

**Enrolled**  
**House Concurrent Resolution 21**

Sponsored by Representative SPRENGER, Senator PROZANSKI; Representatives BENTZ, ESQUIVEL, HACK, NEARMAN, STARK, WHISNANT, Senators DEVLIN, EDWARDS, GELSER, MONROE

Whereas shortly after World War II the United States assumed administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands under a United Nations strategic trusteeship that provided for United States control over development of the islands' economies and international relations and for United States military access to territory within the islands; and

Whereas the United States was allowed by the United Nations to treat the Pacific Islands as a strategic trust territory, and the United States Atomic Energy Commission established the Pacific Proving Grounds in the Marshall Islands, where 67 atmospheric nuclear weapons were tested between 1946 and 1958; and

Whereas nuclear tests were conducted on a number of islands that were inhabited and even on some that had not been evacuated; and

Whereas many residents of islands that were in the vicinity of the nuclear weapons test proving grounds and their descendants continue to exhibit medical conditions that may have resulted from exposure to the nuclear fallout that occurred and is still measurable on some islands; and

Whereas the area formerly known as the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands now includes three groups of islands that became the independent sovereign nations of the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia, and are known as the Compact of Free Association (COFA) islands; and

Whereas notwithstanding their status as independent nations, the COFA islands are heavily dependent on United States government grants and are subjected to United States military presence under the COFA treaty; and

Whereas because of the unique relationship that has existed between the three COFA nations and the United States, the COFA treaties allow island citizens to enter the United States without visas to study, live and work and to have access to available services such as driver licenses and health care; and

Whereas since the COFA treaties came into effect, citizens of the COFA islands have moved to the United States for education and work opportunities because stagnant island economies have made it difficult for residents to find jobs or obtain good education; and

Whereas COFA island citizens volunteer to serve in the United States Armed Forces at a higher per capita rate than United States citizens; and

Whereas while the United States retains a strong military and economic presence in the COFA islands, Congress and some state governments have reduced some benefits, including access to medical coverage and driver licenses, for which COFA islanders residing in the United States have historically been eligible; and

Whereas COFA islanders and their children who are residing legally in the United States should be fairly treated in recognition of the unique relationship between the United States and the COFA islands and because of the continued need of the United States to maintain a strong military and economic presence in the COFA islands; and

Whereas Eastern Oregon University has had a program for students from the Federated States of Micronesia since 1977 that provides services to COFA students in recognition of the challenges these students will face in achieving their academic goals and in their everyday lives in the United States; now, therefore,

**Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:**

That we, the members of the Seventy-eighth Legislative Assembly, support the rights of Compact of Free Association islanders residing in Oregon to live freely among us; and be it further

Resolved, That we express our deepest appreciation for their extraordinary commitment to the service and defense of our nation.

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Adopted by House May 14, 2015

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Timothy G. Sekerak, Chief Clerk of House

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Tina Kotek, Speaker of House

Adopted by Senate June 15, 2015

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Peter Courtney, President of Senate