



House Journal

FOURTH REGULAR SESSION, 2009

2nd Day

Thursday, August 13, 2009

The House of Representatives of the Sixteenth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature convened in its Second Day, Fourth Regular Session on Thursday, August 13, 2009, at 1:45 p.m., in the House Chamber on Capitol Hill, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Honorable Arnold I. Palacios, Speaker of the House, presided.

A moment of silence was observed.

The Clerk called the roll and fifteen members were present. Representatives Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero and Stanley T. Torres came in late; Representatives Edwin P. Aldan, Joseph C. Reyes and Ramon A. Tebuteb were absent and excused for the day's session.

ADOPTION OF JOURNALS

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, unless there is any objection from the members, I would make a lump sum motion to adopt the journals for 7th Day, Third Regular Session, February 13, 2009, 8th Day, Third Regular Session, February 18, 2009, 9th Day, Third Regular Session, February 25, 2009, 10th Day, Third Regular Session, March 04, 2009, 11th Day, Third Regular Session, March 11, 2009.

The motion was seconded.

7th Day, Third Regular Session, February 13, 2009
8th Day, Third Regular Session, February 18, 2009
9th Day, Third Regular Session, February 25, 2009
10th Day, Third Regular Session, March 04, 2009
11th Day, Third Regular Session, March 11, 2009

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion for the adoption of the journals appearing on today's Order of Business has been seconded. Discussion.

Representative Hofschneider: Did any of the members pissed off the journal clerk?

Speaker Arnold Palacios: This was Representative Stanley Torres' idea.

Representative Hofschneider: Good work to the clerks, Mr. Speaker.

There was no further discussion and the motion to adopt the House Journals of the 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th Days for the Third Regular Session was carried by voice vote.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

H. B. NO. 16-271: A Bill for an Act to earmark MPLT revenues for the Rota Gaming Commission for personnel costs and for contractual obligations of the Commission for Fiscal Year 2010; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Victor B. Hocog

Referred to: Committee on Ways and Means, and Committee on Natural Resources

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

H. R. NO. 16-95: A House Resolution conveying the sincere condolences and sympathy of the House of Representatives of the Sixteenth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature to the bereaved family of the Late Dr. Rita Hocog Inos on the occasion of her untimely passing.

Offered by: Representative Victor B. Hocog and nineteen others

H. R. NO. 16-96: A House Resolution to pay tribute to the Late Dr. Rita Hocog Inos for all her passion dedication, achievements, contributions, and commitment to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Public School System and the Northern Marianas College.

Offered by: Representative Victor B. Hocog and nineteen others

Representative Hocog: Mr. Speaker, I would like the resolutions to be introduced by the Committee of the Whole and placed on today's Resolution Calendar.

There was no objection from the Floor.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: There being no objection, I order the two resolutions placed on the Resolution Calendar.

Representative Hocog: Mr. Speaker, I regret that we are experiencing machine difficulties at this point in time to provide members a copy of the resolutions I just introduced, and I ask the indulgence of the members to proceed with the adoption pending copies to be made available to each member. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: There is a technical difficulty with the copy machines. I guess we are going to have to all place our trust on Representative Hocog that he did a good job for us to pass the resolutions. Representative Hofschneider.

Representative Hofschneider: As always, Mr. Speaker, I trust Representative Hocog 99.9%, but I would like to see the resolution just to maybe help.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Short recess.

The House recessed at 1:55 p.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 1:57 p.m.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are back in session. I recognize Representative Hofschneider.

Representative Hofschneider: Mr. Speaker, I was talking to the author, I remember, and I think it is fitting that we go on record for former PSS Commissioner Rita Inos and I believe Representative Benavente can help me out. She was very instrumental in bringing PREL into the Commonwealth and that provided a huge and significant contribution to the education system. I believe it is called Pacific Resource Educational Laboratory. I remember when she first came back to the Commonwealth she was very instrumental in bringing that greatly needed assistance for our teachers and staffs of our public schools.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: When we get to the Resolution Calendar, we will get into that discussion. We now move on to Messages from the Governor.

