

APIL gathered in Kolonia, Pohnpei -FSM to discuss issues on: “Health is Wealth: Social and Economic Well-Being of our APIL Pacific Community.”

Association of Pacific Island Legislatures

Members of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures (APIL) met in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, October 12-14, for its 39th General Assembly, to discuss issues on the theme: “Health is Wealth: Economic Well-Being of our APIL Pacific Community.” The opening of the Conference took place on Wednesday, Oct. 12, at the Pohnpei States Legislature in Kolonia. The APIL member host, Honorable Speaker Marvin Yamaguchi, welcomed the delegates to the Pohnpei State Legislature and to Pohnpei General Assembly. Pohnpei State Governor, Hon. Reed Oliver welcomed the APIL delegates and expressed his support of the work of APIL throughout the Micronesia region. The Key Note was delivered by His Excellency, David W. Panuelo, President of the Federated States of Micronesia. His Excellency Panuelo welcomed the members of APIL and expressed his appreciation

for the work the APIL is doing on important regional issues, requiring regional cooperation and regional solutions.

In his keynote message, he spoke, in detail on the important and substantive work that President’s Office is doing on behalf of the Nation. His Excellency Panuelo, in his welcome message, stated: “Whether it’s Climate Change, threats to regional stability and security, access to clean and affordable energy, a need to strengthen educational and health programming, and sustainable transportation, we are stronger together in tackling these challenges when we do so together. Those in Executive Branch roles seek the leadership of those in Legislative Branch roles to

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Top: L-R: Senator Kalani Kaneko (APIL Board-RMI), Representative Andrew May (APIL Board-Chuuk), Walden KC. Weilbacher (APIL Central Secretariat), Senator Shelten G. Neth (Outgoing APIL President-Pohnpei), Senator Nelson Stephen (Incoming APIL President-Chuuk), Delegate Warren S. Umetaro (Palau), and Airata Temeta (Kiribati)

Bottom: L-R: Senator Mitaro Simina (APIL Board-Pohnpei), Chirag M. Bhojwani (Guam), Vice Speaker McGarry Miguel (APIL Board-Pohnpei), Charlie Hermosa (Guam), Speaker Vincent Figir (Yap), MP Taoba Kaiea (APIL Board-Kiribati), Vice Speaker Tina Muna Barnes (APIL Board-Guam), Speaker Kenneth Kedi (APIL Board-RMI), MP England Iuta (APIL Board-Kiribati), MP Tessie Lambourne (APIL Secretary-Kiribati), Delegate Sebastian Marino (APIL Board-Palau), Senator Vinnie V.F. Sablan (APIL V-President- CNMI), Congresswoman Dentita Yangetmai (APIL Board-CNMI), Congressman Angel Demapan (CNMI), Speaker Marvin Yamaguchi (Pohnpei), Representative Jessie P. William (Chuuk), Senator Mary C. Torres (APIL Board-Guam), Senator Ricky Carl (Pohnpei) and Hon. Justice Robert Torres (Guam)

...APIL

continued from front page

provide the laws and frameworks for us to successfully execute the plans to achieve our best solutions, and that's why I so sincerely appreciate your dedication to this duty at the Association of Pacific Island Legislators."

The APIL adopted a few resolutions supporting climate change and ocean conservation measures that will help with the work the FSM government has been doing on these very important issues for their Nation.

There were presentations on the agenda during the mid-afternoon and morning on the 1st and 2nd days. The following were the presenters:

1. U.S. State Senator, Hon. Ed Case presented via zoom on the importance for the APIL Legislative bodies to create a Pacific Ocean Conservation Caucus. The ocean Conservation Caucus will serve as a forum to support Pacific legislators in their conservation efforts. A related topic of presentation was given by James Ward, Asia Director, ICCF. He presented on the work of the International Conservation Caucus (ICCF) and how the organization can assist APIL with the needed expertise to help develop the Pacific Ocean Conservation Caucus envisioned by the APIL.

2. Hon. Justice Robert Torres and Guam Senator, Hon. Mary Camacho Torres presented on: "Wellfullness and Mindfullness of Legislators". The presentation was a great exercise, and an interactive one for Legislators to manage work related stress and other issues that come with their responsibilities as policy makers as well as representatives in their constituencies.

