



Freely Associated States
WASHINGTON, D.C.

April 28, 2021

Ms. Kathryn Paik
Director for Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands
National Security Council
Washington, D.C.

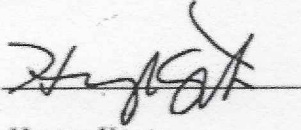
Dear Director Paik:

We write to kindly seek your assistance in considering some needed intervention on behalf of the citizens of the Freely Associated States (FAS) (the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Federated States of Micronesia) residing in the United States. Specifically, we seek your support in addressing the following issues:

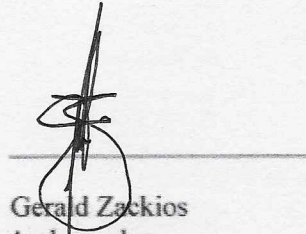
- Citizens of the FAS countries are admitted lawfully into the United States by having in their possessions an unexpired passport from their respective FAS countries and a I-94 issued by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as evidence of lawful admission. Since FAS citizens may stay in the U.S. indefinitely, problems arise when their passports expire and a new passport is issued, thus creating a mismatch of documentation in the DHS system. We are flagging this to encourage the U.S. authorities to find a way to rectify this matter without subjecting FAS citizens to new sets of challenges arising from the mismatch. We feel there must be a way to resolve this matter within the DHS system.
- Citizens of the FAS countries are also beginning to experience a prolonging delay in obtaining social security cards. This is an unusual turn of progress for citizens of the FAS countries who are eligible to obtain social security cards. The standard turn-around for obtaining social security cards is usually within 2-3 weeks. However, lately there seems to be a prolonging delay for our citizens, sometimes up to 6-7 months.
- In December of 2020, the U.S. Congress enacted a law to restore Medicaid eligibility and access to citizens of the Freely Associated States. While we are grateful for the enactment of the law, we are aware that the law has not been fully implemented nationwide. Many states continue to fall behind in the implementation of the law. We have appealed to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), which has jurisdiction over Medicaid, for an expeditious resolution. We would appreciate your kind intervention to fast-track the full implementation of Medicaid eligibility for FAS citizens residing in the U.S, especially during this pandemic.
- In 2018, the REAL ID Modification Act was signed into law as an amendment to the 2005 REAL ID Act. The REAL ID Modification Act authorizes states to issue full-term REAL ID-compliant driver's licenses and identification cards to FAS citizens. Despite having the law in place, many citizens of the FAS countries residing in the United States continue to receive limited driver's licenses and/or identification cards inconsistent with the REAL ID Modification Act.

We appreciate your assistance and support on the above foregoing issues, and we look forward to collaborate with you. Should you find it necessary to meet with us over zoom or in some other way, we would be delighted to do so.

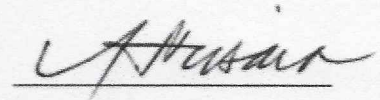
Thank you,



Hersey Kyota
Ambassador
Republic of Palau



Gerald Zackios
Ambassador
Republic of the Marshall Islands



Akillino H. Susaia
Ambassador
Federated Sates of
Micronesia

cc: Ms. Sandra Oudkirk, Deputy Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of State