



# House Journal

## THIRD SPECIAL SESSION, 2009

1<sup>st</sup> Day

May 8, 2009

The House of Representatives of the Sixteenth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature convened its First Day, Third Special Session on Friday, May 8, 2009, at 9:43 a.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 Heinz Hofschneider, Justo S. Quitugua, Raymond Palacios and Edward T. Salas was absent and excused and Representative Stanley Torres will be coming arriving in shortly.

### ADOPTION OF JOURNALS

NONE

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

H. B. NO. 16-241: To amend Public Law 16-32 to clarify which outside General Fund sources the Department of Public Health qualified operational expenses are to be transferred to; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Ray N. Yumul +1  
Referred to: Committee on Ways and Means

H. B. NO. 16-242: To amend the Victim Right's Act; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Rosemond B. Santos

H. B. NO. 16-243: To amend Public Law 16-32 to reprogram \$172,240.323 from MVA's non-personnel appropriation to its personnel appropriation; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Ray N. Yumul +1

H. B. NO. 16-244: To require all taxicabs operating in the CNMI to be uniformly colored; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Rosemond B. Santos  
Referred to: Committee on Public Utilities Transportation and Communications

H. B. NO. 16-245: To replace the subsistence allowance established for the Legislative Branch with the standard government travel processing and rates and to lower the housing allowance established fore the Legislative Branch; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Rosemond B. Santos  
Referred to: Committee on Ways and Means

H. B. NO. 16-246: To authorize the governor to transfer \$3,350,000 of the Non General Revenue Resources for Fiscal Year 2010; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Justo S. Quitugua +1

Referred to: Committee on Ways and Means

*(At this time, Representative Stanley Torres took his seat in the Chamber.)*

H. B. NO. 16-247: To amend Public Law 16-39 to clarify certain provisions; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero

Representative Deleon Guerrero: Mr. Speaker, this is to clarify that H. B. 16-129 which was just signed into law. The Governor signed it with an agreement to amend it, which in this case this is the bill to amend that.

*House Local Bills:*

H. L. B. NO. 16-33: To re-appropriate the sum of \$54,000.00 from Tinian Local Law 15-9; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Edwin P. Aldan

H. L. B. NO. 16-34: To re-appropriate lapsed funds under Saipan Local Law 16-1, Section 3(1); and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Ray N. Yumul

H. L. B. NO. 16-35: To appropriate \$3,650,000 from the revenues collected pursuant to Saipan Local Law 1 1-2 as amended for fiscal year 2010; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Justo S. Quitugua +1

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Representative Stanley Torres, recognized.

Representative Stanley Torres: Mr. Speaker, if I may and with a unanimous consent of the members, I would like to ask to recall from the Committee H. B. No. 16-240 to be placed on the Bill Calendar for action. This is a very short amendment of the wine tasting bill that needs to be modified. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Can we wait until we get to the Bill Calendar and Floor Leader, please take note of that.

### **INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS**

H. COMM. RES. NO. 16-71: Conveying the sincere condolences and sympathy of the House of Representatives to the bereaved family of the late Honorable Howard I. Macaranas on the occasion of his untimely passing and to pay fond tribute to his memory.

Offered by: (Rep. Edwin P. Aldan)

*(Was withdrawn on the floor by the author and instead introduced it as a House Resolution)*

H. R. NO. 16-81: To request the Department of Public Works to draft and adopt a Right of Way Manual establishing uniform standard guidelines and procedures for acquiring private property for public highways in the Commonwealth.

Offered by: Rep. Victor B. Hocog

H. R. NO. 16-82: To recognize and extend sincere appreciation to Matson Navigation Company Inc., for assisting in facilitating the donation of various items to the CNMI.

Offered by: Rep. Rosemond B. Santos

H. R. NO. 16-83: To recognize and extend sincere appreciation to the Division of Customs of the Department of Finance for assisting in facilitating the donation of various items to the CNMI.

Offered by: Rep. Rosemond B. Santos

H. R. NO. 16-84: To recognize and extend sincere appreciation to Reach out Pacific (REPAC): President and Hawaii State Representative, Glenn Wakai for his assistance in facilitating the donation of various items to the CNMI.

Offered by: Rep. Rosemond B. Santos

H. R. NO. 16-85: To recognize and extend sincere appreciation to FAS Moving & Storage for assisting in facilitating the donation of various items to the CNMI.

Offered by: Rep. Rosemond B. Santos

H. R. NO. 16-86: To recognize and extend sincere appreciation to the Commonwealth Ports Authority for assisting in facilitating the donation of various items to the CNMI.

Offered by: Rep. Rosemond B. Santos

H. R. NO. 16-87: To recognize and extend sincere appreciation to Saipan Stevedore Company, Inc., for assisting in facilitating the donation of various items to the CNMI.

Offered by: Rep. Rosemond B. Santos

H. R. NO. 16-88: Conveying the sincere condolences and sympathy of the House of Representatives to the bereaved family of the late Honorable Howard I. Macaranas on the occasion of his untimely passing and to pay fond tribute to his memory.

Offered by: Rep. Edwin P. Aldan

Representative Aldan: Mr. Speaker, just to let the members know that by next week if ever we have a session we are going to introduce this to the family. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Thank you. Would you like this placed on today's Resolution Calendar?

Representative Aldan: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: So ordered, H. R. No. 16-88 is hereby placed on the Resolution Calendar.

H. R. NO. 16-89: To commend and congratulate the Saipan Southern High School Manta Ray Band on their many achievements and outstanding performance at the 2009 Tumon Bay Music Festival.

Offered by: Rep. Ralph DLG. Torres

Representative Ralph Torres: Mr. Speaker and members can we please place this on the Resolution Calendar.

There was no objection on the floor.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: There is no objection it is so ordered that H. R. No. 16-89 is place on the Resolution Calendar.

### MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR

GOV. COMM. 16-353: (4/15/09) Informing the House that he signed into law H. B. NO. 16-145, HD2 (To mandate the Commonwealth Government to prioritize and pay the retirement employer contributions of government employees who are eligible to retire.) [Became Public Law 16-36]

GOV. COMM. 16-354: (4/15/09) Informing the House that he signed into law H. B. NO. 16-187 (re Rota Casino Act). [Became Public Law 16-37]

GOV. COMM. 16-355: (4/3/09) Certification for an annual salary in excess of \$50,000 for Mr. Michael Curtis Brown, Assistant Public Defender.

GOV. COMM. 16-356: (4/16/09) Certification for an annual salary in excess of \$50,000 for Dr. Mary Elizabeth Hernandez.

GOV. COMM. 16-357: (4/16/09) Certification for an annual salary in excess of \$50,000 for Dr. Robert Silk.

GOV. COMM. 16-358: (4/16/09) Certification for an annual salary in excess of \$50,000 for Mr. Braddock Huesman.

GOV. COMM. 16-359: (4/16/09) Certification for an annual salary in excess of \$50,000 for Dr. Glen Richard.

GOV. COMM. 16-360: (4/20/09) Certification for an annual salary in excess of \$50,000 for Dr. Chad C. Lowe.

GOV. COMM. 16-361: (4/20/09) Certification for an annual salary in excess of \$50,000 for Mr. Anthony Raho (Pharmacist).

GOV. COMM. 16-362: (4/24/09) Informing the House that he signed into law S. B. NO. 16-22, SS1, SD1, HS1, HD1 (Amending the Election Reform Act). [Became Public Law 16-38].

GOV. COMM. 16-363: (4/24/09) Informing the House that he disapproved S. B. NO. 16-49, HD1 (re Resident Directors' Salary Increase). [*Deadline: 6/23/09*]

GOV. COMM. 16-364 (4/6/09) Congratulating Mr. Edward C. Sablan on his confirmation to serve as a director of CDA.

GOV. COMM. 16-365: (4/6/09) Congratulating Mr. Jose P. Kyoshi on his confirmation to serve as a commissioner of CEC.

GOV. COMM. 16-366: (4/20/09) Certification for an annual salary in excess of \$50,000 for Dr. Chad C. Lowe.

GOV. COMM. 16-367: (4/29/09) Certification for an annual salary in excess of \$50,000 for Dr. Priyantha Wijayagunaratne.

GOV. COMM. 16-368: (5/1/09) – Executive Order 2009-04 – State of Disaster Emergency Declaration, Continuation #9.

GOV. COMM. 16-369: (4/29/09) Certification for an annual salary in excess of \$50,000 for Dr. William Lytowski.

GOV. COMM. 16-370: (4/29/09) Certification for an annual salary in excess of \$50,000 for Dr. Martin P. Rohringer.

