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H. RES. 994

Recognizing and reaffirming the strong relationship between the United States
and the Pacific Islands.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 18, 2022

Mr. CASE (for himself, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mrs. RADEWAGEN, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. SABLAN, Ms. TITUS, Mr. KAHELE, and Mr. SHERMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Recognizing and reaffirming the strong relationship between
the United States and the Pacific Islands.

Whereas the Pacific Islands are home to roughly 10,000,000 residents, including over 8,600,000 in Papua New Guinea, constituting diverse and dynamic cultures and peoples;

Whereas the people of the Pacific Islands are spread across an expanse of the Pacific Ocean equivalent to 15 percent of the Earth's surface, including the three subregions of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia;

Whereas the United States is a Pacific country with ties that span over 150 years and shared values and interests with the Pacific Islands, including through the Compacts of

Free Association with the Freely Associated States, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau;

Whereas the United States and Pacific Island nations are bound by shared interests and values, including—

- (1) the need to combat climate change and rising sea levels;
- (2) the desire to see a prosperous Pacific region free from coercion;
- (3) a commitment to protecting regional peace and security that fully respects the sovereignty of all nations;
- (4) advancing economic prosperity free from coercion through trade and sustainable development; and
- (5) supporting democracy, good governance, the rule of law and human rights, and fundamental freedoms;

Whereas the United States exports over \$400,000,000 in goods to Pacific Island countries, and two-way trade between the United States and Pacific Island countries amounts to nearly \$832,000,000 in a year;

Whereas the United States launched the Small and Less Populous Island Economies Initiative in March 2021 to strengthen United States collaboration with island countries and territories, including in the Pacific Islands, on COVID–19 economic challenges, long-term economic development, climate change, and other shared interests;

Whereas successive United States administrations have recognized the importance of the Pacific region, including the Pacific Islands, in high-level strategic documents, including—

- (1) the 2015 National Security Strategy;
- (2) the 2017 National Security Strategy;

(3) the 2019 Indo-Pacific Strategy Report, which identified the Pacific Islands as “critical to U.S. strategy because of our shared values, interests and commitments”; and

(4) the 2022 Indo-Pacific Strategy, which stated that the United States will “seek to be an indispensable partner to Pacific Island nations”;

Whereas the United States has deepened its diplomatic engagement with the Pacific Islands through several recent initiatives, including the Pacific Pledge that provided an additional \$100,000,000 in 2019 and \$200,000,000 in 2020, on top of the approximately \$350,000,000 that the United States provides annually to the region to support shared priorities in economic and human development, climate change, and more; and

Whereas the Pacific Islands matter for America, and America matters for the Pacific Islands: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) affirms the importance of the United States
3 relationship with the Pacific Islands and recognizes
4 the importance of United States-Pacific Island part-
5 nerships to promote peace, security, and prosperity
6 for all countries through a rules-based regional order
7 that respects the sovereignty and political independ-
8 ence of all nations;

9 (2) urges the Biden administration to continue
10 to work with the Pacific Islands to—

1 (A) preserve the Pacific Ocean as an open
2 and vibrant corridor for international maritime
3 trade;

4 (B) promote trade and sustainable develop-
5 ment; and

6 (C) address socioeconomic challenges re-
7 lated to public health, education, renewable en-
8 ergy, digital connectivity, and more;

9 (3) reaffirms its support for regional efforts to
10 address the challenges posed by climate change, in-
11 cluding by strengthening resilience to natural disas-
12 ters and through responsible stewardship of natural
13 resources;

14 (4) continues its support of the vision, values,
15 and objectives of existing regional multilateral insti-
16 tutions and frameworks, such as the Pacific Islands
17 Forum, the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders,
18 and the Pacific Community, including the—

19 (A) 2014 Framework for Pacific Region-
20 alism;

21 (B) 2018 Boe Declaration on Regional Se-
22 curity; and

23 (C) Boe Declaration Action Plan; and

24 (5) recognizes the importance of working closely
25 with United States allies and partners with existing

- 1 relationships and interests in the Pacific Islands, in-
- 2 cluding Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and Taiwan,
- 3 in advancing common goals.

