

(CONGRESS HOLDS SATURDAY SESSION)

SAIPAN, AUGUST 3 (MNS) ~~74~~ - THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA HELD A SATURDAY SESSION THIS WEEKEND, AS THE END OF THE CURRENT SPECIAL SESSION ON SAIPAN DRAWS NEAR.

File

MOST FLOOR ACTION TOOK PLACE IN THE HOUSE, WHERE TWO BILLS WERE PASSED ON SECOND AND FINAL READING, TWO OTHERS PASSED FIRST READING, AND A JOINT RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

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PASSED ON SECOND AND FINAL READING WERE: A MEASURE APPROPRIATING \$304,000 FOR CERTAIN PUBLIC PURCHASES AND PROJECTS IN YAP DISTRICT, (HB 252); AND A BILL APPROPRIATE \$52,000 AND TO FURTHER AUTHORIZE THE ADDITIONAL SUM OF \$48,000 FOR FOR MARINE TRANSPORTATION SCHOLARSHIPS AT FEDERAL AND STATE MARITIME ACADEMIES IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE PHILIPPINES, (HB 343). THE LATTER BILL IS TO SUPPLEMENT THE PRESENT TRUST TERRITORY SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM BY PROVIDING FUNDS SOLELY TO BE USED FOR MARITIME SCHOLARSHIPS.

THE TWO THAT PASSED FIRST READING WERE APPROPRIATION BILLS. THEY ARE: APPROPRIATING \$348,000 FOR VARIOUS PURPOSES IN THE MARIANAS DISTRICT, (HB 360); AND APPROPRIATING \$30,000 TO ASSIST IN THE FINANCING OF THE PALAU DISTRICT CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION; AND \$320,000 FOR CERTAIN PUBLIC PURCHASES AND PROJECTS IN PALAU DISTRICT, (HB 358).

ADOPTED WAS A JOINT RESOLUTION COMMENDING CONTINENTAL AIR MICRONESIA ON THEIR FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF SERVING TINIAN ISLAND, (HJR 139), WHICH WAS DEFERRED ON JULY 31. IT NOW GOES TO THE SENATE FOR FURTHER ACTION, ALONG WITH THE TWO BILLS PASSED BY THE HOUSE ON FINAL READING SATURDAY.

ONE BILL AND THREE HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTIONS WERE INTRODUCED. THE BILL WILL PROHIBIT ANY DEPARTMENT HEAD OR PROGRAM MANAGER FROM COMMITTING THE TRUST TERRITORY GOVERNMENT TO ANY PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY WHICH WOULD REQUIRE AN EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS WITHOUT PRIOR CONSENT OF THE CONGRESS OF MICRONESIA, (HB 364). THE JOINT RESOLUTIONS WOULD REQUEST THE U.S. CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD TO RETAIN STUDENT AND YOUTH FARES BETWEEN THE TRUST TERRITORY, GUAM AND HONOLULU, AND RESTORE STUDENT AND YOUTH FARES BETWEEN HONOLULU AND UNITED STATES MAINLAND, AND WITHIN THE UNITED STATES MAINLAND, (HJR 149); REQUEST THE HICOM TO DEVELOP A HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM AND TO PROPOSE LEGISLATION TO THAT EFFECT, (HJR 148); AND AUTHORIZE THE HICOM TO ACCEPT FROM THE FAA A GRANT OFFER FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A MASTER PLAN TOGETHER WITH AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR AN AIRPORT ON KUSAIE ISLAND CAPABLE OF HANDLING B-727-100 AIRCRAFT AND AIRCRAFT ON SIMILAR CATEGORY, (HJR 150).

THE SENATE'S SATURDAY SESSION WAS VERY SHORT, THE ONLY FINAL FLOOR ACTION BEING THE ADOPTION OF A JOINT RESOLUTION URGING THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE THROUGH DIPLOMATIC MEANS TO SEEK THE RELEASE OF EMMETT KAY, AN AMERICAN PILOT HELD PRISONER IN LAOS (HJR 138). KAY ONCE FLEW IN MICRONESIA. THE MEASURE HAS ALREADY PASSED THE HOUSE, AND THUS BECOMES THE FIRST PIECE OF LEGISLATION TO COMPLETE FLOOR ACTION IN BOTH HOUSES DURING THE CURRENT SPECIAL SESSION.

NEW MEASURES INTRODUCED IN THE SENATE SATURDAY INCLUDED ONE JOINT RESOLUTION AND ONE SENATE RESOLUTION. THE JOINT MEASURE WOULD COMMEND AND THANK CONTINENTAL AIR LINES FOR ITS EFFORTS TO RETAIN SUITDENT AND YOUTH FARES BETWEEN THE TRUST TERRITORY AND HONOLULU AND THE UNITED STATES MAINLAND

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(SJR 130). THE SINGLE HOUSE RESOLUTION URGES THE IMMEDIATE REINSTATEMENT OF ROGER L. ST. PIERRE AS THE CHIEF PUBLIC DEFENDER OF THE TT (SR 14). IT WAS INTRODUCED BY SENATOR OLYMPIO T. BORJA (MARIANAS), AND CO-SIGNED BY SIX OTHER SENATORS.

EARLIER IN THE DAY SATURDAY, SENATE AND HOUSE MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH AND EDUCATION AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEES HELD A JOINT PUBLIC HEARING ON THE ADMINISTRATION'S PROPOSED DRUG CONTROL BILL. A JAM PACKED GALLERY OF SPECTATORS HEARD EXPERT WITNESSES, DOCTORS, LAWYERS AND NARCOTICS EXPERTS TESTIFY ON THE MEASURE. IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE BILL WILL NOT BE READY FOR FLOOR ACTION FOR A DAY OR TWO, AND THIS HAS PROMPTED SPECULATION THAT THE SPECIAL SESSION, DUE TO END AT MIDNIGHT TUESDAY, UNLESS EXTENDED BY THE HIGH COMMISSIONER.

SENATE PRESIDENT TOSIWO NAKAYAMA (TRUK) SAID SATURDAY IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM THE FLOOR THAT THE LEADERSHIP IS PLANNING TO ASK THE HICOM FOR "A COUPLE OF DAYS EXTENSION," BUT HE NEVERTHELESS URGED COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS TO HANDLE LEGISLATION AS THOUGH THE SESSION WERE ENDING TUESDAY, IN ORDER TO COMPLETE AS MUCH WORK AS POSSIBLE BEFORE THEN.

THE SENATE WILL NOT MEET ON SUNDAY, BUT PLANS TO HOLD BOTH MORNING AND AFTERNOON SESSIONS MONDAY, THE FIRST BEING AT TEN A.M. HOUSE MEMBERS VOTED TO HOLD ANOTHER SESSION SUNDAY EVENING AT SEVEN.

(NOTE TO EDITORS AND NEWS DIRECTORS: RATHER THAN SENDING YOU A SUNDAY DISPATCH, MNS WILL COVER THE SUNDAY EVENING HOUSE SESSION AND ANY ACTIVITY FROM THE CONGRESS MONDAY MORNING IN THE REGULAR MONDAY MNS DISPATCH. LATE AFTERNOON OR EVENING SESSION ON MONDAY WILL BE COVERED IN A SEPARATE, SECOND DISPATCH FOR MONDAY.)