



House Journal
FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 2008

Adopted:
October 16, 2008

Eighth Day

Thursday, March 27, 2008

The House of Representatives of the Fifteenth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature convened its Eighth Day, First Regular Session on Thursday, March 27, 2008, at 10:30 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 eighteen members were present; Representative Diego T. Benavente came in late and Representative Ralph DLG. Torres was excused.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Ralph Torres is excused for today's session and Representative Benavente will be arriving late. Mr. Floor Leader, a motion to resolve into the Committee of the Whole to present a resolution.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, a motion to resolve into the Committee of the Whole for the presentation of the resolution.

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

The House resolved into the Committee of the Whole at 10:32 a.m.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The House returned to plenary session at 10:41 a.m.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are back to our plenary session and we will move down to Introduction of Bills.

ADOPTION OF JOURNALS

NONE

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

H. B. NO. 16-78: A Bill for an Act to amend Public Law 15-22, and for other purposes.

Offered by: Representative Justo S. Quitugua and four others

Referred to: Committee on Commerce and Tourism

H. B. NO. 16-79: A Bill for an Act to revise the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation's Utility rate structure to ensure CUC's continuing ability to deliver vital utility services; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Representative Arnold I. Palacios and twelve others

Speaker Arnold Palacios: If there is no objection, I would like to place on today's order of business H. B. No. 16-79.

There was no objection from the floor.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

NONE

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR

NONE

SENATE COMMUNICATIONS

NONE

HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS

HSE. COMM. 16-27: (3/26/08) From the Speaker to the Senate President regarding discussions on H. B. NO. 16-51, HD5.

There was no discussion under this item.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

NONE

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

DEPT./AGCY. COMM. 16-17: A copy of NMC Board Resolution No. 08-01, Relative to Declaring Exigency Relative to ACCJC Show Cause Order.

DEPT./AGCY. COMM. 16-18: (3/25/08) From Secretary Gil M. San Nicolas, DOL, submitting the Annual Report of the Department of Labor pursuant to P.L. 15-108.

DEPT./AGCY. COMM. 16-19: (3/25/08) From Public Auditor Mike Sablan submitting OPA's Budget for FY 2009.

DEPT./AGCY. COMM. 16-20: (3/26/08) From Analyst Dawn Revilla, OPA, writing in opposition of H. B. NO. 16-33.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Ready? Representative Quitugua.

Representative Quitugua: Mr. Speaker, on DEPT./AGCY. COMM. 16-17, may I ask that perhaps the Chairman of HEW Committee request the Board of Regents and the NMC President to provide the House a copy of the accreditation report, and also a copy of NMC's response to the accreditation report. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Vice Chairman of HEW, please note it down and relay it to the Chairman.

Vice Chairman Apatang: So noted, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Salas.

Representative Salas: I did bring up that issue to the Chairman of HEW and what he had indicated to me was he did request for a copy and they will be receiving a copy after, I believe, the appropriate party receives it. Obviously they sent it through mail and they are just waiting for the confirmation of receipt and then NMC will provide us with a copy.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Are there any more comments? Representative Stanley Torres.

Representative Stanley Torres: On my way in I heard the discussion regarding the NMC WASC report. It has been almost two weeks and that should not be confidential anymore because it is already in the hands of the WASC. We need to have a copy and base ourselves of what the NMC needs are if we are going to support them financially, then that will be the basis of our support to NMC. In the absence of such report, and you know already where I am with the college, it will still be an obstacle if I am not satisfied with what they committed themselves to bring back the accreditation. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you and, again, the Vice Chairman of HEW will ensure that the Chairman is informed of this and try to get those reports on a timely manner. Representative Babauta.

Representative Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I wish to recommend that the DEPT./AGCY. COMM. 16-18 –

Representative Hofschneider: Privilege.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: State your privilege.

Representative Hofschneider: I am sorry for interrupting, but there is an annoying ring, a cellular phone, and I have a throbbing headache. Sorry for interrupting, sir.

Representative Benavente: Mr. Speaker, it is proper to make sure to ask members to set their phones on vibrate or silent mode.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Please turn off all cell phones. Thank you. You may continue Representative Babauta.

Representative Babauta: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I was glancing at DEPT./AGCY. COMM. 16-18 and I find it to be very vital and informative communication and I wish the Chair would hopefully recommend that the proper committee look at this communication. As I go through it, primarily on the part with regards to the Labor Enforcement Fund, I see some paragraphs here that might properly be contrary to the establishment of P.L. 10-1. I wish that the committee look at this carefully and find out whether or

not the provisions provided in the Labor Enforcement Fund as stipulated under P.L. 10-1 is in line with all these creation of provisions through regulations.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Will the Chair of JGO take note of that? Are there any more comments? Representative Babauta.

