

Micronesians United - Big Island

Supporting a fuller life for Micronesians living in Hawai`i

To: **Mattie Cohan, Senior Assistant General Counsel**
Office of Legal Affairs
Legal Services Corporation
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Washington, DC 20007

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Aloha Mattie,

On behalf of Micronesians United - Big Island we would like to extend our deepest mahalo to the Legal Aid Society of Hawai`i (LASH), and the Legal Aid of Arkansas (LAA) for requesting new rulemaking to change section 1626.10(a) to provide for the eligibility of citizens of RMI, FSM, and Palau legally residing in the United States for legal assistance from LSC - funded programs.

We respectfully submit our whole hearted support for the change to your rules which would allow citizens of RMI, FSM, and Palau to become eligible for legal assistance from LSC - funded programs. We have extremely limited options here in Hawai`i, and we badly need this kind of help.

Our membership and all Micronesians living on the Big Island of Hawai`i do not have any way to obtain legal advise without paying for a lawyer from their own funds. This is a great burden for poor families who are often having trouble with even basic household expenses. Many Micronesians living in Hawai`i, who thus cannot afford to seek legal advise, end up with major difficulties. We feel that these cases would be better handled with a little bit of help from the Legal Aid Society of Hawai`i. We are grateful for the existence of LSC - funded programs, and look forward to the potential help that would be made available through the Legal Aid Society of Hawai`i.

At our most recent meeting on August 9th, we unanimously agreed that we should send a strong letter of support for the Legal Aid Society of Hawai`i. We hope that you will make the necessary changes to your rules so that Micronesians living on the Big Island of Hawai`i can count on the support of LSC - funded programs.

Micronesians consider their community reputation as a very important part of their cultural identity. With so many people unable to afford the cost of an attorney, many problems come about. The Legal Aid Society of Hawai`i is our best hope.

We want to thank you Mattie, and the Office of Legal Services Corporation for the opportunity to share with you our feelings and strong support for these rule changes.

Mahalo,


Hatnat Meneky
Vice President - Micronesians United Big Island

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