GOV. COMM. 16-371: (5/4/09) Certification for an annual salary in excess of \$50,000 for Ms. Bertha-Jermay P. Camacho.

GOV. COMM. 16-372: (5/4/09) Certification for an annual salary in excess of \$50,000 for Mr. Brian D. Gallagher.

GOV. COMM. 16-373: (5/5/09) Second Interim Report – Constitutional Authority to Declare a State of Disaster Emergency with respect to the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (EO's 2008-13 thru 2009-03). [Report attached to communication on the Legislature's network]

GOV. COMM. 16-374: (5/4/09) Certification for an annual salary in excess of \$50,000 for Mr. Hazel Christine Brown.

GOV. COMM. 16-375: (5/6/09) Informing the House that he signed into law H. B. NO. 16-129, HS1, HD2 (FY 2009 Tobacco Control Fund Appropriations). [Became Public Law 16-39]

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Representative Apatang, recognized.

Representative Apatang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a clarification under GOV. COMM. 16-364. Is this correct, congratulating Mr. Edward C. Sablan on his confirmation for Director for the Commonwealth Development Authority (CDA)?

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: It should be a member of the Board of Directors.

Representative Apatang: Not Director.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: No.

Representative Apatang: Thank you.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Representative Babauta, recognized.

Representative Babauta: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wish to emphasize the importance of Gov. Comm. 16-375 so that we can take up the Vice Speaker's bill in today's session.

## SENATE COMMUNICATIONS

SEN. COMM. 16-147: (4/16/09) Returning H. J. R. NO. 16-26 (Joint Session to receive the Governor's State of the Commonwealth Address), which was adopted by the Senate without amendment on April 15, 2009. [For info]

SEN. COMM. 16-148: (4/16/09) Returning H. B. NO. 16-47, HD2 (Smoke-free Air Act of 2008) which was passed by the Senate with amendments on April 15, 2009, in the form of H. B. NO. 16-47, HD2, SD1. [*For action on Senate Amendments*]

SEN. COMM. 16-149: (4/16/09) Returning H. B. NO. 16-129, HS1, HD1 (Appropriating Tobacco Control Funds for FY 2009) which was passed by the Senate without amendment on April 15, 2009. [For info – Became law]

SEN. COMM. 16-150: (4/16/09) Returning H. B. NO. 16-179, HD1 (Amending the Probation Reform Act) which was passed by the Senate with amendments on April 15, 2009, in the form of H. B. NO. 16-179, HD1, SD1. [*For action on Senate amendments*]

SEN. COMM. 16-151: (4/15/09) Transmitting S. B. NO. 16-54, SD1 (To amend 1 CMC, Division 8, § 8282; and for other purposes), which was passed by the Senate on April 15, 2009. [*For action*]

SEN. COMM. 16-152: (5/4/09) Transmitting S. B. NO. 16-48, SD1 (To establish the Vocational – Technical Education Program Scholarship for five years; and for other purposes) which was passed by the Senate on May 1, 2009. [*For action*]

SEN. COMM. 16-153: (5/5/09) Transmitting a certified copy of S. R. NO. 16-35, "A Senate Resolution expressing the Senate's best wishes to all participants for a fruitful and successful meeting at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Pacific Mayors' Conference and Trade Fair held on May 14 to 17, 2009, at the Fiesta Resort & Spa, Saipan." [For info]

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A motion to reject and move to Conference Committee, H. B. NO. 16-47, HD2, SD1, in reference of SEN. COMM. 16-148.

SEN. COMM. 16-148: (4/16/09) Returning H. B. NO. 16-47, HD2 (Smoke-free Air Act of 2008) which was passed by the Senate with amendments on April 15, 2009, in the form of H. B. NO. 16-47, HD2, SD1. [*For action on Senate Amendments*]

The motion was seconded.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: The motion is to reject the Senate amendments and move to conference committee and it has been seconded. Discussion on the motion, Representative Babauta, recognized.

Representative Babauta: Thank you. May I ask the Chair the reasons for the rejection of this communication?

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: As you know, the Senate submitted an amendment to the legislation, which is almost contradictory to the intent of the legislation. The author had requested to reject the amendments and move to a conference committee. Representative Apatang, recognized.

Representative Apatang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have spoken with the author about the legislation and he agrees to go ahead and accept the amendments. I wonder if anybody confronted Representative Quitugua in regards to that amendment.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: The last I had talked to the author, he was not amendable to it, but - Representative Babauta, recognized.

Representative Babauta: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have the same explanation similar to Representative Apatang, before Representative Quitugua left the office on Wednesday afternoon, he had asked that, and I support the Senate amendments and that is the reason why I ask the rationale for the rejection. Basically, I was perusing the amendment this morning and there is only one question that I need to raise under discussions if we are going to take this communication up and I recommend that we Calendar the Senate Communication.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: We will. There is a motion to reject and certainly, we are under discussion. If we decide to go into conference committee I will be appointing a conference committee for this. The motion is to reject the Senate amendments and we are discussing that right now. I am a little perplexed – the last time I talked to the author, Representative Quitugua about this amendment and he at first did not and I am surprise he is amendable to the Senate amendments. Representative Babauta, you may proceed.

Representative Babauta: Mr. Speaker, if that is the case then I would recommend that we leave this on the Calendar and wait for the author to explain the rationale behind this asking us to support and at the same time requesting the Speaker to reject.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Representative Benavente, recognized.

Representative Benavente: With that Mr. Speaker, I move to defer action.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Is there an objection to deferring action.

There was no objection on the floor.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, it seems there is conflicting information and perhaps maybe we can for cautions sake wait for the author to return from his trip. If there is no objection from the members I move to withdraw my motion at this time.

Representative Benavente: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my motion as well.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Okay, the motion to reject Sen. Comm. 16-148 has been withdrawn and we will defer action until Representative Quitugua comes back in the next session. Vice Speaker, recognized.

Representative Deleon Guerrero: Was the original motion to reject only for Sen. Comm. 16-148 or did it include Sen. Comm. 16-150?

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Only for Sen. Comm. 16-148.

Representative Deleon Guerrero: Thank you.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A motion to reject and move to conference committee H. B. No. 16-179, HD1, SD1 reference to Sen. Comm. 16-150.

H. B. NO. 16-179, HD1, SD1 reference to SEN. COMM. 16-150: (4/16/09) Returning H. B. NO. 16-179, HD1 (Amending the Probation Reform Act) which was passed by the Senate with amendments on April 15, 2009. [*For action on Senate amendments*]

The motion was seconded.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: The motion is to reject the Senate amendments on H. B. No. 16-179, HD1 has been seconded. Discussion on the motion. Representative Babauta, recognized.

Representative Babauta: May I ask the author what is the---

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Representative Santos, recognized.

Representative Santos: There was a proposed amendment from the Senate side. This is the Probation Reform Act, which I had not anticipated and without compromising the original intent of the bill we are hoping that with the conference committee we could iron out the differences.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Are there any further discussion? Ready for the question. Representative Sablan, recognized.

Representative Sablan: Can I just ask for further clarification from the author of the bill what her concerns were with the proposed Senate amendments?

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Representative Santos, recognized.

Representative Santos: I do not like the proposed amendment basically. If you have not seen it, it should be in your packet. I do not subscribe to additional fines in a form of a percentage and the way it was written there was no justification or rationale as to why or how they came to that proposed amendment to the probation act.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Representative Sablan, do you want to take a short recess.

Representative Sablan: Yes.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Short recess.

*The House recessed at 10:05 a.m.*

*RECESS*

*The House reconvened at 10:13 a.m.*

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: We are back to plenary session. Before we went on recess we were discussing Sen. Comm. 16-150 and there is a motion on the floor to reject and we under discussion. Are we ready?

Several members voiced ready and motion to reject Sen. Comm. 16-150 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Let me appoint the conferees for this legislation. Representatives Santos, Benavente, and Reyes will serve on this conference committee.

### **HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS**

HSE. COMM. 16-105: (4/9/09) From Representative Ralph Torres informing the Speaker that he will be off-island fro April 21 – 24, 2009.

HSE. COMM. 16-106: (5/5/09) From Representative Quitugua informing the Speaker that he will out of the office from May 7-15, 2009.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Representative Sablan, recognized.

Representative Sablan: Can we go back to Governor’s Communications if there is no objection.