Representative Babauta: Lastly, Mr. Speaker, thank you. I guess this is a new communication from the Office of the Public Auditor being written down as DEPT./AGCY. COMM. 16-20. I commend the Public Auditor's Office for getting this recommendation out to the committee. This probably has to do with Representative Apatang's bill, which is the 1%, and I fully support the recommendation of the OPA, and instead of removing it why not put a sunset clause or suspension provision. I am hopeful that the Chairman of Ways and Means would address this.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We will address that and this will certainly raise some discussions when we get to the Bill Calendar.

Representative Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to infuse the journal with statements this morning but these are important information that we need to be cognizant of. Right, Representative Sablan, thank you.

OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

NONE

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Under Reports of Standing Committees, I recognize the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, a motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-7, reporting on H. B. NO. 16-11 and S. C. R. NO. 16-10, reporting on H. B. NO. 16-11.

The motion was seconded.

S. C. R. NO. 16-7: Reporting on H. B. NO. 16-11, entitled: "A Bill for an Act to amend the Safe Diving Act of 1990, to allow the Department of Public Safety enforcement authority and strengthen enforcement of Safe Diving Act." *Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations recommends passage of the bill.* [See S. C. R. NO. 16-10]

S. C. R. NO. 16-10: Reporting on H. B. NO. 16-11, entitled: "A Bill for an Act to amend the Safe Diving Act of 1990, to allow the Department of Public Safety enforcement authority and strengthen enforcement of Safe Diving Act." *Your Committee on Natural Resources concurs with the recommendation of the Committee on JGO and recommends passage of the bill.* [See S. C. R. NO. 16-7]

There was no discussion and the motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-7 and S. C. R. NO. 16-10 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion carries and S. C. R. NO. 16-7 and S. C. R. NO. 16-10 are hereby adopted by the House. Mr. Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, a motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-8, reporting on H. B. NO. 16-17.

The motion was seconded.

S. C. R. NO. 16-8: Reporting on H. B. NO. 16-17, entitled, “A Bill for an Act to repeal 8 CMC §§ 1723 and 1741 thru 1744 and to require the transfer of pertinent documents from the Clerk of Court's Office to the Health and Vital Statistics Office; and for other purposes.” *Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations recommends passage of the bill.*

There was no discussion and the motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-8 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: S. C. R. NO. 16-8 is hereby adopted. Mr. Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Camacho: A motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-11, reporting on H. B. NO. 16-56.

The motion was seconded.

S. C. R. NO. 16-11: Reporting on H. B. NO. 16-56, entitled, “A Bill for an Act to amend Section 2 of Public Law 15-122, to exempt recipients of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) from paying utility service reconnection fees; and for other purposes. *Your Committee on Public Utilities, Transportation, and Communications recommends passage of the bill in the form of House Draft 1.*

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are under discussion and I recognize Representative Sablan.

Representative Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In reviewing this committee report I am concern that there is no cost benefit analysis, and I would like to clarify from the committee if there are costs involved in this program. And if so if we could include that into the committee report before we adopt it.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Chairman Stanley Torres.

Representative Stanley Torres: Mr. Speaker, to answer Representative Sablan's request I know that there is no cost benefit explanation there but it is a very simple bill requesting the assistance of CUC with respect to people who are dependent on the LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) and other people that needs power in there homes such as partially disabled and total disabled persons. I do not know how much it will cost but it is a small thing that CUC can assist the people in need. I do not know what else to add to suffice and justify the passage of that bill.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you. Representative Hofschneider.

Representative Hofschneider: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think that it is appropriate that we ask CUC to give us an accounting of not only LIHEAP. Be mindful that the Mayor of Saipan has a similar program, mirror imaging LIHEAP. Not all indigents avail themselves of LIHEAP, because LIHEAP as we know is under funded and it is not even remotely attempting to serve a greater spectrum of the community who are in need of electrical assistance. And as I recall even reconnection fee is being charged under the LIHEAP for those who, in particular, are living under HUD funded programs. In most cases the amount of utility charge is problematic and not the reconnection itself. And statistics today when it comes to indigent individuals far exceeds the program under LIHEAP and if we do not include those people then

