



4 December 2009

Congressman Neil Abercrombie  
1502 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: US Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of  
1997 - Effect on Migrants Under Compacts of Free Association

Dear Congressman Abercrombie:

Please accept these greetings from the 12th Micronesian Chief Executives Summit, comprised of the Presidents of the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Governors of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the FSM States of Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Yap.

The purpose of this letter is to express our deep appreciation for your leadership in sponsoring legislation that would re-extend Medicaid eligibility to citizens of the Freely Associated States (FAS) residing in the United States. As you know, Compact of Free Association (COFA) migrants were excluded from federal Medicaid benefits by the US Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1997. Since that time, FAS citizens in the US have received health care under a variety of state and territorial programs, many of which are now in danger of significant cuts due to current economic conditions.

Your efforts to restore Medicaid benefits to COFA migrants are consistent with the historical and strategic relationship between the FAS and the United States, as well as the spirit of the peoples of the Pacific exemplified by the *aloha* of your home state. Most importantly, your efforts provide assurance to our friends and family in the US that their basic health care needs will not get lost in the larger debate of health care reform in the US.