There were no objections on the floor the House returned back to Governor’s Communications

### **MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR**

GOV. COMM. 16-353: (4/15/09) Informing the House that he signed into law H. B. NO. 16-145, HD2 (To mandate the Commonwealth Government to prioritize and pay the retirement employer contributions of government employees who are eligible to retire.) [Became Public Law 16-36]

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GOV. COMM. 16-373: (5/5/09) Second Interim Report – Constitutional Authority to Declare a State of Disaster Emergency with respect to the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (EO's 2008-13 thru 2009-03). [Report attached to communication on the Legislature's network]

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GOV. COMM. 16-375: (5/6/09) Informing the House that he signed into law H. B. NO. 16-129, HS1, HD2 (FY 2009 Tobacco Control Fund Appropriations). [Became Public Law 16-39]

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Representative Sablan, please proceed.

Representative Sablan: This is on Gov. Comm. 16-375, I just want to get some clarification from the members about the legislative changes that the Governor was requesting. He indicates in his communication that he had received assurances that there would be amendments to this law forthcoming and I just wanted to ask for some clarification as to what those amendments would be from the members who are privy to that.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Vice Speaker, recognized.

Representative Deleon Guerrero: Mr. Speaker, I would need to get a copy of the bill that proposes the amendment. There were two concerns ---

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Short recess.

*The House recessed at 10:15 a.m.*

*(At this time, Representative Hofschneider took his seat in the Chamber.)*

**RECESS**

*The House reconvened at 10:19 a.m.*

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: We are back to plenary session. So clarified, Representative Sablan?

Representative Sablan: Yes.

### **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE JUDICIAL BRANCH**

JUD. BR. COMM. 16-15: (3/27/09) Certification for replacement hire within the Supreme Court.

JUD. BR. COMM. 16-16: (4/27/09) Submitting for legislative review and consideration the Proposed Addition to the Commonwealth Rules of Civil Procedure – Dormant Docket for Mortgage Foreclosure Proceedings. [Deadline: 6/26/09] (*Referred to the Committee on Judiciary & Government Operations*)

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Please note on JUD. BR. COMM. 16-16 I have assigned this matter up to the Committee on Judiciary and Government Operations (JGO) to look into this and report back. Representative Stanley Torres, recognized.

Representative Stanley Torres: May I ask the Chair of the JGO to keep track of the timing of this communication. This is a very important and it could be a serious---

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Of course, there is a self-executing deadline and so of course the JGO Committee will report back before that time.

Representative Santos: We will report that out before June 26<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Thank you. Have the record reflect that Representative Hofschneider is hereby present.

## COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE NMI DELEGATE

NONE

## COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

DEPT./AGCY. COMM. 16-84: (4/20/09) From BOE Chairwoman Lucy Blanco-Maratita and PSS Commissioner Rita Sablan with regard to the Legislative Summit scheduled for April 30, 2009.

DEPT./AGCY. COMM. 16-85: (4/16/09) From NMIRF Administrator Mark A. Aguon concerning double-dipping.

DEPT./AGCY. COMM. 16-86: (4/16/09) From NMIRF Administrator Mark A. Aguon with regard to obligations to the Worker's Compensation Commission (WCC).

*There were no discussions under this item of the Agenda.*

## OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

MISC. COMM. 16-71: (4/14/09) From Mayor Juan B. Tudela certifying to the vacant position of an Accountant be filled pursuant to P.L. 16-32, § 604(b).

MISC. COMM. 16-72: (4/14/09) From Mayor Juan B. Tudela certifying to the vacant position of an Executive Secretary be filled pursuant to P.L. 16-32, § 604(b).

MISC. COMM. 16-73: (4/15/09) From Co-Chair Antonio M. Tudela, APILG, regarding the Association's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Pacific Mayors' Conference to be held next month.

MISC. COMM. 16-74: (Undated) From the Association of Mariana Islands Mayors (AMIM), Vice Mayors and Elected Municipal Council Members transmitting a certified copy of Resolution 2008-24 regarding fees assed to boaters entering the CNMI.

MISC. COMM. 16-75: (4/22/09) From the CNMI Nursing Association President Lee Castro to Rep. Tebuteb seeking funding support from the Saipan Delegation in the amount of \$35, 0000 for the APNLC Conference.

*There were no discussions under this item of the Agenda.*

## REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

S. C. R. NO. 16-85: Reporting on H. R. NO. 16-42, entitled, "To acknowledge the enactment of the Northern Mariana Island Immigration, Security, and Labor Act as set forth in Public Law 110-229 on May 8, 2008; to express concerns about the economic impact of this Act on the Commonwealth economy; to recognize the Governor's Statement on June 24, 2008, regarding the Act; and to support the Governor's action in seeking further legal advice before initiating any litigation challenging the Act in federal courts." *Your Committee on United States and Foreign Relations recommends the filing of H. R. NO. 16-42.*

S. C. R. NO. 16-86: Reporting on H. B. NO. 16-127, entitled, "To amend 2 CMC § 4324(c); and for other purposes." *Your Committee on Natural Resources recommends the filing of H. B. NO. 16-127.*

S. C. R. NO. 16-87: Reporting on S. B. NO. 16-42, entitled, “To amend Public Law 15-2 to reinstate the board of directors to oversee the Department of Public Lands within the Executive Branch; and for other purposes.” *Your Committee on Natural Resources recommends filing of S. B. NO. 16-42.*

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-85 reporting on H. R. No. 16-42 recommendation for filing.

The motion was seconded.

S. C. R. NO. 16-85: Reporting on H. R. NO. 16-42, entitled, “To acknowledge the enactment of the Northern Mariana Island Immigration, Security, and Labor Act as set forth in Public Law 110-229 on May 8, 2008; to express concerns about the economic impact of this Act on the Commonwealth economy; to recognize the Governor’s Statement on June 24, 2008, regarding the Act; and to support the Governor’s action in seeking further legal advice before initiating any litigation challenging the Act in federal courts.” *Your Committee on United States and Foreign Relations recommends the filing of H. R. NO. 16-42.*

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: The motion has been seconded, discussion on the motion. Ready for the question.

Representative Babauta voiced ready and the motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-85 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. A motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-86 reporting on H. B. No. 16-127, recommendation for filing.

The motion was seconded.

S. C. R. NO. 16-86: Reporting on H. B. NO. 16-127, entitled, “To amend 2 CMC § 4324(c); and for other purposes.” *Your Committee on Natural Resources recommends the filing of H. B. NO. 16-127.*

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: The motion has been seconded, discussion on the motion. Ready.

Several members voiced ready and the motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-86 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. A motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-87, reporting on S. B. No. 16-42 recommendation for filing.

The motion was seconded.

S. C. R. NO. 16-87: Reporting on S. B. NO. 16-42, entitled, “To amend Public Law 15-2 to reinstate the board of directors to oversee the Department of Public Lands within the Executive Branch; and for other purposes.” *Your Committee on Natural Resources recommends filing of S. B. NO. 16-42.*

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: The motion was seconded, discussion on the motion. Representative Sablan, recognized.

Representative Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do feel that this recommendation to file the bill does deserve some discussion. In reviewing the committee report it appears that the reason why the Committee is recommending not reinstating the Board for the Department of Public Lands (DPL) is because there have been past abuses and I am certainly not quarrelling with that finding, I think we all know that, but the proposal has been made primarily I think because there continues to be abuses with the current system that has been set up by with our Department of Public Lands. I would like to hear from the Committee if there had been consideration in terms of how (*End of Tape 1, Side A*) (*Start of Tape 1, Side B*) it could be prevented or at least reasonably controlled. I guess I will rest with that.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Representative Tebuteb, recognized.

Representative Tebuteb: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the Committee had discussed at length the concerns raised by Representative Sablan, although, there is supposedly an existing Advisory Board to the Public Lands. I believe this body also had attempted to get clarification on what is the function, if it does exist, what have the Advisory Board done, with respect to concerns raised by this body. The proposed amendment on this legislation includes for example, Section 6, the Resident Department Head. I believe this body has passed legislation not specific on the Governor’s Communication that vetoed this amendment in this particular Senate Bill. So we are basically trying to bring back the Board. The Committee feels that there still needs to be additional information that needs to be gathered in order to move on with this. So we have these two issues.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Representative Sablan, you still have the floor.

Representative Sablan: Thank you. In reviewing the report as well as the attachments that came with the Report, it seems to me that – that this is a good time and a good opportunity to do a more comprehensive review of our land use program and the management of our public lands. There have been controversies that have arisen with respect to the Homestead Program and also the Marpi development project is one example, there has been controversy on Tinian and I am sure on Rota as well. The Secretary of Pubic Lands, himself, notes that if we are concern of how they are managing the homestead program and I would add to that it is not just homesteads, but all public lands in the Commonwealth, then we should inquire about that concern and I think that we should. There are specific concerns that have been expressed over the years, but also in recent history and this is, maybe, a good time to commence a formal hearing and revisit the issue in terms of how to improve governance with our Public Lands Department. I realize there is an Advisory Board, but I do not think any appointments have ever been made and there is still a continuing concern I think that – that there are no checks and balances and that the Department is openly politicized with the current system in placed. So how can we fix that? I am not sure that filing this bill will be the answer, if anything, I think we are missing an opportunity.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: That is a very good observation. I think other members have expressed concerns to the Committee but I will let the Committee Chair see if he can explain it. Without objection, I am going to come down to the floor and share my thoughts on this as well.

