

(Justification)

## NORTHERN MARIANAS TRANSITION

Negotiations between the United States and the Marianas Political Status Commission were concluded on February 15, 1975, with the signing of a covenant which would provide a new Commonwealth status for the Northern Mariana Islands. The people of the Mariana Islands District voting in a United Nations sponsored plebicite, approved the covenant by 78.8%. The covenant has been approved by the House of Representatives and the Senate Interior and Foreign Relations Committees and Armed Services Committee. Final action by the Senate on the covenant is expected by by early Feburary 1976.

This request for an appropriation of \$1,500,000 will provide tor a special program of transition in the Marianas which will include a constitutional convention and referendum and a related political education program, and economic, fiscal and physical planning studies.

The funds will be used as follows:

## Economic and Social Planning

Economic and Social Development		
planning	\$	225,000
Physical Planning	\$	225,000
Fiscal and Revenue Planning	\$	50,000
Impact on Relocation of Capital	\$	50,000
Subtotal	\$	550,000
Administration		
Joint Commission	\$	40,000
Secretariat	\$	485,000
Contingencies	\$	50,000
. Subtotal	\$	575,000
Schedule Transition Steps		
Constitutional Convention	\$	100,000
Constitutional Referendum	\$	50,000
Election New Government	\$	25,000
Subtotal	ş —	175,000

For State

## Government Organization

Studies and Planning Constitutional Convention	\$	50,000
Reorganization	\$	50,000
Initial Legislative Program	\$	<b>50,0</b> 00
Research U.S. Federal Programs and		
Services	\$.	50,000
Subtotal	\$	200,000
Grand Total	\$	1,500,000

The need for funds is urgent since the United States is committed to providing the funds as soon as the covenant is approved. Transition funds which have been authorized in P.L. 94-27 are needed at that time to assure an orderly and speedy process for full self-government as provided under the terms of the Northern Marianas Commonwealth. Should funding for the transition be appropriated prior to Congressional approval of the covenant, the Department will abide by the authorizing language in P.L. 94-27 prohibiting obligation or expenditure prior to such approval.