we are just sort of focusing only on a small segment of the indigent population. But, I have a greater concern, Mr. Speaker, on the intent of the committee report. It does not touch the issue that it is amending. It is a broad language. On page 2 of the bill beginning line 9, it is inserting a new classification: in addition the corporation shall not charge reconnection fees to families who have a household member with a heart illness or to invalids. Now you have to make a specific classification for heart ailments. You may have a triple, quadruple, or single bypass and are out of the woods, so to speak. But because you qualify under the definition, we are opening greater latitude over the definition if you do not specify the true intent of the legislation and those who have succumb to congestive heart failure for instance that is a more specific heart illness. A congestive heart failure is a no-recourse unless you get a heart transplant, but heart illness is a catch all language. And as I have stated you may have hypertension and have an irregular heartbeat and that will constitute a heart illness, which in essence qualifies you under this program. But, you are quite okay when you control your hypertension and perhaps your dietary habits. My point is you have to be very specific on who this classification should be extended to. I do not have any concerns with the invalids. I do have a concern because for all intents and purposes the individuals who really need this assistance right now are the growing number of dialysis patients and pulmonary individuals. They are not experiencing any heart disease but they are carrying oxygen, and we see a lot of those on the island. So you have to be very careful when you are putting and inserting a general catchall phrase or classification because this is a small segment of the population. The true congestive heart failure individuals are very small and they deserve this break, but you have to be mindful that there are dialysis patients that have far more debilitating illness other than heart illness itself. And then you have those with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (OPD). These people do not have any heart disease, but because of chronic smoking for instance, or some other illness they are forced to carry their oxygen tank or when they are at home they have to plug in the machine to allow them to breathe normally. So I recommend that we refer this bill back to the committee so that we ask perhaps a physician to help us define the parameters. This is the reason why we need mortality and morbidity to be regularly given to the members of the Legislature for policy decisions. This Commonwealth and the health center has failed in that respect because they have not been producing morbidity and mortality statistics and they are required under the US Public Health to do so. So I recommend, Mr. Speaker, that we refer this back to committee so that we can fine tune the language and the intent and taking in considerations those that I have mentioned.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Deleon Guerrero.

Representative Deleon Guerrero: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I was just going to comment on the concern that Representative Sablan had. I cannot speak for the cost benefit analysis, but I was going to provide a little bit of background regarding LIHEAP clients. There was a waiver for the reconnection fees granted by I am not sure if it was former Governor Deleon Guerrero, but by a governor which CUC did follow and so there was a time that when reconnection fees were waived. Not too long ago CUC decided to reinstate the reconnection fees. *(End of tape 1 side A) (Beginning side B)* ...fund an additional \$300,000.00 for LIHEAP that became law and is still currently with LIHEAP. And right now in the absence of this language, they are proposing to use a portion of those funds to pay for reconnection fees. What that would mean is it would pretty much eat up a good chunk of that \$300,000.00 which is really intended to serve as many LIHEAP clients as possible. So I just wanted to state for the record that I am supporting the original language of this bill, and I have the same concerns as Representative Hofschneider in regards to what he had mentioned. This looks like an amendment by the committee that was inserted, but I supported the original language so that the \$300,000.00 can go towards the clients and not necessarily the reconnection fees. In with regards to this heart illness, I do not know if we should use illness as a policy to qualify families. Let us face it, there are people with heart illnesses that do have money that can pay for reconnection. So, I do not know if using that as a threshold is a good

idea, and it opens it up to other illnesses. I know of a person who recently died in Koblerville. That old man before he died I recalled the daughter saying: *si tata-hu asthma ya ginagagao gi magahet na u ma na' on i air condition sa asthma yan mas mumalalañgo*. This old man eventually was admitted to the hospital and he passed away. In a way we can justify that people with pulmonary illnesses ought to be included in here. But, again, a word of caution, perhaps low income people with debilitating illnesses will be the threshold rather than just the illness itself, because we can open it up to all kind of illnesses that are affected by the need for power. For instance people using oxygen systems, people who need air conditioning. While I support this bill and it is a critical bill, I want to ask that it does go into the committee and perhaps they reevaluate this amendment that was made. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Apatang.

Representative Apatang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that we are discussing the committee report. Part B, Committee Findings, states very clearly as to why the committee decided to go ahead and let go of this bill to assist those who are recipients of the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program. With rising cost of utility, some of these people only have funds from their energy assistance and cannot afford to pay the full amount of their bill. The whole intent of this legislation is to help these people who are indigent that cannot afford to pay the other half of their utility cost. If you do not pay your share you get disconnected, and that is the reason why this bill was introduced. Mr. Speaker, instead of sending it back to the committee, I would suggest that when we go to the Bill Calendar I will offer some amendments to this bill. As of right now a lot of people are suffering from disconnection issues. I know that there are some languages that we want to insert in here, and we could also take some languages out so we could pass this bill. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Hofschneider.

Representative Hofschneider: I think that everyone agrees that the bill has good intentions and we should support it. And with all due respect I do not want to rub unnecessarily on you, Mr. Speaker; you just introduced the repealer of PL 15-94. If we are going to approach this reconnection issue, it should be approached on a business prospective. The reason why someone asked, and I think it was Representative Sablan, about the cost benefit analysis is realistically we should know how much it is going to cost CUC to undertake this waiver because it will come around again. Somehow CUC must increase certain rates in order to recover the loss from the reconnection itself. So if we do not find the money to appropriate for this specific classification of consumers or indigents then in essence this legislation is telling CUC to cough up the difference. That is a bad business practice -- this policy of waiver without us looking at enumerating and accounting for how many indigents there are today, whether it be growing or diminishing, is beside the point. The point is on the full cost recovery under P.L. 4-47 and that with anything you want to extend as a break or a waiver to the consumers, this body has the responsibility to provide the funding for that particular endeavor. Let us not force CUC again to cough up or be burdened with the cost of the waiver. We still can achieve the same goal in the end and that is to extend not having those indigents be charged with the reconnection fee, but it is our responsibility to find the money so that CUC cannot increase certain charges to recover the loss. The cost benefit analysis will tell you how much -- how many there are today and how much it is costing CUC by not recovering and by the waiver intended in this legislation. That is the most appropriate approach. We find the money. Like Representative Deleon Guerrero had said, there was an appropriation for the LIHEAP to augment whatever the amount. So I think it is with intentions and at the same time making sure we are not forcing CUC into financial difficulty because they are going to find other means of recovering the difference. I think if we do not find appropriation, Mr. Speaker, like P.L. 15-94, it is going to come back to the very consumer not qualified under the program. It has to be