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR

GOV. COMM. 16-408: (7/30/09) Executive Order 2009-07 – Declaration of a State of Disaster Emergency: CUC's Imminent Generation and other Failure and the Need to Provide Immediate Reliable Power during Repairs, Continuation #12.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Yumul, recognized.

Representative Yumul: Thank you. In regards to GOV. COMM. 16-408, if there is no objection from the members and, of course, our good Chairman of PUTC, I would like to ask if we can appoint perhaps Representative Tina Sablan to thoroughly review this declaration since this will be a declaration that will lead up to the final termination of Aggreko's contract. On page 5, paragraph h, I find it very intriguing that the Governor states, in part: "If the Legislature fails to act on the CUC request, it will effectively set the stage for loss of service and higher rates. It will thereby reverse the \$6 million-per-year benefit of terminating the Aggreko temporary power contract." I think it is time that we have a report that will outline how Aggreko is to remove itself from the grid system and the Commonwealth and hopefully we can have peace of mind knowing that the power system will continue to remain steady for the Commonwealth. I would like to conduct a report from the Ways and Means Committee since we identified \$3.4 Million under Public Law 16-7 to CUC, but because of the budget that is more pressing at this time, and the good Chairman on PUTC and myself will also be looking at MPLT and the \$3.4 Million we should not leave this to the way side. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Representative Hocog: Mr. Speaker, for the information of the members particularly the Committee on PUTC, I had confirmed a meeting with the Executive Director of CUC to meet with the Committee on August 20 at 10:30 in the Speaker's Conference Room. So, I urge the members of the committee and those who are interested to come and sit in and air concerns, and on what Representative Yumul is currently asking. So it will be on Thursday, August 20, 2009, at 10:30 in the morning at the Speaker's Conference Room. I have communicated to the Executive Director and had agreed with the date set forth. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you. Is the Speaker invited to the meeting?

Representative Hocog: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you. I also believe that it is becoming rather obnoxious for lack of a better word that we continue to have this emergency declaration even for hiring of nonresidents. We are not only talking about highly skilled generator mechanics, we are talking about janitors. So, we can at least get a clarification and I thank you Representative Hocog for scheduling that meeting. I think everybody will be interested to hear the logic and justifications for the continued declarations basically legislating through emergency declarations. Representative Hocog.

Representative Hocog: Additionally, Mr. Speaker, I understand the good Chairman of Ways and Means also invited the MPLT in the afternoon for a meeting. Am I correct – oh, Friday morning, August 21st. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Has a letter or a memo been officially transmitted, Representative Yumul?

Representative Yumul: Mr. Speaker, I received a call from MPLT staff and had informed me that MPLT will be conducting a regular scheduled board meeting at their location. They have upgraded their conference room and the chairman is asking for the indulgence of the Committee on Ways and Means to come down to their location to formally sit with them and discuss the matters that have been reiterated by Representative Hocog.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: My question is, have you advised the members of the Committee on Ways and Means in a memorandum form.

Representative Yumul: Mr. Speaker, due to some technical difficulties, the memo will be going out before the end of the day today.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Please.

Representative Yumul: And you are invited.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Sablan, recognized.

Representative Sablan: Could I get a clarification on the two meetings that have been announced by Representative Hocog and Representative Yumul. The PUTC is holding a committee meeting with Mr. Muña on Thursday, August 20 at 10:30 in the Speaker's Conference Room. Is it just to take up the issue of the emergence declaration? And then for Representative Yumul, is that purpose of the MPLT meeting on the 21st, the following Friday, is that just to take up the issue of how much money was actually remitted for the purposes of the Aggreko contract?

Representative Hocog: That is correct, Representative Sablan. We will be discussing the emergency declaration by the Governor and the funding that was made available to CUC under Public Law 16-7. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Yumul, do you want to provide some clarification as to the scope of the meeting that Ways and Means will be having with MPLT?

