

INTERIM RESOLUTION 2007-005

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3 THE HOUSE AND SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE  
4 AND LABOR URGE CONGRESS TO DECLARE ARKANSAS AN "AFFECTED  
5 JURISDICTION" UNDER THE COMPACT OF FREE ASSOCIATION.  
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7 WHEREAS, under the Compact of Free Association, citizens of the  
8 Marshall Islands may live and work in the United States without being subject  
9 to documentation and inspection requirements of United States immigration  
10 laws. The Marshallese living and working in the United States under the  
11 Compact of Free Association are not on a path to citizenship; and  
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13 WHEREAS, Arkansas's resident Marshallese who are legally present in  
14 this state contribute greatly to the state's economy through hard work and  
15 payment of all the taxes that are paid by citizens of Arkansas; and  
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17 WHEREAS, despite being legally present and making significant economic  
18 contributions to Arkansas and to the United States, Arkansas's resident  
19 Marshallese do not qualify for the social and health benefits available to  
20 United States citizens, including Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security  
21 benefits; and  
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23 WHEREAS, employment opportunities in Arkansas have attracted between  
24 six thousand (6,000) and eight thousand (8,000) Marshallese; and  
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26 WHEREAS, state and federal funded health providers are the safety net  
27 for care of the Marshallese, the Washington County Health Unit treats and  
28 follows Marshallese patients for public health services such as  
29 immunizations, maternity services, family planning services, and infectious  
30 disease control care, and St Francis House NWA, Inc. (Community Health  
31 Center- Section 330, PHS funded) provides preventive and primary care,  
32 especially for chronic diseases to Marshallese living in Northwest Arkansas;  
33 and  
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35 WHEREAS, lack of regular family primary health care puts the weight of  
36 health care on unreimbursed visits to emergency rooms and necessary specialty

1 care requiring hospitalization; and

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3 WHEREAS, eight hundred sixty-seven (867) Marshallese children are  
4 presently enrolled in the Springdale, Arkansas, school district, at a cost to  
5 the state and the district of seven thousand seven hundred forty-six dollars  
6 (\$7,746) per student per year for a total for fiscal year 2007 of six million  
7 seven hundred fifteen thousand seven hundred eighty-two dollars (\$6,715,782);  
8 and

9  
10 WHEREAS, between 2000 and 2004, there were four hundred fifty-nine  
11 (459) live births in Arkansas among Marshallese. These four hundred fifty-  
12 nine (459) children are United States citizens by birth and are therefore  
13 eligible for all the benefits available to citizens, including food stamps,  
14 Medicaid, Social Security benefits, ARKids First (SCHIP), and Temporary  
15 Assistance to Needy Families; and

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17 WHEREAS, communicable and hereditary health issues more prevalent among  
18 the Marshallese population than among Arkansas' general population could  
19 become threats to the health of all Arkansans if not properly addressed; and

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21 WHEREAS, Arkansas receives no federal funding for the health care and  
22 education services provided to the state's resident Marshallese; and

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24 WHEREAS, under the 2003 amendments to the Compact of Free Association,  
25 Pub. L. No. 108-188, Hawaii, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands were  
26 declared "affected jurisdictions" eligible for federal funding to assist in  
27 caring for resident Marshallese. The status of "affected jurisdiction" was  
28 awarded in recognition of the especially large Marshallese populations in  
29 those jurisdictions. Arkansas has now joined those jurisdictions with regard  
30 to the especially large Marshallese population in this state; and

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32 WHEREAS, due to the extraordinary problems and burdens facing the State  
33 of Arkansas with regard to its resident Marshallese, Arkansas should be  
34 recognized an "affected jurisdiction" under the Compact of Free Association,

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36 NOW THEREFORE,

1 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE AND SENATE INTERIM COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC HEALTH,  
2 WELFARE AND LABOR OF THE EIGHTY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF  
3 ARKANSAS:

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5 THAT the House and Senate Interim Committees on Public Health, Welfare  
6 and Labor urge the United States Congress in recognition of the extraordinary  
7 problems facing the State of Arkansas with regard to its resident Marshallese  
8 to declare Arkansas an "affected jurisdiction" under the Compact of Free  
9 Association.

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11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the House and Senate Interim Committees on  
12 Public Health, Welfare, and Labor urge the United States Congress, in order  
13 to protect the health of all Arkansas's citizens, to make available to the  
14 state's resident Marshallese any and all health services that the United  
15 States government is able to provide.

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17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that upon adoption of this resolution, a copy  
18 of this resolution shall be transmitted to each member of the Arkansas  
19 Congressional Delegation.

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21 Respectfully submitted,

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25 Senator Bill Pritchard

26 District 35

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30 Representative Stephanie Flowers

31 District 17

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36 Filed Date: 02/08/2008 By: MGF/ksw