approached from a business prospective and CUC will come around and charge those who are able payers. Honestly, it is a doable legislation and it is good, but we need to ensure that we put languages that the Legislature shall appropriate for the cost of this program, and let us come back in the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation and appropriate that amount of money. That is the most appropriate approach rather than to just say waive it and let CUC be burdened with it. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Reyes.

Representative Reyes: I have a question about LIHEAP. Does that include everybody? In other words, residents and non-resident workers alike under the guidelines? It is everybody so to speak. I think, Mr. Speaker and members, the intent of this bill is good but then again I side with Representative Hofschneider here perhaps we should refer it back to the committee. I do not know what the policies of LIHEAP on how do you qualify for this program, but I think it is interesting to take a look at it. How many are we going to be helping and how many we will not be? There are others that might need the assistance, but at the same time and it has been mentioned by Representative Hofschneider I look at this and we are going back in circles. We are trying to find money to rescue CUC, but yet take money away from CUC. It will be good to take a look at this one more time, although as I said the intention is genuine and look into the definitions of illnesses further.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Deleon Guerrero.

Representative Deleon Guerrero: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As far as the cost benefit analysis is concerned when a customer gets disconnected what CUC does is send one of their people in charge of disconnections and what they will basically do is unlock your meter box, slip in a piece of plastic and then plug it back. By the time he gets there and performs the work the whole act would take about five minutes. So if you want to quantify and do a cost benefit analysis, it would take a person less than 30 minutes to do that job, and the same process applies to reconnection. Based on CUC's report their meter readers are receiving roughly around \$15,000 to \$17,000 per annum that equates to about \$7.21 an hour. Half of that is \$3.60 an hour to do that one act. CUC is charging \$60.00 for reconnection. So, think about it. The cost benefit analysis is less than \$10.00 for one person to get reconnected or disconnected and CUC charges \$60.00. I do not think that CUC will be overly burdened by having these indigent people reconnected when they are charging a little bit more than what they should be charging to reconnect people. They are charging over six times what it should cost them. I am sorry -- I did not include the gas -- maybe five times more then what they should be charging. So Representative Sablan, if cost benefit is the issue here I think that we can quantify that.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Hofschneider.

Representative Hofschneider: I follow the logic but it is not cut and dry as you put it. You have to add in the economic scale over providing one employee under the umbrella of CUC, so there is a multiplier to that \$7.00 an hour. Be that as it may I think he just pointed out that is it is easily attainable if we attempt to provide the language that the cost of this taking away from CUC shall be appropriated by the Legislature for the waiver itself. So the cost will not be and in addition to the already burdened CUC and still accomplishing the waiver for indigent individuals. I think that is the remedy, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Stanley Torres.

Representative Stanley Torres: I would like to add to the Vice Speaker's comment that the person who disconnects and reconnects the power does not have to be an electrician. A person can be trained in ten

minutes to know how to unplug the meter, to put a sleeve in there and lock it, even the customer service people that can do this.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Okay. Apparently there are some recommendations that we either table it or refer it back to the committee to consider all the issues. Is there a motion? Representative Babauta.

Representative Babauta: I was going to offer that comment that was made by Representative Hofschneider. Normally, when issues like this arise, we would just put on First Reading and have the committee work on the language.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Is that amenable, Representative Deleon Guerrero?

Vice Speaker Deleon Guerrero: Yes, now that I have thought about it and the concerns of Representative Hofschneider, my concern is because of the amendment, but if Representative Apatang proposes to make an amendment when we get to the bill itself, we can go ahead and pass this. I have no objection with that.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: So the motion is to adopt the committee report. We will go ahead and adopt the report.

The motion to adopt S. C. R. NO. 16-11 carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion carries and S. C. R. NO. 16-11 is hereby adopted by the House. Representative Babauta.

Representative Babauta: In line with that again there is no stopping the committee from submitting an addendum report to S. C. R. NO. 16-11 for record purposes.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you for that comment. Representative Sablan.