There was no objection on the floor.

Representative Deleon Guerrero: In order, per the Speaker's instructions, it will be Representative Hofschneider, followed by Representative Benavente and then Speaker Palacios. Please proceed, Representative Hofschneider.

Representative Hofschneider: I think, Mr. Speaker and members that historically we have very good examples or data to reflect on both governance of Public Lands when it was in placed in the Constitution as Marianas Public Land Corporation (MPLC) and then moving on to where it is now abiding with the constitutional provision that after twelve years it shall be transferred to the Executive Branch. The corpus itself has been dissolved but the fundamental policies are still intact. We have seen that under the Froilan Tenorio Administration the first Administration of all public lands and I recall when Representative Benavente was the Speaker then, we had to stop the sitting Governor because of that – the specific example will be the World Corporation lease, whereby, they decided to divvy up - the minimum requirement under the constitution for legislative process and that is five hectares. So they divided it up to two parcels of 4.99 hectares and that is the beginning of where the governance lies. In my view and personal observation and understanding of what should really be considered is not so much in reinstating the Board and having qualified people to sit who are truly convicted to looking at the future of public lands in the interest of the people of the Commonwealth and future generations, what is alarming is the dwindling and diminishing public land availability. Yet the significant increase in cost of administering public lands under the current system, it has in fact evolve 200% if I am not mistaken in terms of personnel cost. So there is very little money going to the investment requirement under the Constitution and the receiver of those incomes, Marianas Public Lands Trust (MPLT). So we are not looking at the highest yield for the interest of the people. In summary, Mr. Speaker and members, is, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) in the beginning of the Froilan Administration was asked to come in and look at and assess the purpose of land exchanges for instance, that have been widely abused during that period. And GAO found that the under assessment, under evaluation of Public Land in that period, the public lost over \$90 million of potential income as a result of discrepancy in policy, they were focusing on policy. So I think we need to start looking outside the box. It is not so much the governance of a Board or the governance of a singular decision making under the current system which the Governor, himself, with the advice of DPL can execute and dispose and management however, they seem appropriate under the provided enabling law that we have, there is where the problem lies. We need to fine tune those governance, those prescribe rules and regulations or laws governing consistent with the fundamental policies still intact under the old MPLC provision. I think that one of the most glaring examples would be the lack of public participation for considering land leases that is the cornel of the argument. We are looking at the highest yield and that is the basic tenant for considering leasing public land for what ever number of years maximally forty years. So again, I understand because some of us that were – what Legislature Representative Benavente, when you were the Speaker?

Representative Benavente: Ninth.

Representative Hofschneider: So from that on, I think it has been a good twelve years we have not really shift our understanding or responsibility on accountability of all public lands. In fact, we are deteriorating in terms of policy. So I think that we should focus on the governance providing for

changes in the Constitution for instance, that allows public participation because of the diminishing availability of public lands – what do we do with the remaining public lands, and how do we shift that interest of investors to public or private land so that they also partake in the economic development, not because the government, the public land is under-evaluated or under-appraised it is ridiculous – government property is averaging \$70 a square meter versus \$100 to \$300 for a wetland for instance. So I think my personal opinion is that it is not so much the governance of reinstating the Board or under the current prescription, but focus on what can be done and how to deal with disposition management of public lands. Thank you.

Representative Deleon Guerrero: Thank you, Representative Hofschneider. Representative Benavente, you now have the floor.

Representative Benavente: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If you notice even with the outmost respect that I have for my Chairman and the members of the Committee, I did not sign the Committee Report because I respectfully disagreed with the members of the Committee that signed. As Representative Hofschneider had pointed out, it has been too long ago but I remembered being part of the Legislature when MPLC was abolished by Governor Tenorio. We went through a period of this current system where the Department as managed by the Governor it got so bad that I was in the Legislature still when we decided that enough was enough and we reinstated the Department feeling that our founding fathers of our Constitution were right that land being so critical for our people it needed to be removed from many political interference and created this independent body. So we recreated the Board once again to remove the politics, the individual person, the Governor, in administering the public lands and the lands that are owned by our people and then of course recent issues that made us change it back to where we are at again. I did not sign the Committee Report once again because I disagreed because I have seen the different periods in which this current system versus the old system had worked and I continue to feel that we will be a lot better off or the lands that are owned by our people will be better off if it was managed by an independent body. I realize that we have some failures in that system as well, but I believe that there are opportunities and possibilities in recreating this body, and the policies required of this body to manage properly our public lands. I was ready actually to vote “no” if the Speaker was going to ask on the voice vote of the decision of this Committee Report, but I am not sure and I do not even have the answers myself as to what to do next, what I have to offer as a resolution here, but I really do believe that we need to sit as a body with the Senate and come up with a system or a way the best we can to bring not necessarily MPLC back but remove the authority that the Administration as the Governor has in dealing with the public lands. Thank you.

Representative Deleon Guerrero: Thank you, Representative Benavente. Speaker Palacios, you now have the floor.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Thank you. I was a member in the Fifteenth Legislature when the Marianas Public Lands Authority (MPLA) was abolished, Public Law 15-2, and recreated the present system. I have attended the numerous public hearings that were held on the legislation itself. The crocks of the move to change from an Autonomous Agency to what is an Agency under the Executive Branch was basically because of the widespread allegations of abuses of the system by the Board of Directors. It was always my belief the way the Board was set up was not really the problem but it was the Board members and that to me if we are going to fix the system we should have created some criminal penalties and have every individual member of the then MPLA be personally liable for any misdeeds. So the reason why I believe this legislation is now being proposed is that there seems to be some allegations of the same improprieties from then when it was under a Board to now being in the system that it is in. Unfortunately, the legislation itself did not

have – I believe it was too simple it just did a global amendment from the existing Department of Public Lands and it just creating a Board without guidelines. And Representative Hofschneider and also Representative Benavente is saying is that we need to have a real guideline for this Body to function and give it independence and values of the public lands and the duties that it should have and that is the shortcomings of this legislation. The idea that we should have Autonomy is something that I believe we should insist on, but the legislation before us unfortunately did not dwell to making those specific prescriptions to protect public lands and have the highest and best use when we are leasing out public lands. I know that Representative Ralph Torres was very concerned about this and had confronted me and requested that the Chair hold off and withdraw the Committee Report until perhaps he can come up with a substitute legislation which will address in a substantial manner the issues that are arising under the Department of Public Lands. I hope that he does take on this task and revisit the whole issue of how we are going to put an institution to administer and manage public lands. Thank you.

Representative Deleon Guerrero: Thank you. Representative Tebuteb, then Representative Ralph Torres, and then Representative Sablan. Representative Tebuteb, you now have the floor.

Representative Tebuteb: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had asked Representative Babauta to hold off on his comments after observing the three Speakers speaking. The Committee had looked at all angles coming up with this Report and the decision it was not only an one time committee meeting that the formulation of what to do with the bill, whether to file it or pass it came as a result of a number of committee meetings and thus the result is, to file it as a result of a number of committee meetings. This Body passed legislation that penalizes the expenditure authority personally liable. There is an Office of the Public Auditor (OPA) reports I believe it is attached on some of these misdeeds. As a result of whether a decision for a one person to decide land matter or Board members or a number of people to decide on land matters are attached to the report. Whether there are abuses or non-abuses the OPA report 95-18 indicates with the former Executive Director the matter has been resolved outside the Courts. In most of the OPA report it has been directed at Board members. So the decision for the members to go for or against was not a one time meeting. Those concerns raised by the former Speaker and the Speaker are very valid. If you look at the purpose in this particular bill it uses homestead as an example to facilitate this bill to bring back the Board. It use the word “hope” I will read it: The purpose of this Act is to reinstate a Board to the Department while keeping the Department within the Executive Branch in hope that the Board will be more responsive to the wishes of the people of Northern Marianas Descent (NMD) within the Commonwealth. So it uses “hope”. The Committee looked at the different reports from OPA angled it in such that not only a one time meeting the decision to go for or against this bill, and thus that is why we have this Committee Report. Thank you.