Representative Yumul: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Representative Hocog is correct. The issue at hand is as was brought forward. Public Law 16-7 which authorized the \$3.4 Million funding for CUC for the

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Short recess.

The House recessed at 2:08 p.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 2:08 p.m.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are back in session. Please continue.

Representative Yumul: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The rationale for the \$3.4 Million was because of the state of emergencies that ensued and then the eventual termination of the Aggreko contract. The good PUTC Chair and I decided that it would be more appropriate to meet separately with both CUC and MPLT to get the facts as to how the money was distributed, how the program, which is the rehabilitation, was put into effect, and the payments of certain arrears that CUC had incurred. There is another issue that I am going to be bringing up with MPLT, but at this time the Chairman of PUTC and myself have decided not to discuss it because it is a very sensitive issue, and we are going to get our documentation and commitments from them in terms of certifications as to the plan of action that they have executed whether it was how it was intended for and to basically bring this body into peace of mind knowing that the law was followed.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Salas.

Representative Salas: I would like to find out the time for the Friday meeting with MPLT.

Representative Yumul: The time for Friday has not be published because they have not put it out in print form and when they do, we will be given a slot to sit with them.

Representative Salas: Okay.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Let me run this again – when is this meeting with MPLT and what time is it going to be.

Representative Yumul: It is tentatively scheduled for next Friday in the morning, approximately 9:00-9:30. Again, it is contingent upon their publishing the notice to the public.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: So this is really not a legislative or Ways and Means Committee meeting. This is a board meeting. The MPLT will have a board meeting and we have been invited to come down and join them during the board meeting.

Representative Yumul: Right. We were invited only because, again, we do not want to put the board in a position to assemble up here in the legislature and give them undue burden. It is just a preliminary that if during the course of our discussion with them we need to formalize it, then the decision will be made to invite them up here for a more detailed discussion.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you, Representative Yumul. I would like to ask you give me a briefing on what this is going to entail after the session.

Representative Salas: Just for clarification, are we invited to this meeting on Friday.

Representative Yumul: Of course, members of the legislature are always invited. Again, it is not formal. We were just asked for convenience that this day is available. I could have scheduled another date and formalize it, but at this point it might take less than half-an-hour. I trust the integrity of the board.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Okay, thank you. Ready? We move on. There being no communications from the Senate, the House, the Judiciary, and the NMI Delegate, we go to Communications from Departments and Agencies.

SENATE COMMUNICATIONS

NONE

HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS

NONE

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

NONE

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE NMI DELEGATE

NONE

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

DEPT./AGCY. COMM. 16-97: (7/13/09) From NMIRF Chair Juan T. Guerrero to Speaker Arnold Palacios regarding the NMI Retirement Fund's Board of Trustees opposition of the passage of H. B. No. 16-68, SD1.

DEPT./AGCY. COMM. 16-98: (7/29/09) From the Commonwealth Election Commission has certified the popular initiative entitled, "Open Government Act of 2009" for the upcoming 2009 General Election.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Ready? We move on to Item 11, Other Communications.

OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

MISC. COMM. 16-78: (8/4/09) From PA/HMGP/CIP Programs – Office of the Governor, Ms. Virginia C. Villagomez, Governor's Authorized Representative informing the Speaker that the CNMI House of Representative's disaster assistance under Typhoon Chaba (DR-1541-MP) is now considered closed.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Ready?

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Speaker Arnold Palacios: If there is no objection, we will skip the Reports of Standing Committees and move on to the Resolution Calendar.

Representative Sablan: I just wanted to make a short request on S. C. R. NO. 16-89 that that be referred to the Committee on Commerce and Tourism. I did consult with our Vice Chair and he is also fine with that.