Representative Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to say that I also recognize and appreciate the intentions of this bill. I understand what you were saying, Vice Speaker Deleon Guerrero, in your view, should be a negligible cost for reconnecting. But it is not free, and if we could just have that in an addendum report, something that the committee could give back to us so we would know what should be appropriated to cover any short fall that is created by this program and I would feel more comfortable voting for this bill. That is all I ask. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you. This issue is critical for a lot of low income people and indigent families, and perhaps we ought to also take a look at the LIHEAP. This issue arises from the restriction on using the appropriated funds for the LIHEAP and using it for reconnection fees. One way of looking at it is to really reevaluate and reassess the whole program and if we need to fix it to accommodate some of these needs we should. Representative Reyes.

Representative Reyes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am not too familiar with the LIHEAP but it will be interesting to find out how many are being accommodated under the program, because there may be others needing the services and it was mentioned earlier perhaps not necessarily waiving the entire reconnection fee, and I prefer that even a \$10.00 reconnection fee would probably be more reasonable. I am not an attorney but it could be looked at as being discriminatory because people that subscribe to

LIHEAP may not be the only ones struggling financially to have power being reconnected. But, it will be interesting to have some data to further justify. I will support the program, thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: I call for a short recess.

The House recessed at 11:21 a.m.

RECESS

(Representative Benavente took his seat in the Chamber.)

The House reconvened at 11:37 a.m.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are back in session. Under privilege, I recognize Representative Benavente.

Representative Benavente: Thank you. Once again I realize I am late but I would like to ask to be marked as present today. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: So ordered.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL AND CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

RESOLUTION CALENDAR

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Hocog.

Representative Hocog: If there is no objection, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the indulgence of the Floor Leader to place H. J. R. NO. 16-3 on today's Resolution Calendar. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: It is reflected on the Resolution Calendar. Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Camacho: A motion for adoption of H. COMM. RES. NO. 16-2.

H. COMM. RES. NO. 16-2: A House COMMEMORATIVE RESOLUTION EXPRESSING THE UTMOST APPRECIATION OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE 16TH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE TO MR. SEIJI SATO (AN AMBASSADOR OF TOURISM) FOR HIS HARD WORK AND DEDICATION IN PROMOTING THE CNMI AND ITS PEOPLE AS AN INTERNATIONAL TOURIST DESTINATION AND A WARM PLACE OF COMFORT TO THE PEOPLE OF JAPAN AND THE WORLD.

The motion was seconded, and there being no discussion the motion was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: H. COMM. RES. NO. 16-2 is hereby adopted. .

Representative Babauta: Point of clarification, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Babauta, recognized under point of clarification.

Representative Babauta: I am not sure whether the author of H. COMM. RES. NO. 16-2 requested for assistance on the sponsorship, and if not then I am volunteering to co-sponsor H. COMM. RES. NO. 16-2. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Stanley Torres.

Representative Stanley Torres: May I ask the author if amenable for the Committee of the Whole as a sponsor.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: I so order that this resolution be reflected as committee of the whole. Representative Tebuteb.

Representative Tebuteb: I have no objection on that but for everybody's information this commemorative resolution was presented to the gentlemen with everybody's name.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you. That resolves the concern.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, it is nice to know we have psychics in our august body. Mr. Speaker, a motion to suspend the Rule IX, Sections 8, 9, and 10 for placement of House Bills.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Floor Leader, before we do that, let us address the issue of the House Joint Resolution 16-3 because it is reflected on the Resolution Calendar. In talking with the author and several members I believe this House Joint Resolution requires additional justifications and discussions. If there is no objection, I am going to refer this to Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations to report on this House Joint Resolution. Okay. Chairwoman Santos, you are hereby assigned this House Joint Resolution. Thank you. Representative Hocog

There was no objection of the floor.

H. J. R. NO. 16-3: A House Joint Resolution to put the question of Calling a Constitutional Convention before the voters of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. (*Referred to Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations*)

Representative Hocog: I would to recommend that the Chair of the JGO Committee expedite the committee report if it warrants, and to include concerns of individual legislators here that would make this a better form of House Joint Resolution. It surely requires, Mr. Speaker, that we act on this promptly and expeditiously. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you for that recommendation.

Representative Santos: Mr. Speaker, as the Chair of JGO, I invite and welcome any member of this House to join us in our meeting on this particular resolution.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you. Representative Sablan.

Representative Sablan: I would also like to ask my good chairwoman to consider a public hearing as well so that we can incorporate the comments of not only our colleagues in the Legislature but also of the general public. Thank you.

BILL CALENDAR

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We move down to Bill Calendar.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, a motion to suspend Rule IX, Sections 8, 9, and 10 for placement of House Bill 16-79.

The motion was seconded.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Deleon Guerrero.

Representative Deleon Guerrero: Before you rule on the motion, could you include House Bill 16-56, HD1 on today's calendar?

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Floor Leader, can you also include H. B. NO. 16-11 and H. B. NO. 16-56, HD1.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, amending my motion to include H. B. NO. 16-11, H. B. NO. 16-56, HD1.

