

OFFICE FOR MICRONESIAN STATUS NEGOTIATIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

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March 15, 1975

James M. Frey
Assistant Director for
Legislative Reference
Office of Management and Budget
Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Mr. Frey:

Your office has asked our views and recommendations on HJR 549, as amended, to approve the "Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America, and for other purposes". The resolution would act to extend the approval by the United States of the political status agreement earlier negotiated with representatives of the Northern Mariana Islands and overwhelmingly approved by the people of the Northern Mariana Islands in a plebiscite observed by the United Nations Trusteeship Council. Upon termination of the United Nations Trusteeship Agreement for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands the Northern Mariana Islands would become a territory of the United States as set forth in the Commonwealth Covenant.

On July 1, 1975, the President personally transmitted the Commonwealth Covenant to the United States Congress for its consideration. The President urged that "...the Senate and the House take early, positive action to approve the Northern Mariana Islands Commonwealth Covenant which will thereupon become law in accordance with its provisions. Favorable consideration by the Congress will represent one more important step in the fulfillment of its obligations which the United States undertook when the Congress approved by joint resolution the Trusteeship Agreement on July 18, 1947. Congressional approval of the freely expressed wish of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands will enable them to move toward their long sought goal of self-government in political union with the United States. The final realization of this desired goal will be an historic event for the people of the Northern Mariana Islands and for the United States--an event to which I look forward with great pleasure."

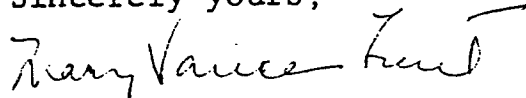
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The Congress has now responded positively to the President's request by enactment of the enrolled bill.

We strongly recommend the President approve the legislation. We believe the Covenant follows the best traditions of this nation and approval would be in the national interest.

Sincerely yours,



Mary Vance Trent
Acting Director

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