

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSJM 8017

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Addressing compacts of free association.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Hasegawa, Hunt, Billig, Saldaña, Stanford and Wilson, C.).

Senate Committee on State Government, Tribal Relations & Elections
House Committee on State Government & Tribal Relations

Background: Compact of Free Association (COFA) is a set of compacts between the United States and three sovereign states—the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), and the Republic of Palau. COFA was originally established in 1986. In 1994, the compact between the United States and Republic of Palau was finalized. In 2003, the compacts with RMI and FSM were renewed for 20 years. Citizens of nations with COFA agreements may enter, lawfully reside, and work in the United States, serve in the United States military and receive some federal assistance.

Summary: The Legislature requests that Congress take the appropriate steps to:

- restore federal benefits for COFA migrants, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and Medicaid;
- ensure that citizens of nations with COFA agreements are appropriately counted as part of the 2020 census;
- consider the uniqueness of COFA status in all immigration policies, including exempting citizens of nations with COFA agreements from changes to the public charge rules; and
- immediately begin work on COFA renewal negotiations.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	47	0
House	97	0

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.