The motion was seconded.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Discussion? Representative Tebuteb.

Representative Tebuteb: Since we already adopted the committee report on H. B. NO. 16-17, can we also include that on today's calendar?

Representative Benavente: Point of clarification.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Under point of clarification, Representative Benavente.

Representative Benavente: Correct me if I am wrong, I do not know what the Rules says exactly, but normally upon adoption of a committee report, the legislation automatically appears on the respective calendar. This is something we continue to do almost every time, so let everyone understand that upon adoption of a committee report the legislation automatically appears on the respective calendar for disposition.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Yes, that is fully understood. Floor Leader, for further clarification.

Floor Leader Camacho: I would like to clarify that H. B. NO. 16-79 was introduced today and would have gone to committee which is why we are suspending the Rules. But as to the committee reports that were already adopted they would have automatically go on the respective calendar.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: So the motion, as clarified, is to suspend rules for placement of H. B. NO. 16-79. It has been moved and seconded.

The motion was carried by voice vote.

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, a motion to place H. B. NO. 16-79 on today's Bill Calendar.

The motion was seconded and was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The motion carries, H. B. NO. 16-79 is hereby placed on today's Order of Business.

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, a motion for passage on First and Final Reading H. B. NO. 16-79.

The motion was seconded.

H. B. NO. 16-79: TO REVISE THE COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION'S UTILITY RATE STRUCTURE TO ENSURE CUC'S CONTINUING ABILITY TO DELIVER VITAL UTILITY SERVICES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Hofschneider.

Representative Hofschneider: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I encourage members to go on record on this bill. In as much as the intent, Mr. Speaker and members, is in fact quite noble and in spite of problems that it has created for CUC's financial condition we would have been much relieved if we could have come up with the funding for P.L. 15-94. Be it as it may I feel it is the appropriate thing to do and allow CUC to really have its financial posture in the appropriate place. And by way of that, Mr. Speaker, work with CUC to find relief for individuals, families, and businesses in general. We are taking up the issue of indigent population, now P.L. 15-94 attempts to deal with the majority of the population, the consumers themselves. In a faltering economy, it is basic to do with the most costly element in terms of doing business in the Commonwealth or any jurisdiction. The cost of power is phenomenally inhibitive if not restrictive for the growth of our island economy, let alone the families and individuals that are finding it extremely.... *(End of Tape 1, Side B)* ...and you see two windows, one window is for you to go up and pay your utility bill if you have no question on your billing. It has been observed for the last few months that there is no line at the window that is open for customers who have no question on their billing. At the other window where you go for customer services and disputes, the line is extremely long. That in itself should tell us that we need to put a sense of priority in terms of our scarce resources and look at ways to lower the burden of utilities. I do not think one is not being impacted by the cost of utility in spite of the efforts of individuals, families, and businesses to conserve. I would have been more inclined to support keeping PL 15-94 had we found a way to pay for PL 15-94 itself and relief individuals, families, and businesses alike and sustain the viability of CUC financially. The spiraling cost of fuel is not going to go away, and we do not have an end in sight as to the global pricing of oil, and that should

of great concern and great priority in terms of our responsibility here to look at and accelerate the pace of certain things we have. In fact, introduced here in the House is the initiative to borrow money and fix our utility problems and extend the help to generally all citizens in the Commonwealth. The second is the legislation for privatization. Those should be looked at extensively and acted on immediately so that we have in place, by law, the ground rules for privatization. We cannot privatize without setting the ground rules, Mr. Speaker, for the utilities in the Commonwealth because it amounts to massive disruptions if not catastrophic in the lives and the economy of the Commonwealth. It is not an easy thing to repeal this, Mr. Speaker, because of the intent. Like I said earlier, it is timely and it is noble and the right thing to do to extend that kind of help as intended in P.L. 15-94, but if we do not have the will to pay for it, the worst case would be to force CUC into the ground and that is bankruptcy. And as we continue to experience scheduled and unscheduled blackouts or power outages, we, the citizens here can tolerate it to an extent unlike the visitors themselves and those anticipating and looking to invest in the Commonwealth. It will take us a minimum of three to five years to recover from that experience of having visitors who wants to invest in the Commonwealth and see how bad the situation with utilities are in the Commonwealth. No money can repair that perspective or opinion about the Commonwealth as a point of investment. So everything is riding on how well and how reliable and how affordable utility is, not only for the community here in the Commonwealth, not only to sustain whatever businesses that we have remaining, but as a desire to expand the economy. It is essential that we get moving with repairing and finding ways to supplement more affordable forms of energy for our individual families and businesses in general in the Commonwealth. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I support you in taking the initial step to do the right thing. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you. Vice Speaker.