1. S. C. R. NO. 16-89 Reporting on S B. NO. 16-45 entitled, “To amend 4 CMC § 5941 (a) to abolish the security deposit requirement for long term business certificate applicants; and for other purposes.” *Your Committee on Commerce and Tourism recommends passage of S. B. NO. 16-45 in the form of House Substitute 1.*
2. S. C. R. NO. 16-111: Reporting on H. B. NO. 16-197, entitled, “To amend 1 CMC 8536 through 8539; and for other purposes. *Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations recommends that the House pass H. B. NO. 16-197.*
3. S. C. R. NO. 16-112: Reporting on H. L. I. NO. 16-23, entitled, “To amend Article III, Section 11 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to authorize the election of an Attorney General; and for other purposes.” *Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations recommends that the House pass H. L. I. NO. 16-23.*
4. S. C. R. NO. 16-113: Reporting on S. B. NO. 16-27, SS1, entitled, “To require all contractors to be licensed in the Commonwealth; and for other purposes.” *Your Committee on Commerce and Tourism recommends that the House pass the S. B. NO. 16-27, SS1 as substituted by the Committee.*

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Short recess.

The House recessed at 2:14 p.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 2:15 p.m.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are back in session. Representative Sablan, if there is no objection, I hereby refer S. C. R. NO. 16-89 back to the committee. There are some substantive and technical problems with the committee substitute that is coming out of the committee and we need to send it back to the committee. The substitute is amending a statute that no longer exists. So we need to have the committee work on the bill. Is there any objection?

There was no objection from the Floor and S. C. R. NO. 16-89 was recommitted to the Committee on Commerce and Tourism.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: S. C. R. NO. 16-89 is hereby referred back to the Committee on Commerce and Tourism for further work. We will now move on to Resolution Calendar.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL AND CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

NONE

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NONE

RESOLUTION CALENDAR

1. H. R. NO. 16-91: To request the Department of Public Lands to designate thirty hectares of public land on Tinian, thirty hectares of public land on Rota and ten hectares of public land on Saipan as Free Trade Zones to

be administered by the mayors of the respective islands and to transfer fee simple interest of such public lands to each respective municipality. H. R. NO. 16-93: Supporting H.R. 934, a U.S. House congressional bill to convey certain submerged lands to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in order to give that territory the same benefits in its submerged lands as Guam, the Virgin Islands, and American Samoa have in their submerged lands, and to preserve the Commonwealth Governments joint management role in the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument.

3. H. J. R. NO. 16-28: Respectfully requesting Gregorio Kili Sablan, CNMI Delegate to the United States Congress, 111th United States Congress to support the removal and reclassification of the Nightingale Reed-Warbler from the United States Fish and Wildlife endangered species list.
4. H. COMM. RES. NO. 16-92: Expressing the utmost appreciation of the Northern Marianas Sixteenth Commonwealth Legislature to Mr. Marcelino "Max" B. Aguon for his hard work and dedication in maintaining the beach side area along Sugar Dock to Aquarius Beach Hotel and promoting and educating the people on issues of environmental cleanliness and tourism awareness to the frequent visitors of the area.
5. H. R. NO. 16-94: Recognizing and commending Dr. Vicente Sablan Aldan for his achievements and community service to the people of the Commonwealth and for his success at the Saipan Health Clinic and the Saint Jude Renal Care Facility.
6. S. J. R. NO. 16-13, SD1: In honor of the United States National Guard and Reserve forces, and recognizing the support provided to them by their private and public sector employers as they serve our country. [SEN. COMM. 16-180]
7. H. R. NO. 16-95: *Conveying the sincere condolences and sympathy of the House of Representatives of the Sixteenth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature to the bereaved family of the Late Dr. Rita Hocog Inos on the occasion of her untimely passing.*
8. H. R. NO. 16-96: *To pay tribute to the Late Dr. Rita Hocog Inos for all her passion dedication, achievements, contributions, and commitment to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Public School System and the Northern Marianas College.*

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe everybody got a copy or managed to look at the two new resolutions. I move for the adoption of H. R. NO. 16-95 in reference to the late Dr. Rita Inos.

The motion was seconded.