Representative Deleon Guerrero: Representative Ralph Torres, you now have the floor.

Representative Ralph Torres: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, we hear both sides, but the bottom line is that it does not matter if it is this Secretary of Public Lands or the next one giving it to one person to dictate the island of the CNMI is totally wrong in my point of view. You take the Board of Directors and have them go into a meeting and you decide what to do with the property that we have in the CNMI, at least, for myself there is accountability and there is a form of checks and balance. Just the idea and the approach of giving one person to decide what is going to happen to the Beach Road, at Rota, in Marpi, at any property, now if we are going to go in and look at how many more public lands that is available and yet you have one person to decide that – that is going to make a difference as the time goes by even more. That is why even in this report I disagree with the

Committee Report, although I do respect their Committee they had done their share on what they believe their approach in this issue although, I do not share the same sentiment. Thank you.

Representative Deleon Guerrero: Before I go back to Representative Sablan, are there any other members that have not spoken who would like to speak? Representative Apatang, you now have the floor.

Representative Apatang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was not here when they deliberated this in the Committee and I did not sign it, but if I was present at the committee meeting I would sign this report. Some of us had been here for a very long time we know what is happening. How many times we had complained about the situation at Public Lands. It does not make any difference as to whether one person or ten people deciding. There is a law that governs. They have to abide with the regulations and the law. Now, if one person disregards the law they should be prosecuted. The same with the Board if there is ten people on the Board and they violated the law they should be prosecuted. It does not matter whether you put twenty Board members to decide on public lands issues. They are things that they decide that are priorities. We have experienced this in the past and it is still ongoing. I believe the audit is still ongoing about Public Lands itself. So let us just leave it alone. The Committee recommends that this bill be filed and I am supporting it 100%. Let us file it. Let the law decide. Let them be governed by the law and the regulations. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am a member of the Natural Resources and I too did not sign this Committee Report. Not so much for but I have an enormous respect for the Chairman and the committee members and I do recall many of the discussions. But there is a fundamental difference between having a Department Head and Board members. Board members have to comply with the Open Government Act, they have to announce their meetings, and they have to conduct their discussions publicly. A Department Head can decide short of the requirements of the Constitution on the square footage of a property, can decide how that property is going to be disposed off and Department Heads are not subject to impeachment by the Legislature you can have an oversight committee call a Department Head and answer questions to show of actual violation of criminal actions there is very little that you can impose upon that Department Head. Board members have a fiduciary duty which is the highest form of duty and trust imposed on Board members and can be removed and can be personally liable for violating that fiduciary duty. So there is a fundamental difference between Department Heads and Board members. And it is the policy of the Legislature often times for expedience and efficiency create a Department Head to handle public land, I understand that and often times when they seek to have more discussions and accountability they create a Board. And there is a bigger issue in regards to the ownership of land that is the part that we are missing here. This systemic – it is cold it is hot we still have not decided the bigger issue what we are going to do with the ownership of property in the CNMI. There are very controversial points of view shared by members of this august body and until we decide what to do with that bigger issue we are going to continue to go back and forth between Department Heads and Board members. But stating specifically to the Committee Report there are fundamental differences between Department Heads and Board members. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Thank you. Representative Hocog, you have the floor.

Representative Hocog: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I make any decision on what my vote will be I would like to ask the Legal Counsel the legal opinion with the Department of Public Land. Is it a line item Department at this point in time or it is a Department that has been put under the

Executive Branch but still being considered that have autonomy on its disposition of public land? I would like to find that out before I make that decision. (*End of Tape 1, Side B*) (*Beginning of Tape 2, Side A*)

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Legal Counsel, recognized.

Legal Counsel Joe Taijeron: I would have to get Public Law 15-82 to respond to that in detail I can briefly get that so I will look at the language and show you precisely how it is define.

Representative Hocog: Can I then ask for a short recess on that matter?

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Short recess.

*The House recessed at 10:50 a.m.*

*RECESS*

*The House reconvened at 11:00 a.m.*

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: We are back to plenary session. Representative Hocog posed a query to the Legal Counsel and asked for a short recess. Legal Counsel, are you ready?

Legal Counsel Joe Taijeron: Yes, Mr. Speaker. As I read Public Law 15-2 Section 101, the Department of Public Lands it reads, “The Department of Public Lands is hereby established within the Executive Branch to manage and administer the Commonwealth’s public lands under the provisions of Article XI of the Constitution...” it continues on “except as provided in this Act all powers and duties assigned to the Marianas Public Land Authority by existing statute shall be assigned to the Department of Public Lands hereinafter the Department”. My reading of this means to answer Representative Hocog’s question is the second under the words that he used under the Department or line Department it is not another Branch of the government it exist solely within the Executive Branch.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Okay. Representative Hocog, you still hold the floor.

Representative Hocog: Well, Mr. Speaker if it is a line Department I think what do we consider the Department of Lands and Natural Resources then? Do we require establishing a Board to govern the Administration of the Department of Lands and Natural Resources? Also what is the difference between the Department of Lands and Natural Resources and the Department of Public Lands?

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Is that a question posed to the Legal Counsel?

Representative Hocog: No, I am just putting out a comparison Mr. Speaker. If it a Department in the Executive Branch that the differences with the Department of Public Land and the Department of Natural Resources is totally in a way have variations, but Public Lands strictly deals with the land resources and for me I guess that it will be a prudent guideline to have people that can oversee the disposition of public lands rather than a one man team. The argument of self-enrichment whether is a single man handling the Department or like Representative Apatang had said, twenty member, it lies with the individual and of course in the past there were members of Public Lands when there was a Board are paying their dues because of misspending of the entities funds. Probably the importance of having the Department of Public Lands fall under the Executive Branch is, perhaps to

expedite and get away from bureaucracies of decision makers as a result of Board members to have conflicts amongst interested applicants trying to get public lands. But again, it all depends of the individual that is managing or administering the public land management. I will like to see a Board created back that will ensure fairness and without having rampant dispositions of people that get favors for opportunity for government land lease and at the same time Board members can also create bureaucracies in advancing development because of many conflicting interest. So this is a judgment call by each of the members. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Let me recognize, Representative Reyes.

Representative Reyes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Looking at the findings on the bill and one caught me which is, that the Agency had too much autonomy and is now being operated by a single Secretary and it highlights some problems and concerns that have been expressed with the administration of Public Lands. Perhaps the real problem here is that maybe the Secretary himself is tasked to do so much and considering that we had for many years and up until now we still got problems with land compensations. The homestead is another issue and with all the leases for a single person – and I agree with Representative Ralph Torres that for a single person to make this decision and make a call and considering that the public lands are owned by the public is necessary. The reason I say other than the Constitution and I have seen some letters here whereby there are some problems of collection still remaining and perhaps the present Secretary is doing his job but there is still not enough effort. These are multiple tasks that is being handled by one person and if the Board just do not work they can be replaced and I think having more heads than one in deciding the fate or the disposition of land matters that we have here would be to the best interest everybody, but it appears that the Department of Public Lands does have a lot of problems right now on his hands. So I can go either way, but the thing is we need to get down to the core of this. What is really the problem and what is holding back everything? Is it not having a Board and having it decided by one person or would it be easier and more convenient to have a Board in placed to make decisions for everybody? In fact, I am proposing a bill actually on the land compensation matters similar to this bill because it is just taking too long and if the Secretary or whomever cannot decide and have a certified listing for all the land compensation claims, perhaps the Board would be given another ninety days to come up with something and have this issue out of the way. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Thank you. Vice Speaker, you now have the floor.

Representative Deleon Guerrero: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize for prolonging the agony here. This raised a lot of decisions and relevant concerns that is involved with regards to the management and disposition of public lands. We have seen this agency morphed from what was an autonomous agency which were given a lot of powers to the point that the Legislature could not even review or approve its budget and from then on it is supposed to be a line agency now, but we still see a lot of the inherent benefits of the autonomous agency still in effect today, the Legislature does not review and approve its budget. So it is interesting and I am boggled that it is a line agency still with benefits of an autonomous agency. Perhaps, we should look at this agency comprehensively. If it is as the Constitution proposes it was intended to be a line agency at what eleven – twelve years from the time it was created, then those benefits should not be there anymore. We should look at that. But we should also be mindful that it is responsible for the management and disposition of the most important natural resources that we have and we should be careful if we do propose to have a Board to ensure that the Boards are accountable should the fiduciary responsibility of the Board be still in placed. One thing that we have to be mindful as I think Representative Hocog had pointed with Boards, when it was autonomous the Board was a governing Board and rightly so, now that it is a line agency and most line agencies only have Advisory Boards because

due to the nature of what it is, a line agency, it is in the Executive Branch, the Governor does have authority over the Executive Branch and most Boards overseeing line agencies are advisory capacities. So those are things we should be mindful of I just wanted to point that out. But it is unique in a sense and that it is subject to abuse and perhaps having fiduciary responsibilities in placed for the Board would be appropriate. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Representative Dela Cruz, you now have the floor.

