**, on November 18, 2008, the 29th Guam Legislature adopted Resolution No. 196,
12 relative to supporting the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Carolinian Affairs
13 Advisory Committee Resolution No. 2008-0001 in opposition to the proposal of the United States Federal
14 Government to recognize the Marianas Trench as a National Marine Monument; and


15 **WHEREAS**, a unilateral designation of this area as a marine monument under the Antiquities Act
16 without the consent of the People of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands would be an
17 affront and an insult to the People, especially to the indigenous people of the CNMI; now, therefore,

18 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Directors of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures,
19 49th Meeting, December 4-5, 2008, Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands, that the members of the
20 Association of Pacific Island Legislatures on behalf of the People of the CNMI respectfully inform the
21 President of the United States, its strong opposition to the creation of a Northern Islands National
22 Monument; and

23 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the President of the Association of Pacific Island
24 Legislatures certifies, and the Secretary of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures attests to the
25 adoption hereof and that copies of the same shall be thereafter transmitted to the President of the United
26 States; the President-Elect of the United States and to the Presiding Legislative Officers and Chief
27 Executives of each of the APIL member jurisdictions.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED ON THE 5TH DAY OF DECEMBER, 2008.


J. KALANI ENGLISH
PRESIDENT


JUDITH T. WON PAT, Ed. D.
SECRETARY