H. R. NO. 16-95: A HOUSE RESOLUTION CONVEYING THE SINCERE CONDOLENCES AND SYMPATHY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SIXTEENTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE TO THE BEREAVED FAMILY OF THE LATE DR. RITA HOCO INOS ON THE OCCASION OF HER UNTIMELY PASSING.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion for the adoption of H. R. NO. 16-95 has been seconded. Discussion. Are you ready for the question?

There was no discussion and the motion to adopt H. R. NO. 16-95 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: H. R. NO. 16-95 is hereby adopted. Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In reference to H. R. NO. 16-96, a motion to adopt in reference to the Late Dr. Rita Inos' many years of public service at PSS and NMC.

The motion was seconded.

H. R. NO. 16-96: A HOUSE RESOLUTION TO PAY TRIBUTE TO THE LATE DR. RITA HOCO INOS FOR ALL HER PASSION DEDICATION, ACHIEVEMENTS, CONTRIBUTIONS, AND COMMITMENT TO THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM AND THE NORTHERN MARIANAS COLLEGE.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion has been seconded. Discussion.

There was no discussion and the motion to adopt H. R. NO. 16-96 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: H. R. NO. 16-96 is hereby adopted by the House. Representative Babauta.

Representative Babauta: (inaudible – microphone off)

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We will take a short recess.

The House recessed at 2:19 p.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 2:22 p.m.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are back in session. I recognize the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move for the adoption of what is listed here as H. COMM. RES. 16-92 reference to Mr. Max Aguon.

The motion was seconded.

H. COMM. RES. NO. 16-92: A House Commemorative Resolution expressing the utmost appreciation of the Northern Marianas Sixteenth Commonwealth Legislature to Mr. Marcelino “Max” B. Aguon for his hard work and dedication in maintaining the beach side area along Sugar Dock to Aquarius Beach Hotel and promoting and educating the people on issues of environmental cleanliness and tourism awareness to the frequent visitors of the area.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, I believe that there was information from Representative Ray Palacios if we can renumber this to a House Resolution instead of a House Commemorative Resolution. So it would be H. R. NO. 16-97 and to please make a note of that, and I continue to make a motion to adopt what is now referenced as H. R. NO. 16-97 referring to Mr. Max Aguon and his hard work and dedication for the beach side at Sugar Dock.

The motion was seconded.

H. R. NO. 16-97: A House Resolution expressing the utmost appreciation of the House of Representatives of the 16th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature to Mr. Marcelino “Max” B. Aguon for his hard work and dedication in maintaining the beach side area along Sugar Dock to

Aquarius Beach Hotel and promoting and educating the people on issues of environmental cleanliness and tourism awareness to the frequent visitors of the area.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion is for the adoption of H. R. NO. 16-97 and it has been seconded. Discussion on the motion. Ready.

There was no discussion and the motion to adopt H. R. NO. 16-97 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion is carried and H. R. NO. 16-97 is hereby adopted by the House.

Vice Speaker Deleon Guerrero: Mr. Speaker, privilege.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: State your privilege.

Vice Speaker Deleon Guerrero: I am here, present, and accounted for. Also, if I may, since we are under Resolution Calendar, we presented a commemorative resolution this morning for Mr. Antonio “Apa” Villagomez Deleon Guerrero. That was a joint commemorative resolution. I have a copy of that resolution and I would like to ask the members if there is no objections if we can go back to Item 4 and let me introduce this so that we can also continue and adopt it as well.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Is there any objection going back to Introduction of Resolutions?

Representative Babauta: Short recess, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Short recess.

The House recessed at 2:25 p.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 2:31 p.m.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are back in session. We went on recess when the Vice Speaker requested that we go back to the Resolution Calendar.

Vice Speaker Deleon Guerrero: Mr. Speaker, I understand after checking with the Senate and since this originated from the Senate that the Senate has to introduce and adopt it first, and then it would be sent to the House. So, I would like to withdraw my recommendation and hold off until the Senate adopts it.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Okay, we will recognize that withdrawal. Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, I move for the adoption of S. J. R. NO. 16-13, Senate Draft 1 (SD1) in reference to the United States National Guard and Reserve Forces.

