## United States Senate

The Honorable Chuck Schumer Senate Majority Leader United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray Chair Senate Appropriations Committee United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510 The Honorable Mitch McConnell Senate Minority Leader United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins Ranking Member Senate Appropriations Committee United States Senate Washington, D.C. 20510

February 29, 2024

Dear Leader Schumer, Leader McConnell, Chair Murray and Ranking Member Collins:

We write in support of legislation to renew the Compacts of Free Association (COFA) with the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau, including in any legislative vehicle.

Our COFA partnerships are critical to U.S. national security. Failure to pass the renegotiated Compacts as soon as possible imperils our relationships with the Freely Associated States and the entire Pacific Island region, who view the COFA as a barometer of the U.S. commitment to the region. They ensure that we, rather than a nation hostile to U.S. interests, maintain strategic control of the Pacific Ocean between Hawaii and the Philippines.

The People's Republic of China (PRC) is engaged in active efforts to undermine Pacific Island nations' confidence in the United States. Failure to act on COFA opens the door to more corrupting influence and funding by the PRC in the region. The PRC is pursuing military basing and policing agreements in the region and working to undermine recognition of Taiwan, and exerting corrupting influence in several other countries. Without the COFA agreements, these trends would accelerate.

These unique bilateral agreements are the product of nearly four years of negotiations under two Presidential Administrations, and year-long negotiations across eight primary committees of jurisdiction in the House and Senate and multiple others. The resulting bicameral, bipartisan legislation will secure U.S. national security in the Indo-Pacific for the next two decades.

We ask for your support in moving the COFA package forward with the urgency it requires. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Joe Manchin III
United States Senator

Benjamin L. Cardin United States Senator

Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

Jack Reed
United States Senator

Ron Wyden
United States Senator

Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

Tim Kaine United States Senator John Barrasso, M.D.
United States Senator

James E. Risch United States Senator

John Boozman
United States Senator

Roger F. Wicker United States Senator

Jerry Moran Jerry Moran

United States Senator

Thom Tillis
United States Senator

Todd Young United States Senator

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

Brian Schatz
United States Senator

Martin Heinrich United States Senator

Catherine Cortez Masto United States Senator

Gary Peters
United States Senator

Jeffrey A. Merkley United States Senator Joni K. Ernst United States Senator

Dan Sullivan

United States Senator

Bill Cassidy, M.D.

United States Senator

Mitt Romney

United States Senator

Rick Scott

United States Senator

Lisa Murkowski

United States Senator