



*The President*  
*Palikir, Pohnpei*  
*Federated States of Micronesia*

November 3, 2020

The Honorable Wesley W. Simina  
Speaker  
21<sup>st</sup> CFMS  
Palikir, Pohnpei FM 96941

Dear Speaker Simina:

I write to transmit the enclosed Presidential Decree to temporarily suspend the use of our designated FSM Special Polling places in the U.S. State of Hawaii, and the U.S. Territory of Guam.

I fully realize the impact of this suspension action; however, I am confident that you and our Honorable members share my deep concern for the safety and exposure risk of our citizens abroad. Given the continuing rise of positive COVID-19 cases in those jurisdictions, it is necessary for us to take appropriate action to minimize the opportunities for our citizens to be exposed unnecessarily to this risk.

Most importantly Mr. Speaker, we have already started to disseminate information in this regard because it is vitally important that our eligible voters are afforded an opportunity and the time to plan to exercise their right to cast their votes in the March 2020 National Elections. Our citizens will have the opportunity to cast their votes via absentee ballot, and our National Election Office is prepared to respond to requests for these ballots. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David W. Panuelo", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

David W. Panuelo  
President

Xc: Chief Justice, FSM Supreme Court  
All FSM State Governors  
FSM National Election Office



*The President*  
*Palikij, Pohnpei*  
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**Decree to suspend the use of the Special Polling Places in Guam and in Honolulu for the March 2021 National Election due to the COVID-19 Pandemic**

WHEREAS, on November 25, 2020, the Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia adopted Congressional Resolution No. 21-228 further extending up to January 31, 2021, the Public Health Emergency Declaration for the COVID-19 Pandemic (“Emergency Declaration”);

WHEREAS, the Emergency Declaration emphasized the legal duty and obligation of the National Government of the FSM, its leadership and all officials of this Nation, to take all the emergency precautions, measures and interventions as a matter of acute emergency and necessity, in order to protect the lives of our citizens given the unrelenting global spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, the Emergency Declaration confirmed that pursuant to Article X, Section 9(a) of the FSM Constitution, the President may issue appropriate decrees related to the Emergency Declaration;

WHEREAS, a presidential decree previously issued in accordance with the Emergency Declaration set out a national standard of social distancing measures, in order to protect the public health and safety of our citizens; and

WHEREAS, given that the national election required by law has been scheduled for March 2, 2021, and taking into consideration the continuing rise of the COVID-19 cases abroad, it becomes necessary to issue an additional decree in accordance with the Emergency Declaration in order to further protect FSM citizens residing in Honolulu and in Guam expected to take part in the national election from the possible COVID-19 infection or potential spread of the virus in the course of the conduct of the national election at the aforesaid special polling places.

NOW THEREFORE, I, David W. Panuelo, President of the Federated States of Micronesia, pursuant to the authority vested upon me by Article X Section 9(a) of the FSM Constitution, and for the sake of protecting the public health and maintaining safety of our citizens abroad, do hereby DECREE as follows:

1. The use of the Special Polling Places in Guam and in Honolulu is temporarily suspended until further notice, for the March 2021 national election.
2. FSM Citizens are urged to plan ahead of time towards requesting for absentee ballots according to the FSM National Election Act and its Regulation.
3. The Acting National Election Director is directed to extend all the assistance necessary in connection with each request for absentee ballot.

SO ORDERED.

David W. Panuelo  
President

Date: 12/03/20