Representative Dela Cruz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will try to make this very short. First of all, I want to say that I do agree with Representative Apatang. It really does not matter whether you have twenty or even a hundred Board members in an agency versus one. DPL right now is still in its infancy. It is fairly new in its existence as compared to MPLC or MPLA that has been in existence for decades. So the question of whether we should get Boards back in to Public Lands is – I will say a policy call on each and every one of us. But we also have to remember that it has to be the right people put in placed and who are the right people, we do not know. In comparing the Department of Public Lands or MPLA – we look at the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC). CUC used to have Board members, what happened to CUC, it ran through the ground, it collapsed. The Board members had a fiduciary duty to ensure that those power generators are maintained. But look what had happen. Why was MPLA abolished? Each and every one of us knew why. They were basically having this thing with expenditures, self-gratification, and that is why it was abolished. Mr. Speaker, again, I believe DPL is still new. We as members here should take a look at that and say, maybe we should give him more time, the author of Senate Bill 16-42, and I believe his main concerns was the Homesteading Program for his Senatorial District. A week or so ago four hundred twenty sum homesteads were given out. I wonder if his concerns have been met. I wonder whether he still have the same concerns on Senate Bill 16-42 that he had then, does he still have it now. If there is a problem with DPL then let us analyze and look what the exact problems are. I believe the author again, had very big concerns with his Senatorial Districts Homesteading program. I believe that has been satisfied. Again, I think and I keep repeating myself, but the Department of Public Lands is still in its infancy, Mr. Speaker and we should give it a chance to grow. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Thank you. Representative Benavente, you have the floor for the last time.

Representative Benavente: Thank you. It is my second time and it should be my last time. I do feel the need to speak one more time since there were concerns raised earlier by Representative Hocog and now Representative Dela Cruz as to the examples that they raised. For example, because we are now looking at the Department of Public Lands as a line agency, should we now be thinking about a Board for the Department of Lands and Natural Resources or should we look at the examples of CUC. The comment I made earlier was actually that point that we should not look at the creation of Public Land and compare it to the creation of CUC or the need to create a Board for the other agencies. That is not what the founding fathers of the Constitution looked at. They created all these Agencies and Departments without the need to create a Board. But knowing as everyone has talked about already the importance of it and the Vice Speaker said, the most important natural resources that we have in our Commonwealth in public lands, our lands, the peoples lands, we cannot be compared to CUC and the Department of Lands and Natural Resources and that is what our Constitution put up. I think it is – I do not want to say it was a mistake, but to allow the provision that would have remove the MPLA at the time – but more importantly the foresight that our founding fathers of the Constitution saw the importance of this natural resources the public lands they saw the need to create this independent body this fourth branch of government if you will that

will deal strictly with our land matters. It is too important and it should not be compared to CUC. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Representative Hofschneider, you have the floor for the last time.

Representative Hofschneider: For the last time, Mr. Speaker and members. I am going to pick off where Representative Benavente made an observation that for the longest time it was under MPLC and then now DPL and I will pick off also on Representative Dela Cruz's comments. In the beginning Adam and Even was told of the forbidden fruit and lo and behold they were tempted to try the forbidden fruit we are all sinners. In the beginning MPLC restricted politicizing land issues. In the beginning it was removed essentially creating a fourth branch that after twelve years it was relieved and lo and behold the penetration of special interest and impropriety revealed itself more than when it was in placed as MPLC. This is a community that is still growing and learning how to govern itself and anywhere you go on this earth land is an issue. Now, one of the most basic requirement that MPLC, MPLA, and now DPL is charged with and have not come up with is a land use plan, which I refer to the statement made earlier by the Floor Leader. What do we do? We cannot make heads or tails on what to do with the remaining public land because there is no fundamental land use plan and that is where we are. As far as the infractions of Boards and individual persons, those are pretty easy to deal with through this Body and I go back to my good friend, Representative Apatang's comments, that it does not matter if there is twenty heads or one head, I say, I agree with Representative Apatang having seen twenty heads here, have we produced something significant to attest to that statement. I move to end debate.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Let me give the last to Representative Sablan. Representative Sablan, you have to limit it and move on.

Representative Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I will try to keep this brief as well. I agree with the sentiments of the members who have called for a more comprehensive review of our land use program and our public lands department. I think that it is absolutely critical right now to carry out a hearing or a series of hearings to review the way that we have been managing and disposing of public lands in the Commonwealth. I would like to ask on the record, Mr. Speaker and Chairman Tebuteb, if we could commence a formal hearing, however, we dispose of this committee report and this Senate Bill I think that the questions remain that really deserve further scrutiny and answer with respect to whether or not we should structure a governing Board or even simply an Advisory Board so that we do not have person who is politically appointed deciding on the issue of how to manage and dispose of public lands that is an important question that we should be considering. We already have an example that was produced from our own House and granted that it has not been signed into law, but the Healthcare Corporation bill gives us an example of a way to restructure a Board that is charge with very critical responsibilities so that we can prevent abuses. For example, the Healthcare Corporation Board would be voluntary they would not be compensated, restrictions are placed on travel outside of the Commonwealth, they are considered fiduciaries, there are professional qualifications of the members, and they are charge with responsibility for strategic planning and there is also a mandate in that to develop a long term plan for health in that bill. We can do the same for public lands. Require the same types of qualifications of our Board members take away any compensations, restrict travel, those were the sources of abuses in the past we can prevent that in the future. Then the same thing for the requirement for policy and planning I am continually disturbed by the absence of any updated land use plan from our Department of Public Lands. They are mandated by the Constitution to develop and adopt a land use plan that should involve public input and the fact that there have been repeated request from the members and community for a copy of this land use plan that have gone ignored is a major concern. There was a public meeting on

Tuesday with members of the community, with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and representatives from DPL, the Coastal Resources Management (CRM), and the Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and the request was made even then. Where is this land use plan and we were told that, it was somewhere in the office, no one was sure where, it had been fifteen years since anybody really looked at it, they were thinking about updating it, but we do not really know what the plan is, and my fear is that, there is really no plan. If there were a plan that involves the community that had buy in from the community and from the leadership we would not have problems like, what was going on with Marpi, where this here is a major sighting that has proceeded without a permit, proceeded without a single public hearing, really and we are hearing mixed stories from DPL. On the hand I hear from their Planning Director they are processing homestead lots and getting ready to issue out numbers, on the other hand the Secretary is saying, oh no do not worry about that it is just a clean up. The same think with Banzai, apparently there are efforts underway now to do a similar type of clearing in the Banzai area, for what purpose I am not sure, we would know that if there was a land use plan. There are other concerns too, not just with homesteads and the lack of a plan I am curious to know whether the Department of Public Lands has made any transfers to the Public Lands Trust---

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Representative Sablan, your point is very well taken please wrap it up.

Representative Sablan: Yes, I am getting to the end. Really the point that I am trying to make is more of a request. I think that there are very urgent questions that need to be examined formally on the record and before the public and before our community and I would like to ask for a hearing however we dispose of this committee report we should not rest with this and we should perceive with legislation inquiry to the matter.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, since this is your Committee Report you will have one minute.

Representative Tebuteb: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The point that the Committee is trying make is based on the bill. There are basically two things on the bill whatever they are some of the members has stated that. Representative Deleon Guerrero pointed a little towards that direction on the funding that DPL has is only for informational purposes on our end. As we speak there is pre-judgment and post-judgment interest that accumulates on this government on land compensation. So the two areas that this bill is addressing is already addressed in the committee report and it is a cut and paste provision that did not work that this bill is talking about and it is covered in the committee report. It is a cut and paste provision did not work as illustrated by this committee report reflective of OPA, is it special interest, maybe. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold I. Palacios: Ready for the question.

There was a division on the floor when the Speaker called for the voice vote for the adoption of S. C. R. No. 16-87 reporting on S. B. NO. 16-42. The Speaker instructed the Clerk for the call of the roll.

The Clerk called the roll on the motion to adopt S. C. R. No. 16-87 reporting on S. B. NO. 16-42.

