

By: Buckley

H.R. No. 559

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The United States has enjoyed strong relationships
2 with the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands,
3 and the Federated States of Micronesia; and

4 WHEREAS, The Compact of Free Association Act of 1985
5 terminated U.S. trusteeship over the former Trust Territory of the
6 Pacific Islands and established the Federated States of Micronesia
7 and the Republic of the Marshall Islands as independent nations in
8 1986; in 1994, the U.S. established another Compact of Free
9 Association with the Republic of Palau; the agreements also outline
10 how economic assistance is administered to the nations by the
11 U.S. Office of Insular Affairs; and

12 WHEREAS, The COFA agreements are perpetual with a periodic
13 review of financial provisions; the most recent amendments to the
14 agreements were passed by the U.S. Congress, and they went into
15 effect on March 18, 2024; the amendments ensured that veterans
16 living in the COFA islands could access VA medical services, and
17 they restored and extended federal domestic services such as SNAP,
18 TANF, FEMA, and in-state tuition; the amendments also strengthened
19 U.S. Indo-Pacific influence by enhancing U.S. military presence in
20 the COFA nations; and

21 WHEREAS, An estimated 94,000 non-immigrant legal permanent
22 residents from COFA nations currently live in the U.S. and its
23 territories; of that population, approximately 5,000 live in and
24 contribute to the State of Texas and the United States as a whole

1 through various employment sectors, including technical and
2 professional fields; in addition, many COFA islanders serve in the
3 U.S. military and are stationed at bases in Texas; in 2019, the
4 Senate and the House of Representatives of the 86th Texas
5 Legislature adopted resolutions acknowledging the historical
6 significance of the COFA agreements; and

7 WHEREAS, Texas and the United States have benefited
8 immeasurably through decades of unwavering friendship with the
9 Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the
10 Federated States of Micronesia, and it is a pleasure to join in
11 recognizing the many contributions of Texas residents who trace
12 their heritage to the COFA nations; now, therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 89th Texas
14 Legislature hereby express support for the protection of COFA
15 islanders residing in Texas and affirm their rights afforded under
16 the Compact of Free Association agreements; and, be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 89th Texas
18 Legislature hereby recognize March 18, 2025, as COFA Day in Texas.