



February 6, 2024

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice-Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leaders Schumer and McConnell, Chair Murray, and Vice Chair Collins:

We write as the presidents of the three nations freely associated with the United States regarding the need for the legislation that would strengthen our associations and enable them to endure. As you know, the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2023 has been cleared on a bipartisan basis by all U.S. congressional committees of jurisdiction and was proposed to be added to the emergency supplemental appropriations legislation being discussed in the Senate.


Our free associations effectively expand the United States for defense purposes to cover an expanse of the Pacific larger than the 48 contiguous United States, stretching from west of Hawaii to the Philippines and Indonesia. Our partnerships also enable the U.S. to base missiles and its earliest warning radars trained on Asia in Palau and a facility that the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff says is the world's premier range for ICBM testing and military space operations in the Marshall Islands. They also make it possible for the U.S. to conduct military exercises in the Federated States of Micronesia.

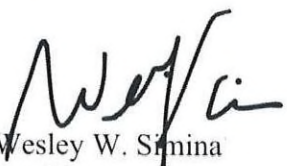
The legislation was developed through a process that President Trump personally initiated in a meeting with the presidents of our nations. Its provisions are vital to our nations and to a free and open Indo-Pacific.


The agreements that this legislation would approve were to take effect last fall. Although we understand the delay in the legislation's approval, it has generated uncertainty among our peoples. As much they identify with and appreciate the United States, which formerly governed our islands, this has resulted in undesirable opportunities for economic exploitation by competitive political actors active in the Pacific.

We are very pleased by the tremendous bipartisan committee efforts on the legislation to date and cannot overstate the importance to all of our nations of final approval by the U.S. Congress.

In solidarity with the United States, we are,


Surangel S. Whipps, Jr.
President
Republic of Palau


Wesley W. Simina
President
Federated States of Micronesia


Hilda C. Heine
President
Republic of the Marshall Islands

cc: The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States of America

The Honorable Joe Manchin III
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate

The Honorable Ben Cardin
Chairman
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate

The Honorable John Barrasso
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate

The Honorable James E. Risch
Ranking Member
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
United States Senate

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
United States Senate

The Honorable Christopher Coons
Chairman
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations
United States Senate

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations Appropriations
United States Senate

The Jack Reed
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate

The Honorable Mazie Hirono
United States Senate

The Honorable John Boozman
United States Senate

The Honorable Brian Schatz
United States Senate

The Honorable Joni Ernst
United States Senate

The Honorable Ron Wyden
United States Senate

The Honorable Rick Scott
United States Senate

The Honorable Martin Heinrich
United States Senate

The Honorable Mitt Romney
United States Senate

The Honorable Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senate

The Honorable Bill Hagerty
United States Senate

The Honorable Tammy Duckworth
United States Senate

The Honorable Shelly Moore Capito
United States Senate

The Honorable Tim Kaine
United States Senate

The Honorable Dan Sullivan
United States Senate