Vice Speaker Deleon Guerrero: Mr. Speaker, I am sure many of our current members who were in the Fifteenth Legislature who fought vigorously and even overrode the Governor's veto of H.B. No. 16-___ now P.L. 15-94 have some reservations supporting this bill when it will in fact probably provide some of our critics' reaffirmation that it was a political maneuver and now we are back tracking on what we did. I know some of us will probably feel that we have reservations supporting this bill now. I just want to register some points, Mr. Speaker, the reasons I am supporting this bill now. I really have to commend you for your courage to have this bill introduced. There are several mitigating factors here that are happening now. One is that we look forward to our power plant generators that are currently being rehabilitated to be back online at least at a ninety percent capacity by the end of this fiscal year. And hopefully the efficiently level, which will equate to perhaps lower fuel cost will occur towards the end of this year. Secondly, that we are addressing the needs of our indigent population with the burden of the soaring fuel costs by earmarking funds towards LIHEAP. And just so the members know, the current regulations regarding LIHEAP are being amended which it is at the Attorney General's Office and it will lower the threshold so that more indigent people can qualify and the funding level of each client will be increased. Representative Hofschneider speaks of privatization. We also know that there is a current move towards privatizing the management of CUC to what is called the performance management contract. That is also underway. We also know that there is a study being done to have our fuel capacity increased. There is a study of building a fuel farm. I think all these different moves are going in the right direction to not only improve our power generating ability but also our fuel storage capacity and that will, in my eyes, mean potentially lower fuel rates for the Commonwealth. So because of all these different events that are currently underway I can now support this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you, Vice Speaker. Representative Reyes.

Representative Reyes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I for one will support any remedy or anything to help CUC because we are all suffering here. I would like to register my comments here too. Mr. Speaker, it troubles me though, I am not satisfied, yet, as to what really is the biggest problem of CUC. I know that we talked about fuel prices, but, Mr. Speaker, not too long ago, I believe a bill was passed to forgive CUC the \$150 Million that they owed to CDA. Since then up till now we are continuously spending money as if giving CUC a blank check. Representative Hofschneider has said there are two windows up at the CUC payment office and you see nine out of ten people lining for problems or promissory notes or what not. My question there again, Mr. Speaker, is this because of the high rate of utility charges? Could it be also that part of the financial problems that CUC is having is because customers are not paying? Could that be a possibility? Have we ever looked at that really? Mr. Speaker, it will be interesting to know also how many amongst the commercial facilities on the island, hotels in particular, are running their own generators at this time too. Is that also affecting CUC by not generating money for not hooking up to the power grid of the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation? Perhaps that is also good because it is helping CUC repair what they need to repair and that perhaps that if these guys will hook up to CUC that the engines again will fail because it will not be able to handle the load. Mr. Speaker, this CUC matter has been for many years right now and all we hear everyday is repairs and one right after the other. My question again comes as to how efficient and I know that Vice Speaker has mentioned that it will be a little bit more efficient with the output of these engines but probably these engines are worth just changing. Take example of a vehicle, no matter how good your car is if you do not put maintenance you are going to have a problem. I have asked CUC that if something should happen now or tomorrow, do we have any contingency plan in place as to how do we generate power. I am afraid even with this rate right now that we pay, if we have an SOP that CUC can put in place chances are that our rates will double. Mr. Speaker, right now we do not even have insurance on those engines. If it blows up tomorrow, what are we all going to do? I heard that the Vice Speaker say that there are some plans to put up additional fuel storage facilities, I do not know. I do not know if you guys have seen a plan by CUC. All I know and all I hear everyday is this that everybody is suffering and we continuously give CUC a blank check, and we really need to take a look at this. I want to see the contracts between CUC and Telesource. It gives me a curiosity why is Telesource offering additional power from Tinian to here, and that is a private company. These guys are not going to do this thing if they are not going to make money. I want to know where the contract is or how much fuel we pay to Power Plant No. 4. I know that whoever is running that is probably making so much money everyday and is very satisfied. But these are the things that it will be interesting to take a look at because we talk about money, but we are not looking at other measures here, cost saving measures, or probably even call it waste. I want to know how much we are losing on the grids, the transmission lines. There are still other areas perhaps. Even the billing department, I get confused. I do not know if you guys can figure out how this rate structure is, because I get bills for \$3.50 and my fuel surcharge is \$238.00 to \$258. I cannot understand how that is done. My question again is how efficient not just the engine, but how efficient is management there and how much effort are they putting into addressing all these so that we can all be given the right data and perhaps recommend the best manner of approach rather than continuously writing a blank check. Going back to this bill, which is a good intention because we are rescuing them again. But Representative Deleon Guerrero said that this was passed in the Fifteenth Legislature and it could be said that it is all political then and now we are reverting back. The intention is good and noble but I think we need to go back and look at CUC again in a very detailed manner. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you. Representative Dela Cruz.