The motion was seconded.

S. J. R. NO. 16-13, SD1: A Senate Joint Resolution in honor of the United States National Guard and Reserve forces, and recognizing the support provided to them by their private and public sector employers as they serve our country. [SEN. COMM. 16-180]

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion has be made and seconded. Ready for the question?

There was no discussion and the motion to adopt S. J. R. NO. 16-13, SD1 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion is carried and S. J. R. NO. 16-13, SD1 is hereby adopted.

Representative Yumul: Mr. Speaker, I apologize – just to state for the record that S. J. R. NO. 16-13, SD1 on page 2 identified on line 14 a Rear Detachment Officer for Echo Company, but I think in all fairness there are other units, such as the 302nd who are getting ready to deploy sometime next year also have a small detachment of MP’s primarily based out of Guam, so by us singling one battalion, it really should be Army Reserves in general or 9th MSC which is the new name for the unit.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: If there is no objection, I am going to ask that we provide those as technical insertions. The resolution has been adopted by the House. Representative Yumul, the House members depend on you when there is a legislation on the floor regarding (End of Tape 1, side A) ...

Representative Yumul: (Start of Side B) Motrin, I have a severe headache and probably a flu. I am trying my best to remain sharp, but I do apologize to the members.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you, Representative Yumul. If there is no objection, I would like call for a short recess and ask the members to go over some of the agenda items. Short recess.

The House recessed at 2:37 p.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 2:39 p.m.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are back in session. We go back to Reports of Standing Committees.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Speaker Arnold Palacios: I now recognize the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, a motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-111 reporting on H. B. NO. 16-197 recommending passage.

The motion was seconded.

S. C. R. NO. 16-111: Reporting on H. B. NO. 16-197, entitled, “To amend 1 CMC 8536 through 8539; and for other purposes. *Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations recommends that the House pass H. B. NO. 16-197.*

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Discussion. Representative Sablan.

Representative Sablan: Just a correction, the Committee Report actually recommends the filing of H. B. NO. 16-197.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, let me restate my motion. Thank you for the clarification, Representative Sablan. I move to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-111 reporting on H. B. NO. 16-197 recommendation for the filing of the respective bill.

The motion was seconded.

S. C. R. NO. 16-111: Reporting on H. B. NO. 16-197, entitled, “To amend 1 CMC 8536 through 8539; and for other purposes. *Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations recommends that the House file H. B. NO. 16-197.*

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Discussion. Ready?

There was no discussion and the motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-111 thereby filing H. B. NO. 16-197 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion is carried and S. C. R. NO. 16-111 is hereby adopted.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, a motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-112 reporting on H. L. I. NO. 16-23 in reference to the elected attorney general.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion is for the adoption of S. C. R. NO. 16-112. Do I hear a second to that motion?

The motion was seconded.

S. C. R. NO. 16-112: Reporting on H. L. I. NO. 16-23, entitled, “To amend Article III, Section 11 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to authorize the election of an Attorney General; and for other purposes.” *Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations recommends that the House pass H. L. I. NO. 16-23.*

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion has been seconded. Discussion. I recognize Representative Quitugua.

Representative Quitugua: (Inaudible) ...unless we are going to pass it and then next election ...

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Further discussion. Ready?

There was no further discussion and the motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-112 thereby placing H. L. I. NO. 16-23 on the Bill Calendar was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: S. C. R. NO. 16-112 is hereby adopted. Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move for the adoption of S. C. R. NO. 16-113 recommending passage of S. B. NO. 16-27, SS1.

The motion was seconded.

S. C. R. NO. 16-113: Reporting on S. B. NO. 16-27, SS1, entitled, “To require all contractors to be licensed in the Commonwealth; and for other purposes”. *Your Committee on Commerce and Tourism recommends that the House pass the S. B. NO. 16-27, SS1 as substituted by the Committee.*

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Discussion on the motion.

