

## Board Meets Chuuk State Legislature

On July 3, 2007, the FSMSS Board of Trustees met with the Speaker of the Chuuk State House of Representatives, Singoro Harper, and the President of the Chuuk State House of Senate, Detor Santos. In the meeting, the FSMSS Board of Trustees asked for the help of Chuuk State Legislature concerning payments from the Chuuk State Government. The board reminded legislature that when payments aren't made, workers don't get credited for quarters in which they actually worked and were in fact taxed for social security. This would in effect cause people to sometimes not be eligible for benefits once they retire, die or become disabled. "We will try our best to go for at least partial payment if not full payment," the president said and assured the board that legislature would do everything in its power to pay off its debts. Mr. Santos revealed a potential \$95 thousand in dividends from the Bank of FSM that would hopefully be used to pay for social security taxes.



The Speaker, Mr. Harper, echoed the President's sentiments and said he had met with President Mori and Chuuk State Government is looking at a possible appropriation of \$1 million, half of which he will lobby legislature to approve to pay social security. He went on to reveal Chuuk is looking into assistance from China in the form of a grant estimated from \$3.5 to \$5.0 million which legislature hopes to use in paying for social security taxes. This may be finalized as early as the end of July 2007. The Administrator, Narruhn, emphasized that since the State of Chuuk receives the most in benefits from the FSMSSA among the four states, greater effort on the part of the Chuuk Government should be placed on not only delinquent taxes but on the continuing payments for current and future taxes. Otherwise, future benefits would be affected.

The board ended the meeting by voicing their appreciation for the apparent efforts already taken by the Chuuk State Legislature.

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