3. The third presentation was on "Regional Transshipment". The presenters were Guam Legislature Vice Speaker Tina Muna Barnes, Mr. Charlie Harnosa, General Manager for American President Lines and Mr. Shirag Bhojwani, Director of Policy and Communications for the Guam Legislature. They presented on their work to commission a feasibility study to develop the most secure, reliable and cost-effective way to bring into Guam, from international ports and to disseminate and transship goods to and from Micronesia, having Guam as its transshipment hub. Their strategy is to

effectively push economic growth and sustainability for the Micronesian Island Nations and entities...The Micronesia region, as defined by APIL as the Blue Continent – located between two of the world's biggest economies, Asia and the United States, have the potential to benefit from these anticipated increased maritime activity. The important areas needed are to diversify our economies, and to ensure food security and essential commodity are met. They touched on topics such as: Centralized Supply-Chain; Diverse Economic Development; Light Manufacturing/Assembly; Regional Sustainment and Workforce Development/Education.

At the 39th General Assembly, under its business session, the members of APIL unanimously elected the following to serve as Officers for its 2022-2023 Term:

President: Hon. Senator Nelson Stephen from the FSM State of Chuuk. Vice President: Hon. Senator Vinnie V.F. Sablan from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; Hon. Tessei Lambourne, as Secretary, from the Republic of Kiribati, and the State of Yap will submit the name of its member to serve as APIL Treasurer.

The APIL outgoing President, Hon. Shelten G. Neth expressed APIL's appreciation to all presenters who presented at the Conference, some who travelled far to attend the meetings and wished everyone a safe day-trip to Ahnt island and to all the participating members safe travels back to their home islands. He wished everyone the blessings of thankfulness and hope for those who attended the Conference bring back with them, to their home islands, wonderful memories of Pohnpei-APIL!

On Saturday, October 15th, the members and participating delegates were given the amazing experience and wonderful opportunity, on boat rides, across the eight-miles stretch, open ocean voyage to visit beautiful and pristine Ahnt Island. Our wonderful host, Rohsa and Rohslein provided an amazing and wonderful lunch for their day visitors. Rohsa spoke on the work his family has been doing for the past several years to preserve and conserve the marine life and the biodiversity that exists in the lagoon and around the islands. Representatives from Blue Prosperity Micronesia, at the same event, spoke on their initiatives as well and how they see the work at Ahnt Island leaving a legacy for generations to come. They continue to network and encourage the APIL members to create

environmental policies with the ultimate goal to conserve the natural biodiversity of our ecosystems, such as what we all experienced at Ahnt island."

The members at 39th General Assembly adopted twenty-four resolutions during the Conference. A few of the substantive resolutions are listed with titles:

1. APIL Resolution No. 39-GA-07

"Commending the Biden Harris Administration for the Pacific Islands Strategy and urging the United States to further its efforts in maintaining a free and safe Indo Pacific."

2. APIL Resolution No. 39-GA-13

"Expressing support for the FSM's Blue Prosperity Micronesia initiative and encouraging all APIL entities to conserve our environment and its natural resources, especially the natural biodiversity of our ecosystems."

3. APIL Resolution No. 39-GA-16

"Expressing appreciation that each and every one of the APIL member countries have become signatories to the Paris Agreement of 2015 and challenging our island governments to be ever vigilant, not only in meeting the climate goals and objectives of the Paris Agreement, but to arduously campaign for stronger commitment among the global community to fight global warming."

4. APIL Resolution No. 39-GA-18, CD1

"Relative to urging China and the United States to resume meaningful cooperation and resume the climate change dialogue to curb the detrimental

impacts of climate change on small island nations."

5. APIL Resolution No. 39-GA-19

"Calling for the creation of an APIL Standing Committee on Conservation and Climate Change to engage in regional and international cooperation to address needed conservation and climate change policy on adaptation, mitigation, climate finance and for all other climate change purposes."

6. APIL Resolution No. 39-GA-22, CD1

"Strongly supporting the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands in its efforts to ensure that any extension of its Compact of Free Association with the United States of America will finally resolve the unsettled issues stemming from U.S. nuclear bomb tests and waste disposal."

7. APIL Resolution No. 39-GA-25

"Respectfully requesting the APIL member governments to establish the Pacific Ocean Conservation Caucus (POCC) to support efforts to protect and restore the ocean across the Pacific."

Members that were present at the APIL 39th GA Pohnpei Conference: Legislative assemblies of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, FSM State of Chuuk, FSM State of Pohnpei, FSM State of Yap, Island of Guam, Republic of Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Palau. For more information, please log onto: (www.apilpacific.com)



39th General Assembly of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures (APIL) opens in Pohnpei

Pohnpei Enginkehlap News

October 17, 2022

Pohnpei—On October 12, 2022, Governor Reed B. Oliver attended the

opening ceremony for the 39th General Assembly of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures (APIL) at the Pohnpei State Legislature chamber.