Vice Speaker Deleon Guerrero: Mr. Speaker, I was hoping the Chairman of this committee would be here. I had asked him if we can defer action on the committee report until such time that we get comments from the newly formed CNMI Contractor’s Association and they had asked the Chairman of the Committee if they can submit their comments and meet with the Committee before we act on it. So, the Chairman was okay with that recommendation, but he is not here to confirm that. I would like to ask if there is no objection to defer action right now. We could leave it on the calendar and allow the contractors to meet with the committee first.

There was no objection from the Floor.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Mr. Vice Chairman.

Representative Salas: Mr. Speaker, I do not object to that.

Representative Apatang: Mr. Speaker, I thought the last day for initiatives was on August 10th.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are on S. C. R. NO. 16-113.

Representative Apatang: Oh, okay.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: So since there is no objection, we will take up on the recommendation to leave S. C. R. NO. 16-113 on the Calendar until the Chairman is present and allow the committee to further work with the newly formed CNMI Contractor’s Association. Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, just so that the record is clear there being no objection from the members, I respectfully withdraw the motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-113 until further information comes in.

There was no objection from the Floor.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Okay, so as agreed, I recognize a motion to adjourn.

BILL CALENDAR

1. H. B. NO. 16-201: To establish a government service severance package for employees funded by the General Fund with at least eighteen years of government service; and for other purposes.
2. H. L. I. NO. 16-8: To amend Article XII of the Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands by adding a new Section 7 to allow each senatorial district to amend or repeal the restrictions on alienation of land with respect to its senatorial district [*See S. C. R. NO. 16-60, Subst. 1*]
3. H. B. NO. 16-132, HD1: To authorize the Marianas Visitors Authority to regulate tour operators and tour guides by amending 4 CMC § 2103; and for other purposes. [*See S. C. R. NO. 16-79*]

