



Abercrombie Bill Intended To Federally Assist FAS Migrants

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U.S. Representative Neil Abercrombie has announced proposed legislation to reinstate certain federal benefits for migrants from Federated States of Micronesia, Palau and the Marshall Islands.

Kauaiaworld.com reports that the bill restores federal eligibility for non-emergency Medicaid, food stamps, supplemental security income, and temporary assistance for needy families, all of which were guaranteed by the U.S. government to Freely Associated States migrants in the past.

“Eligibility for these benefits was in the original Compact of Free Association, agreements between the Government of the United State and these sovereign nations,” Abercrombie said in a prepared statement.

Abercrombie says it’s wrong for Hawaii taxpayers- the state had to front up \$90 million after the benefits were lifted—“to be stuck with the bill for an international agreement.”

Last year, Hawai‘i spent more than \$90 million to provide health and social services to FAS migrants, doubling from what it cost in 2003.

Under the Compact of Free Association, citizens of the Freely Associated States have access to direct services of over forty U.S. federal domestic programs.