



CONGRESS OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

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Office of the Speaker

February 14, 2015

The Honorable Haser Hainrick
National Public Auditor
Palikir, Pohnpei FM 96941

Dear Mr. Hainrick:

Happy Valentine's Day. I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to respond to the just-released Public Auditor Report 2015-04 entitled CFSM Public Project and Social Programs: \$1.6 million Approved Without Clear Criteria. I am asking your indulgence to allow me to respond since in an audit report you --as the auditor--get to have the last word, and I am not normally allowed to respond to a published audit. I did have the right to, and I did respond to the draft audit, or rather two very succinct summaries of the draft audit. At no time did you submit the entire draft report to Congress for review.

I feel compelled to write because I was shocked by the tone of the Executive summary of the audit report. In it you used language that is not normally found in an audit report. With all due respect to your profession an audit report is usually very boring to read. For a good reason: it is supposed to be pointing out facts and deviations from standards, along with suggested corrective measures, and to do so objectively, without a political agenda.

In the recently released report on the other hand the rhetoric just went through the roof. So much passion! You asked the rhetorical question of what happened to the public money. You excoriated Congress for ignoring presidential vetoes (that is our Constitutional prerogative). You exhorted: "People want progress. People deserve better." I am a politician, and I can recognize political rhetoric.

You mentioned at the end of the summary that it was cc'ed to "Interested FSM citizens in-country & abroad." As a matter of fact you did just that, which is really unusual for an audit report. The report arrived at Congress on February 10, 2015. It was not posted on your official website until noon that day. But by February 9, the day before, it was already emailed to numerous people all over the world, and gleefully re-emailed by challengers in the upcoming Congressional election.

Which leads me, and I assume everybody else, to ask: Why did you choose to release this report three weeks before the general election of March 3, with loud calls of "People deserve better"? It sure looks like you are trying to get the people to do something to the incumbents in Congress. Or is it an attempt to influence the referendum in Chuuk? As

you know there is a question on the state ballot of whether to secede from the FSM. Are you trying to make the national government and its Congress look bad?

Mr. Public Auditor, if you did not intentionally try to engage in politics then you are absolutely reckless as to the consequences of your inflammatory rhetoric, especially when it is misleading.

And it did mislead people. The report stated that the \$1.6 million was approved without justification. However that has been transformed on the Internet, and it is now widely reported that "Congress has misused \$1.6 million", which is completely different. Not only that, your audit was of Public law 17-68 passed by the 17th Congress. You are however blaming the 18th Congress instead, and the report blithely ignores the difference. Your office to date has taken no steps to make those differences clear.

I note also that one of the auditors on your audit team is closely related to one of the candidates in this upcoming Congressional election. Should that fact be disclosed to the public and mentioned in the report? Was that person involved in drafting the inflammatory Executive summary? Should the public be told?

I will not go into substantive details. I will let the readers judge. But you found problems with Congress funding Women's Day activities and municipal government shortfalls? I personally support, and will continue to support women's activities even if that displeases you.

As I mentioned in my reply to the draft audit, I thank you for the tremendous work that has gone into the audit. It can serve a real educational function. But with the current tone and its timing, I doubt that this audit report can serve a purpose other than as a campaign document to assault the incumbents in Congress. And that, Mr. Public Auditor, saddens and disappoints me greatly. The people deserve better from its Public Auditor.

One last request: I would appreciate if you could circulate this reply as widely as the audit report to those interested FSM citizens to whom you sent the audit report or notice thereof.

Sincerely,



Dohsis Halbert
Speaker, 18th Congress

CC: President
Vice-President
Governors
Speakers of State Legislatures