On behalf of the people and government of Pohnpei, Governor Oliver welcomed the APIL delegation to Pohnpei. He highlighted the importance of leaders gathering from every level of society to advocate continuously on behalf of their people, “to promote and progress the health of our people.”

Governor Oliver noted the theme for this year’s General Assembly, “Health is wealth, social and economic well-being of our APIL Pacific community” is a fitting reminder of the reality of our times, especially with the COVID-19 pandemic, challenging us to prioritize what matters most and reminding us that our most important resource is our people. He noted that a wise man once said that the first wealth is health and in today’s world, health is not always the priority but hoped that the APIL’s well-thought-out theme will be a guide to productive engagement

and a successful general assembly.

Also in attendance, delivering remarks were the Honorable Marvin T. Yamaguchi, Speaker of the 10th Pohnpei Legislature, and H.E. David W. Panuelo, President of the Federated States of Micronesia. The 39th General Assembly was held from October 12 – October 14, 2022, and included delegations from the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the State of Chuuk, the State of Yap, the State of Pohnpei, the Republic of Kiribati, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Republic of Palau, Territory of Guam as well as the Pacific Island Development Bank (PIDB).

After the opening ceremony, Governor Oliver joined PIDB CEO/President Lindsay Timarong and APIL delegates for a luncheon at Mangrove Bay, hosted by PIDB.



39th General Assembly of the APIL express support for Blue Prosperity Micronesia; President Panuelo advocates the importance of marine spatial planning for economic growth & development, conservation & protection efforts

FSM Information Services

PALIKIR, Pohnpei—From October 10th to 14th, 2022, the 39th General Assembly of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures (APIL) met in the State of Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM). His Excellency David W. Panuelo, President of the FSM, provided keynote remarks at the opening ceremony for the 39th APIL General Assembly wherein he advocated for the importance of reliable and quality science and information for decision-making.

“Good information and good science result in informed decision-making,” President Panuelo said in his remarks. “In the context of our marine environments, we acknowledge that our ocean resources are crucial to maintaining and supporting the livelihood of communities and peoples in the Pacific; we recognize the competing demands and uses of marine resources require thorough and thoughtful planning to ensure that marine resources are properly conserved, yes, but also utilized, and exploited, for our economic development and benefit. Key to marine resource management is marine spatial planning, which is

purpose-agnostic—it’s just good science and good information for informed decision-making.”

Following the President’s remarks, the attending members of the APIL engaged in several days of discussions, deliberations, and presentations, ranging from discussion on the U.S. Congress’ Pacific Ocean Conservation Caucus to a briefing on Guam’s Transshipment Task Force/Subcommittee on Federal & Foreign Relations. Arguably of the most interest to the FSM National Government—which is not a member of the APIL—was the luncheon hosted by Micronesia Conservation Trust with Blue Prosperity Micronesia, wherein Yolanda Joab-Mori and Dr. Nicole Yamase, Program Coordinator and Science Advisor respectively for Blue Prosperity Micronesia, described the categorical value of marine spatial planning for the maximization of revenue-generating activities as juxtaposed to the maximization of effective conservation and protection for sustainable use and environmental security.

Following the presentation, the 39th General Assembly of the APIL endorsed a resolution wherein the organization commended the FSM for the Blue Prosperity Micronesia initiative. “Be it resolved by the [APIL], 39th General Assembly, FSM State of Pohnpei, October 12-14, 2022, that this Assembly hereby declares that it is in support and congratulates the Government of the [FSM] for the Blue Prosperity Micronesia initiative and for the congressional endorsement of the companion marine spatial plan,” the resolution, introduced by the Honorable Andrew May from Chuuk State,

the Honorable Mitaro Simina from Pohnpei State, and the Honorable Vincent Figir from Yap State, said.



The APIL General Assembly concluded with a courtesy call between President Panuelo and attending APIL members. During the meeting, President Panuelo described his appreciation for APIL’s support for the resolution showing support for Blue Prosperity Micronesia, and noted that he looks forward to more collaboration and partnership between the FSM Government and APIL.

The members of the APIL are American Samoa; the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; the FSM State of Chuuk; the FSM State of Pohnpei; the FSM State of Kosrae; the FSM State of Yap; the Island of Guam; the Republic of Kiribati; the Republic of the Marshall Islands; the Republic of Nauru; the Republic of Palau; and the U.S. State of Hawaii. The FSM Government extends its gratitude to the APIL for its resolution of support for Blue Prosperity Micronesia.