Representative Edwin P. Aldan	yes
Representative David M. Apatang	yes
Representative Oscar M. Babauta	yes
Representative Diego T. Benavente	no

Representative Joseph N. Camacho	no
Representative Francisco S. Dela Cruz	yes
Representative Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero	yes
Representative Victor B. Hocog	no
Representative Heinz S. Hofschneider	no
Representative Raymond D. Palacios	absent excused
Representative Justo S. Quitugua	absent excused
Representative Joseph C. Reyes	no
Representative Christina M. Sablan	no
Representative Edward T. Salas	absent excused
Representative Rosemond B. Santos	absent during voting
Representative Ramon A. Tebuteb	yes
Representative Ralph DLG. Torres	no
Representative Stanley T. McGinnis Torres	yes
Representative Ray N. Yumul	absent during voting
Speaker Arnold I. Palacios	no

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion to adopt S. C. R. No. 16-87 reporting on S. B. NO. 16-42 hereby fails. Representative Tebuteb, recognized.

Representative Tebuteb: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think we have discussed this report at length so what will happen now is that this bill will be on the Calendar (*End of Tape 2, Side A*) (*Beginning of Tape 2, Side B*)

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Hofschneider, recognized.

Representative Hofschneider: I like to request that the Chairman reconsiders that idea and refer this bill back to the Committee and take what has been discussed and massage the bill in a way that we can broaden the scope of the enabling Act of DPL. I think that everyone “Nay” or “Aye” on this bill had said something of merit that needs to be now be compiled and worked as an amendment to the bill and see how it comes out from the Committee. I therefore move to send the bill back to the Committee.

The motion was seconded.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: There is a motion to move the legislation back to Committee and has been seconded. Discussion on the motion. Before I recognize Representative Babauta I know that there was one member that is very adamant and he also shared his thoughts on this particular report and that is Representative Ralph Torres. My advice to him at that time was if he wants to take up that challenge Representative Torres and look at it, come up with a substitute bill to see if you can fix it and submit a different proposal. Representative Torres are you a member of the Committee?

Representative Ralph Torres: I wanted to Mr. Speaker, but I was not chosen, so the answer is no.

*(Laughter)*

Speaker Arnold Palacios: So there is a lot of interest as we have seen this morning in the wide-ranging discussions on this issue. So I believe that the issue continues to merit further discussion and needs to be looked at again so I will refer this back to the Committee with the instruction to Representative Ralph Torres to work with the Committee Chair within the Committee to come up with a substitute legislation and submit his recommendations. Representative Babauta, recognized.

Representative Babauta: I yield.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Okay, Representative Babauta yields, Representative Hofschneider, recognized.

Representative Hofschneider: I was going to recommend with all due respect to the Chairman on the Committee of Natural Resources to ask you Mr. Speaker under the authority of the Rules of the House to create a Special Committee specifically to look at in its entirety the DPL.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you for that recommendation. I will take that under advisement and submit a memorandum of instruction to the Committee Chair if that would be the route that the Chair would take. Representative Dela Cruz, recognized.

Representative Dela Cruz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to put my two cents on trying to put this legislation back to the Committee. No offense to any member of the Committee, but we are trying to send this back to the same Committee where some members had actually signed off on the filing of this legislation, but yet voted “no”. To me, I cannot comprehend. I do respect the decisions of any member on the floor to choose whatever decisions, but when you sign off on a committee report and then go against – I am speechless I am sorry, again I do not mean to offend any member here.

Representative Benavente: Point of clarification, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: State your point, Representative Benavente.

Representative Benavente: I do not think there is anybody that signed the report that voted against it.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: You are correct, Representative Benavente. In any event the Chair will take this matter and either recommend for a Special Committee to look into the whole issue or to refer it back to the Committee. Decision on this report finished. Let me ask if there is no objection to suspend any more discussions on the Standing Committee Reports and move on to the Resolution Calendar so we could dispose some of the resolutions and one particular bill.

There was no objection on the floor.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The remaining committee reports will remain on the Calendar, so without objections we will now move down Agenda Item 15.

## **REPORTS OF SPECIAL AND CONFERENCE COMMITTEES**

NONE

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

NONE

## **RESOLUTION CALENDAR**

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: A motion to adopt H. R. No. 16-81 in reference to the Department of Public Works.

The motion was seconded.

H. R. NO. 16-81: To request the Department of Public Works to draft and adopt a Right of Way Manual establishing uniform standard guidelines and procedures for acquiring private property for public highways in the Commonwealth.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion is for the adoption of H. R. No. 16-81, it has been seconded, discussion on the motion. Ready. Representative Sablan, recognized.

Representative Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have no objections to the resolution, but I did want to get some background from the author of the resolution as to why there has not been a right of way manual developed thus far at the Department of Public Works (DPW) especially if that is apparently a federal requirement. I see that the author is not here, but perhaps when he comes back he could provide that information.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Yes, he is not here. I remembered, Representative Babauta, I am sure that this issue came up even in the Fifteenth Legislature if I am not mistaken, please proceed.

Representative Babauta: I would recommend that we defer action.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Could we table this until the author comes back in? Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, since the author is not here to answer that question, perhaps to speed things along I withdraw my motion unless there is any objections from the members.

There was no objection on the floor to defer action on the adoption of H. R. No. 16-81.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion has been withdrawn we will come back to it. Floor Leader, next resolution.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been brought to my attention by Representative Aldan. A motion to adopt H. R. No. 16-88 in reference to the Late Honorable Howard Macaranas.

The motion was seconded.

H. R. NO. 16-88: Conveying the sincere condolences and sympathy of the House of Representatives to the bereaved family of the late Honorable Howard I. Macaranas on the occasion of his untimely passing and to pay fond tribute to his memory.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion to adopt H. R. No. 16-88, it has been seconded, discussion on the motion. Ready.

The motion to adopt H. R. No. 16-88 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Unless there is any objections and in the interest of time and these are generally of the same nature resolution extending sincere appreciation, I would like to make a motion adopt H. R. No. 16-82, H. R. No. 16-83, H. R. No. 16-83, H. R. No. 16-84, H. R. NO. 16-85, H. R. No. 16-86, and H. R. No. 16-87, and H. R. No. 16-89 in reference to the Manta Ray Saipan Southern High School.

The motion was seconded.

H. R. NO. 16-82: To recognize and extend sincere appreciation to Matson Navigation Company Inc., for assisting in facilitating the donation of various items to the CNMI.

H. R. NO. 16-83: To recognize and extend sincere appreciation to the Division of Customs of the Department of Finance for assisting in facilitating the donation of various items to the CNMI.

H. R. NO. 16-84: To recognize and extend sincere appreciation to Reach out Pacific (REPAC): President and Hawaii State Representative, Glenn Wakai for his assistance in facilitating the donation of various items to the CNMI..

H. R. NO. 16-85: To recognize and extend sincere appreciation to FAS Moving & Storage for assisting in facilitating the donation of various items to the CNMI.

H. R. NO. 16-86: To recognize and extend sincere appreciation to the Commonwealth Ports Authority for assisting in facilitating the donation of various items to the CNMI.

H. R. NO. 16-87: To recognize and extend sincere appreciation to Saipan Stevedore Company, Inc., for assisting in facilitating the donation of various items to the CNMI.

H. R. NO. 16-89: To commend and congratulate the Saipan Southern High School Manta Ray Band on their many achievements and outstanding performance at the 2009 Tumon Bay Music Festival.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion is to adopt H. R. No. 16-82, H. R. No. 16-83, H. R. No. 16-83, H. R. No. 16-84, H. R. NO. 16-85, H. R. No. 16-86, H. R. No. 16-87, and H. R. No. 16-89 and has been seconded. Discussion on the motion. Ready. Representative Ralph Torres, recognized.

Representative Ralph Torres: I guess I will go ahead and announce it under Miscellaneous.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Okay. This is congratulating them for winning. Are there any further discussions? Ready.

There being no further discussion the motion to adopt H. R. No. 16-82, H. R. No. 16-83, H. R. No. 16-83, H. R. No. 16-84, H. R. NO. 16-85, H. R. No. 16-86, H. R. No. 16-87, and H. R. No. 16-89 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since the author of H. R. No. 16-81 is back and I think he can answer the question. A motion to adopt H. R. No. 16-81 in reference to Public Works.

The motion was seconded.

H. R. NO. 16-81: To request the Department of Public Works to draft and adopt a Right of Way Manual establishing uniform standard guidelines and procedures for acquiring private property for public highways in the Commonwealth.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion is for the adoption of H. R. No. 16-81 and has been seconded. Discussion on the motion. Representative Sablan, has your query been clarified?

Representative Sablan: Well, I wanted to hear from the author, Mr. Speaker. My question is just to get some background information, I certainly do not object to the resolution, but I would like some information in terms of why there has not been a right of way manual developed yet considering that it is a federal requirement.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Hocog, recognized.

