

SENATE RESOLUTION

8701

By Senators Hasegawa, Saldaña, Conway, and Wagoner

1           WHEREAS, The United States Government tested 67 atmospheric  
2 nuclear weapons in the Marshall Islands from 1946-1958 during the  
3 time that the United States was the administering authority for the  
4 Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands; and

5           WHEREAS, Much of the plutonium that served as the energy source  
6 for the nuclear weapons detonated in the Marshall Islands was  
7 processed at Hanford, thus creating a link between the Marshallese  
8 people and the people of Washington state; and

9           WHEREAS, The "Bravo" test on Bikini Atoll on March 1, 1954, was  
10 the equivalent of 1,000 Hiroshima-sized bombs, and the Marshallese  
11 people experienced the equivalent of 1.6 Hiroshima-sized bombs every  
12 day for the twelve years of the testing program; and

13           WHEREAS, The Marshallese people and their islands became a living  
14 laboratory for nuclear weapons designers to better understand the  
15 impacts of radioactive weaponry on human beings and their  
16 environment, including the top secret biomedical program, Project  
17 4.1; and

18           WHEREAS, Project 4.1 established an internment camp on Kwajalein  
19 Atoll for the people exposed to radioactive fallout from the Bravo  
20 test, and established numerous biomedical studies, such as the  
21 purposeful resettlement of Marshallese people on radioactive islands  
22 to study human uptake of radiation from the environment; and

1       WHEREAS, The Marshallese experience numerous challenges  
2 today connected to the United States nuclear legacy, such as  
3 communities that cannot return to their ancestral lands because  
4 of lingering contamination, those who were prematurely resettled  
5 on contaminated lands, and health care issues related to  
6 radiation exposure and diaspora, including cancer and other  
7 radiogenic illnesses; and

8       WHEREAS, There are no oncologists in the Marshall Islands  
9 today, nor is there a cancer care treatment facility, and thus  
10 the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands is hoping  
11 to build relationships with Washington state's world class  
12 cancer research and treatment facilities; and

13       WHEREAS, The termination of the Trust Territory of the  
14 Pacific Islands in 1986 resulted in the Compact of Free  
15 Association between the United States and the Republic of the  
16 Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and later  
17 Palau, collectively known as the "COFA" nations; and

18       WHEREAS, As a result of the unique and historical  
19 relationship between the citizens of the former United States  
20 trust territory, residents under the COFA treaty currently serve  
21 in every branch of the United States armed forces, and have the  
22 right to enter, live, and work in the United States without a  
23 visa; and

24       WHEREAS, COFA community members reside in numerous counties  
25 across Washington state and are advocating for equity in terms  
26 of eligibility for federal assistance programs for other legal  
27 migrants, such as Medicaid and food stamps; and

28       WHEREAS, The Marshallese people are consummate survivors  
29 whose culture continues to thrive, including the ground zero  
30 communities of Bikini and Enewetak who remain some of the most  
31 gifted open ocean navigators, voyagers, and weavers in the  
32 world; and

33       WHEREAS, The upcoming March 1st anniversary of the Bravo  
34 detonation is a national holiday and day of mourning and  
35 remembrance for the Republic of the Marshall Islands;

36       NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Senate pause to  
37 acknowledge the painful and damaging legacy of United States  
38 nuclear weapons testing in the Marshall Islands, and stand in

1 support of our Marshallese community members across Washington  
2 State on the March 1st anniversary of the Bravo detonation.

3 I, Brad Hendrickson, Secretary of the Senate,  
4 do hereby certify that this is a true and  
5 correct copy of Senate Resolution 8701,  
6 adopted by the Senate  
7 February 27, 2020

8 BRAD HENDRICKSON  
9 Secretary of the Senate