



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-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.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

21 **WHEREAS**, the Board of Directors of the Association of Pacific Islands Legislatures believe that
22 the nomination and confirmation of a Micronesian as the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Insular
23 Affairs is not only appropriate but necessary to broaden the understanding of the Department of Interior

1 regarding Micronesian issues and to tie the Micronesian islands more closely to the issues and priorities
2 to the United States of America in the Pacific Region; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Assistant Secretary Babauta supports work toward regional integration for
4 organizations like the Association of the Pacific Islands Legislatures, the Micronesian Chief Executive
5 Summit, and The Micronesian Center for a Sustainable Future; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

32 **WHEREAS**, Assistant Secretary Babauta is a native son of Guam born and raised in the southern
33 village Guam, Agat which lies by the Sea; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Assistant Secretary Babauta is uniquely positioned to manage the enormous
2 transformative change that is taking place in the region; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

34 **WHEREAS**, Assistant Secretary Babauta could use this realignment to appoint a high level special

1 representative to each of the Territories and Freely Associated States who report to him directly; thereby
2 insuring that institutional power does not become bureaucratic, calcified, insensitive and non responsive
3 to the needs, best interest, or concerns of the citizens of the region; and

4 **WHEREAS**, the citizens of the United States affiliated Islands of Micronesia would be better served
5 by the Office of Insular Affairs with a local office in Guam, now, therefore,

6 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Directors on behalf of the Association of Pacific Island
7 Legislatures duly acknowledge the need for a more local location for the Office of Insular Affairs; and

8 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board of Directors on behalf of the Association of Pacific
9 Island Legislatures do hereby request the Office of Insular Affairs to acknowledge, research, adopt and
10 pursue the above Resolution; and

11 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board of Directors, on behalf of the Association of Pacific
12 Island Legislatures, do hereby encourage individual governments and legislatures of other Pacific
13 islands to also adopt similar Resolutions; and

14 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the APIL President shall certify, and the APIL Secretary shall
15 attest, to the adoption of this resolution and that copies of the same shall be transmitted to the President
16 of the United States, the Secretary of State, and to the Assistant Secretary of the Office of Insular
17 Affairs, to the governments of the Freely Associated States and to the Presiding Legislative Officers and
18 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.


REBLUUD KESOLEI
PRESIDENT


ALIK J. ALIK
SECRETARY