Representative Hocog: Well I am sure I cannot answer the question of my Representative as to why the Department of Public Works never developed a right of way manual and that is just the purpose of this resolution is to request the DPW to do just that to create a right of way manual. At this point in time, Mr. Speaker and members, there have been a lot of easements that need to be compensated by declaring it a purpose of public interest that as of today land owners are very adamant in giving the right of way consent to the Government to do the pavement of roads and highways within the CNMI. In order for the CNMI to be eligible in federal funding to have these land owners compensated using federal funds in the absence of local funds is the reason that this resolution is important for DPW to develop the right of way manual in the CNMI so that we can proceed with all unpaved highways within the CNMI. That is why we need to see and take the opportunity because there is a way that the federal government can provide us the financial assistance to do pavement in the absence of local funding. More importantly on one of the Whereas that is very important for the eligibility of federal funding is the 23CFR710201C2, Section can provide the eligibility for the CNMI under the payment for private land that the Commonwealth Government does not have the money to pave. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Sablan, that is very clear. Basically we need to standardize some guidelines so that we can qualify for federal highway funds to acquire private property for right of way. Ready for the question.

There being no further discussion the motion to adopt H. R. No. 16-81 was carried by voice vote.

## **BILL CALENDAR**

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are now on the Bill Calendar, Floor Leader, let us take a recess.

*The House recessed at 11:45 a.m.*

**RECESS**

*The House reconvened at 11:50 a.m.*

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are back to session. Vice Speaker, recognized.

Representative Deleon Guerrero: I want to ask the indulgence of the members if we can place H. B. No. 16-247 that I introduced this morning on the Calendar, because it is time sensitive. The Governor had mentioned in his veto message that we do not act on it he is going to hold the funds. We do not necessarily have to act on it today, Mr. Speaker, all I that I ask is to just place it on the Calendar. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Floor Leader, let us place some of the bills that were introduced this morning.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, I heard the concerns of the members regarding certain bills that were introduced and to effectuate the efficiency I discussed with them that for the next session we can place those bills, but the bills that we can act immediately this morning, I would like to make a motion to suspend the Rules to place H. B. No 16-243 in reference to the Marianas Visitor's Authority's (MVA) nonpersonnel appropriation.

The motion was seconded.

H. B. NO. 16-243: To amend Public Law 16-32 to reprogram \$172,240.323 from MVA's non-personnel appropriation to its personnel appropriation; and for other purposes.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion is for suspension of Rules for placement of H. B. No. 16-243 has been seconded, discussion on the motion. Ready.

There being no discussion the motion to suspend the Rules for placement of H. B. No. 16-243 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A motion to place H. B. No. 16-243 in reference to MVA's nonpersonnel appropriation.

The motion was seconded.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion is for placement of H. B. No. 16-243 it has been seconded, discussion on the motion. Ready.

There being no discussion the motion for placement was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Floor Leader, recognized.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A motion to pass on First and Final Reading H. B. No. 16-243 in reference to MVA reprogramming.

The motion was seconded

H. B. NO. 16-243: To amend Public Law 16-32 to reprogram \$172,240.323 from MVA's non-personnel appropriation to its personnel appropriation; and for other purposes.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion is for passage on First and Final Reading H. B. No. 16-243 and has been seconded, discussion on the motion. Representative Hocog, you have the floor.

Representative Hocog: Mr. Speaker, while I sympathize MVA's request to reprogram from operations to personnel I do not know if it would be the right time, I guess the Executive Director is here to provide the members as to how did the personnel cost became overrun from previous budgetary provision and I believe they need \$205,000.00 to cover their shortfall and I was wondering whether the previous personnel cost has been inflated and what happened to their previous budget allocation for personnel that they are requesting the operational funds now to supplement personnel cost. I would suspect that there has been increased in personnel or there have been contractual obligation that have been forged and not budgeted and was taken from their presently personnel cost. So I just wonder why the shortfall. I suspected that their shortfall should reflect on the operation and not the personnel. So I just want to find out how did this happen that the personnel cost has experienced an overrun.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Perhaps, Representative Reyes is in the position to answer that question?

Representative Reyes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although, the Chairman and the author of the bill is not here I did have some discussion about this matter. Mr. Speaker, the shortfall was created when the override of the Budget not too long ago and that was the based salaries of the personnel of MVA and as a result it created a shortfall of \$206,396.34. If we are not to allow the Executive Director to reprogram such funds the MVA stands to lose approximately 15 personnel for the rest of the fiscal year. In addition to that, my conversation of the Managing Director they are some listings of personnel which might have been circulated which is not really the genuine copy rather and if I may not have a copy distributed in the certified listing of the personnel I would be more than happy to provide you one right now. But right now there is from the previous listing of 46 which is about two years ago which I have seen a copy of that. The personnel of MVA right now is only at 35 and with one vacant and that is the Chief Accountant. It was underfunded with the budget, otherwise as I said 15 employees would be---

Representative Hocog: Mr. Speaker, if I may.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: You still have the floor, Representative Hocog.

Representative Hocog: Since the Chair of the Commerce and Tourism is being charge to answer on behalf of the Managing Director of MVA I just want to ask how much cost will the 15 employees that were given notices to be furloughed amounted to versus the under budgeted for one Chief Accountant. What would be the total cost of the 15 personnel that were given notices for furlough?

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Reyes, proceed.

Representative Reyes: Mr. Speaker, I do not have – I have the listing of the names here 15 would be furloughed, the reduced hours to forty would be six, the reduced hours to fifty one would be eight.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Chairman, let us take a short recess so that we can ask the Executive Director of MVA to come forth so that we can just streamline.

*The House recessed at 12:01 p.m.*

*RECESS*

*The House reconvened at 12:15 p.m.*

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are back to plenary session. Chairman Reyes, you have an amendment?

Representative Reyes: Yes, Mr. Speaker. On the heading of the bill to reprogram from \$172,240.33 to \$206,396.34, likewise on line 4, change from \$205,000.00 to \$206,396.34 also on line 18. Thank you.

The motion was seconded.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion has been seconded. Discussion on the motion. Ready for the question.

There being no discussion the motion to adopt the amendment offered by Representative Reyes was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are back to the main motion. Ready. Clerk, call the roll.

The Clerk called the roll on the motion to H. B. NO. 16-243, HD1 on First and Final Reading.

Representative Edwin P. Aldan	yes
Representative David M. Apatang	yes
Representative Oscar M. Babauta	yes
Representative Diego T. Benavente	yes
Representative Joseph N. Camacho	yes
Representative Francisco S. Dela Cruz	yes
Representative Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero	yes
Representative Victor B. Hocog	yes
Representative Heinz S. Hofschneider	yes
Representative Raymond D. Palacios	absent excused
Representative Justo S. Quitugua	absent excused
Representative Joseph C. Reyes	yes
Representative Christina M. Sablan	yes
Representative Edward T. Salas	absent excused
Representative Rosemond B. Santos	yes
Representative Ramon A. Tebuteb	yes
Representative Ralph DLG. Torres	yes
Representative Stanley T. McGinnis Torres	yes
Representative Ray N. Yumul	yes
Speaker Arnold I. Palacios	yes

Speaker Arnold Palacios: By a vote of seventeen “yes” H. B. No. 16-243, HD1 hereby passes the House on First and Final Reading. We will suspend of any miscellaneous speech until next week. Representative Ralph Torres you have an announcement.

### ANNOUNCEMENT

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Ralph Torres, you are recognized.

Representative Ralph Torres: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would like to invite everyone to Saipan Southern High School they have a fundraising tonight for their Manta Ray Band and also we will be

presenting the resolution during the evening around seven o'clock. So I encourage everyone to come to the high school.

### ADJOURNMENT

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Floor Leader, a motion to recess until Tuesday at nine o'clock.

Floor Leader Joseph N. Camacho moved to adjourn subject to the call of the Chair; it was seconded and carried by voice vote.

The House adjourned at 12:20 p.m., subject to the Call of the Chair.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda B. Muña, Journal Clerk  
House of Representatives

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### APPEARANCE OF LOCAL BILLS

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

SECOND APPEARANCE: NONE

THIRD APPEARANCE:

H. L. B. NO. 16-31: A Local Appropriation Bill for an Act for the Second Senatorial District to appropriate \$15,000.00 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. 16-32: A Local Appropriation Bill for an Act for the Third Senatorial District to appropriate \$1,500,000.00 from the Developer Infrastructure Tax funds to be collected in Fiscal Year 2010; and for other purposes. (Rep. Rosemond B. Santos)