4. H. B. NO. 16-146, HS1: To establish a Village and Agricultural Homesteading Program in the Northern Islands; and for other purposes. [*See S. C. R. NO. 16-82*]
5. H. B. NO. 16-15: To amend Title 1 CMC § 8365 to establish that the Northern Marianas Retirement Fund receive its tax revenue from the hotel occupancy tax and alcoholic container tax directly into a special fund within the Department of Finance. [*See S. C. R. NO. 16-83*]
6. H. B. NO. 16-225: To amend 4 CMC § 1503(a)(5) to reduce the license fee for pachinko slot machines; and for other purposes. [*See S. C. R. NO. 16-84*]
7. H. B. NO. 16-235: To amend 2 CMC § 7113(e)(3) regarding the erection of temporary structures used for public events; and for other purposes.
8. H. B. NO. 16-68, SD1: To repeal and reenact 1 CMC § 8364, as amended by Public Law 15-70, Section 4(j), to allow annuitants to enroll in the Commonwealth government health care program, and to amend 1 CMC § 8392; and for other purposes. [*See SEN. COMM. 16-165*]
9. H. B. NO. 16-167, HD3: To amend 1 CMC § 8222 regarding housing for key government officials; and for other purposes. [*See S. C. R. NO. 16-91*]
10. H. B. NO. 16-178, HD1.: To repeal and replace Title 6, Division 5, Chapters 1 and 2 and create a comprehensive juvenile justice system that will protect the community, hold the juvenile accountable for his or her actions, and assist the juvenile in developing skills to become a contributing member of a diverse community; to establish a system for the appointment and regulation of guardians ad litem to support juveniles and the community at large; and for other purposes. [*See S. C. R. NO. 16-92*]
11. H. B. NO. 16-210, HD1: To restructure the Qualifying Certificate Program by repealing and re-enacting the Investment Incentive Act; and for other purposes. [*See S. C. R. NO. 16-94*]
12. H. L. I. NO. 16-18, HD1: To amend Article XI, Section 5(g) of the NMI Constitution to authorize the Department of Public Lands to reserve twenty percent of its operational expense to pay and satisfy land compensation claims; and for other purposes. [*See S. C. R. NO. 16-96*]
13. H. B. NO. 16-222: To repeal Public Law 15-42 in its entirety; and for other purposes. [*See S. C. R. NO. 16-97*]
14. H. B. NO. 16-219, HD1: To designate Lau Lau Bay as a boat launching site to facilitate quicker response times for emergencies located on the eastern coastline of Saipan; and for other purposes. [*S. C. R. NO. 16-99*]
15. S. B. NO. 16-23: To reduce unemployment among resident workers by encouraging to work under contracts for services to the Commonwealth Government for capital improvement projects that pay the employees under such contacts at least the prevailing U.S. minimum wage; and for other purposes. [*S. C. R. NO. 16-101*]
16. H. B. NO. 16-254: To amend 1 CMC Section 8314(a) to provide for additional eighth Trustee to the Board of Trustees of the Retirement Fund; and for other purposes. [*S. C. R. NO. 16-102*]
17. H. B. NO. 16-230: To amend Title 6, Section 2223 to provide the Department of Public Safety with the authority to dispose of all firearms within its custody and to required DPS to promulgate rules and regulations for the fair and safe disposition of all firearms within its custody; and for other purposes. [*S. C. R. NO. 16-103*]
18. H. B. NO. 16-157: To establish an Incompetency Determination Act; and for other purposes. [*S. C. R. NO. 16-105*]
19. H. B. NO. 16-160: To repeal and reenact 1 CMC § 8392; and for other purposes. [*S. C. R. NO. 16-106*]
20. H. B. NO. 16-38: To repeal Section 3 of Public Law 13-1, to repeal and reenact Chapters 1-3, to repeal and reenact chapters 1-3 of Part 1 of Division 8 of Title 1 of the Commonwealth Code; and for other purposes. [*S. C. R. NO. 16-107*]
21. H. B. NO. 16-116: To establish standard guidelines for employees on military leave pursuant to the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, Chapter 43 of Title 38 U.S.C.; and for other purposes. [*S. C. R. NO. 16-108*]
22. H. B. NO. 16-238: To amend 4 CMC § 50144(b) increasing fines to deter retailers from selling tobacco products to minors; and for other purposes. [*S. C. R. NO. 16-109*]
23. H. B. NO. 16-122: To repeal Division 4 of Title 1 of the Commonwealth Code; and for other purposes. [*S. C. R. NO. 16-110*]

The House did not act on any legislation under the Bill Calendar.

ANNOUNCEMENT

NONE

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

NONE

ADJOURNMENT

Representative Apatang: What will be our attire for the presentation of the Resolution on Saturday.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: I recommend that we wear our session attire, shirt and tie. We will be advising you of the time. My office will clarify that with the Legislative Bureau and see if we can get those information and get them out to you. Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, a motion to adjourn subject to your call.

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The House stands adjourned subject to the call of the Chair.

The House adjourned at 2: 46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda B. Muña, Journal Clerk
House of Representatives

APPEARANCE OF LOCAL BILLS

FIRST APPEARANCE: 1st Legislative appearance of a local bill is on the day it is introduced.

SECOND APPEARANCE: NONE

THIRD APPEARANCE:

H. L. B. NO. 16-41: To authorize the Mayor of Tinian and Aguiguan to establish regulations in order to protect essential natural resources within the Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan; and for other purposes. (Rep. Edwin P. Aldan)

H. L. B. NO. 16-42: To appropriate \$30,000.00 from the local license fees collected for pachinko slot machines and poker machines in the Second Senatorial District; and for other purposes. (Rep. Edwin P. Aldan)

H. L. B. NO. 16-43: To appropriate \$110,000.00 from the Developer Infrastructure Tax collected in the Second Senatorial District; and for other purposes. (Rep. Edwin P. Aldan)