

PROPOSAL TO AMEND CONSTITUTION

To amend Article IX, Section 9, of the Constitution of the Federated States of Micronesia to create consistency between the eligibility requirements to run for Congress and to be elected President and to require residency within the FSM to be eligible to run for Congress.

Article IX. Section 9. A person is ineligible to be a member of Congress unless he is at least 30 years of age on the day of election ~~and has been~~ a citizen of the Federated States of Micronesia by birth for at least 15 years, and a resident of the state from which he is elected ~~and a resident of the Federated States of Micronesia~~ for at least ~~5~~ 10 years. A person convicted of a felony by a state or national government court is ineligible to be a member of Congress. The Congress may modify this provision or prescribe additional qualifications; ~~knowledge of the English language may not be a qualification.~~

INTENT AND PURPOSE OF AMENDMENT

There are two purposes for this amendment. The first purpose is to make the eligibility requirements for running for Congress consistent with the eligibility requirements for being chosen President. This amendment will allow only those who are FSM citizens by birth to be eligible to run for Congress. It is important for all of our national political leaders to be vested in the future of this country and being a FSM citizen by birth is a clear measurement of one's ties to the FSM.

The second purpose of this amendment is to ensure that those who run for Congress understand what is happening within the FSM, understand our citizens, and the needs of the state from which they are elected, as well as the needs of the national government. A FSM citizen who has spent decades living in Guam, Hawaii, or the mainland US has been living in a different culture and is not well versed in the current needs of our islands. Including a FSM residency requirement will prevent those who have not been vested in their home communities from running for office from abroad. This residency requirement is especially important once the FSM recognizes dual citizenship.

This proposal will allow those citizens of Chuuk, Kosrae, and Yap who are living and working in Pohnpei and those citizens of Pohnpei who are living and working in other states to run for Congress. Citizens who are serving their state by working in the national government or who are serving in their sister communities are knowledgeable of the unique problems and circumstances facing the FSM.

Date: June 1st, 2022

Introducer: 
Kind Kanto
Delegate, Chuuk