



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. 51-BOD-08, CD1

“Endorsing the Pacific Island Health Officers Association’s Board Resolution 48-01, Declaring a Regional State of Health Emergency Due to the Epidemic of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) in the United States-Affiliated Pacific Islands (USAPI).”

1 **WHEREAS**, the United States Affiliated Pacific Islands (USAPI) include American
2 Samoa, Guam, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall
3 Islands, the Republic of Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia (Pohnpei, Chuuk, Yap and
4 Kosrae); and

5 **WHEREAS**, the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures include American Samoa, State
6 of Hawaii, Island of Guam, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the
7 Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, FSM State of Pohnpei, FSM State of Chuuk, FSM State of
8 Yap, FSM State of Kosrae, Republic of Kiribati and Republic of Nauru; and

9 **WHEREAS**, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), statistically the Pacific
10 Island Countries, in particular, the Micronesians and some Polynesian populations are ranked the
11 highest in obesity and some Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD) indicators; and

12 **WHEREAS**, the NCD mortality rates in the USAPI are indeed among the highest in the
13 world and The prevalence of diabetes among 25-64 year old adults was 47.3% in American Samoa,
14 32.1% in Federated States of Micronesia (Pohnpei) and 28.3% in Marshall Islands. The prevalence
15 of hypertension, a kind of cardiovascular disease, was 34.2% in American Samoa, 21.2% in
16 Federated States of Micronesia (Pohnpei) and 15.9% in Marshall Islands. The obesity rates
17 (BMI \geq 30kg/m²) were 74.6% in American Samoa, 44.8% in Marshall Islands and 42.6% in
18 Federated States of Micronesia (Pohnpei); and

19 **WHEREAS**, the estimated indigenous population of Pohnpei is only 29,900; of Yap,
20 10,200; of Kosrae, 7,300; of Chuuk, 53,300; of Palau, 14,400; of the Republic of the Marshall
21 Islands, 49,900; of American Samoa, 50,500; of Guam, 57,300; and of the Commonwealth of
22 Northern Mariana Islands, 17,400 according to 2005 Census for the Republic of Palau; 2000 Census
23 for the Federated States of Micronesia (Pohnpei, Chuuk, Yap, Kosrae); 2000 Census for the
24 Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands; 2000 Census for the American Samoa; 2000 Census
25 for Guam; 1999 Census for the Republic of Marshall Islands; and

1 **WHEREAS**, the leading causes of morbidity and mortality for adults in the USAPI are
2 from non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including obesity, cancer, cardiovascular disease, stroke,
3 diabetes, depression, injury, arthritis and gout; and

4 **WHEREAS**, the rates of NCDs and their risk factors in the USAPI are among the highest in
5 the world, are rapidly increasing, are epidemic, and include high tobacco use, high alcohol
6 consumption, a genetic predisposition towards obesity, significant environmental and behavioral
7 health barriers to healthy eating and healthy families, a propensity toward injury, and a high
8 prevalence of sedentary lifestyles; and

9 **WHEREAS**, the indigenous people of the USAPI are rich in culture but comparatively
10 small in population; are fragile, isolated and endangered in multiple ways, including economically,
11 socially and environmentally, have endured early decimation due to communicable diseases
12 contracted shortly after Western contact, and now face decimation and possible extinction due to
13 diseases and changes in climate associated with Western lifestyles; and

14 **WHEREAS**, the USAPI medical systems—given the current and rising rates of NCDs—are
15 unable to manage the health complications of NCDs effectively due to the high cost and
16 infrastructure required for end stage treatment, which include dialysis, cancer surgery, cancer
17 chemotherapy and radiation therapy, intensive cardiac care for hospitalized patients, specialty stroke
18 units, and sub-specialty medical care; and

19 **WHEREAS**, many residents of the USAPI migrate to other parts of the USAPI and to the
20 United States for medical care that cannot be accessed locally, and this medical migration stresses
21 already burdened health systems in Guam, CNMI and the United States and causes suffering among
22 USAPI families and communities, due to separation and financial strain; and

23 **WHEREAS**, the cost and complexity of health care in the USAPI are increased
24 exponentially due to the geographic isolation of small islands; and

25 **WHEREAS**, external funding for health care in the USAPI from the United States and
26 other sources is unbalanced, with significant resources and mobilization dedicated to issues such as
27 bioterrorism and pandemic influenza but comparatively fewer resources, effort and coordination
28 focused on NCD's, a far more urgent issue for the region; now, therefore,

29 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Directors of the Association of Pacific Island
30 Legislatures, 51st Board Meeting, December 1-3, 2010, Colonia, Yap, Federated States of
31 Micronesia, that the Board of Directors, on behalf of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures,
32 hereby endorses Pacific Island Health Officers Association's Board Resolution 48-01, Declaring a
33 Regional State of Health Emergency due to the Epidemic of Non-Communicable Diseases in the
34 United States-Affiliated Pacific Islands; and

1 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board of Directors of the Association of Pacific
2 Island Legislatures will dedicate the following topic: "Blue Continent, Communications and
3 Infrastructure and the Health of Our People" as the theme for the APIL 30th General Assembly; and
4 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the APIL President shall certify, and the APIL
5 Secretary shall attest, to the adoption of this resolution and that copies of the same shall be
6 thereafter transmitted to the American Pacific Nursing Leaders Council, the Pacific Basin Medical
7 Association, the Pacific Basin Dental Association, the Pacific Substance Abuse and Mental Health
8 Collaborating Council, the Pacific Islands Primary Care Association, the Pacific Chronic Disease
9 Coalition, the Pacific Partners for Tobacco Free Islands, the Cancer Council of the Pacific Islands,
10 the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, President of the Pacific Island Health Officers
11 Association (PIOHA) and to the Chief Executives and Legislative Presiding Officers of each
12 member legislature of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures.

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


REBLUUD KESOLEI
PRESIDENT


ALIK J. ALIK
SECRETARY