Representative Dela Cruz: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to add on to what has been said earlier. I do agree with the good Representative Reyes here that maybe we are giving CUC a blank check. I recall

on February 7th, we had a meeting up at the CUC office and the discussion was the rehabilitation of the power plant and that had a lot to do with the CIP funding to the tune of \$5 to \$6 Million. Right now we are almost at the end of this month, a month has passed, and we have not seen any progression report from CUC in as far as whether we have added any new capacity as it relates to the repairs. I definitely feel that you as the Speaker give notice to CUC to begin the process of informing this legislative body what progress has been made, and if we are still on track for September of this year to realize 90% capacity, I think that is one very important factor here. Representative Hofschneider's legislation H. B. NO. 16-77 that purports to have CUC enter into a performance management contract privatization or BOT. If you ask me privatization and BOT are one on the same. Personally, I am not entirely favorable to privatization for the mere reason that we have done it before in the past and look at where we are. We have done it in the past, we have entered into contracts with private companies, and we know who these companies are. But who is getting the short end of the stick here, it is the Commonwealth. We privatize a utility company and we still have to provide them fuel. This is the dilemma we face right now, it is fuel. So again I am not totally in agreement with privatization. A performance management contract maybe, that seems to be working well to our neighbor in the south. In fact they are pretty much over producing in their capacity and their capacity is about 500 megawatts. We need to come up and again give notice to CUC that we cannot keep giving them the financial aide because it is actually the people of the Commonwealth that are footing the bill. There are a lot of things that can be done over at CUC. And I think the biggest part of the problem is management. The CUC power still subsidizes water, and sewer. As for CUC Water Division, as you know the Water Task Force has provided so many of these smart meters. Until now I doubt if CUC is actually reading the meters. How is the CUC water is going to stand on its own two feet if all it is looking out for is a subsidy from power and power is crippled. We all know that. I think what needs to happen and again, Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I ask you or the Chair of PUTC to give notice to CUC. We want to know what is happening with the \$5 to \$6 Million for this rehabilitation. Are we moving forward? And I ask that we see this progress report at least on a monthly basis. There are seven more months before September 2008. Are we really on track? That is all, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you. Representative Apatang.

Representative Apatang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, this is going to be short so we can move on. I just want to say thank you very much for having the guts to repeal your own bill. It is kind of hard to do that. I have experienced that in the past when somebody tried to repeal my bill and I was really perturbed about it. I just want to congratulate you for doing that. I know that before election last year, they said it is a political influence, but it is not. I know it is coming from your heart because you feel the feeling of the majority of the people here in the CNMI, and that is the whole intent behind the bill because I was part of it. And I felt the pressure. Although I was not in congress, I was out there and I felt it because people are telling me about it. So it is coming from your heart, you are a leader and you did that, and I want to thank you for that. Now let us move on. Thank you.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Yumul.

Representative Yumul: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, H. B. NO. 16-79 will attempt to repeal P.L. 15-94 in its entirety. I have a very grave concern with that because embedded within P.L. 15-94 under Section 3 of the law talks about metering. We have already encountered a lot of consumers complaining that the meters are being read as an estimate, their meters are being read beyond a reasonable time line where we have customers with more than forty days on a billing cycle. And because the rate structure is on a two steps, the first 1000 and anything over 1000 under PL 15-94, it will mean that if a consumer had an average of say 900 kilowatt hours and there were estimated or worst yet it took forty days for a CUC

reader to come by and read that meter, they are going to be pushed way over the 1000. And because over 1000 kilowatt hour has a higher per kilowatt rate, we have just subjected them to more fees. So I am going to attempt to make an amendment to restore metering into H. B. NO. 16-79 because it is very important that this provision remain in place until CUC gets their act together and read on a timely basis and to stop grossly over estimating meters.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Are you ready to make that amendment?

Representative Yumul: Yes, I am Mr. Speaker. I would like to make an oral floor amendment on page 1, line 17.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Short recess.

The House recessed at 12:15 p.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 12:21 p.m.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: We are back to session and Representative Yumul is attempting to make an amendment. Are you ready now?

Representative Yumul: Yes, I am, Mr. Speaker. On page 1, line 17, “Section 2. Repealer.” Section 2 will read as “P.L. 15-94 is hereby repealed” insert “except as provided in subsection 3 of PL 15-94” and strike out the remainder of the line in its entirety. I so move.

The motion was seconded.

“**Section 2. Repealer**. Except for Section 3, Public Law 15-94 is hereby repealed.”

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Discussion on that motion. Representative Sablan.

Representative Sablan: Yes, I would like to request a copy of that particular subsection.

Representative Yumul: It is in Public Law 15-94.

Representative Sablan: But I do not have that in front of me right now.

Representative Yumul: Sure.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Any other discussion. Representative Sablan.

Representative Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. While we are waiting for the copies to be made I also like to go on record with respect to my support of this bill. I would like to echo some of the sentiments that have been expressed commending you for your courage, Mr. Speaker, and I also like to know that this public law would not have been possible without the overwhelming support of both chambers of the Legislature during the Fifteenth. I guess before we even take this vote I would like to urge the support of the members of the Fifteenth Legislature who had helped make PL 15-94 possible to support this bill

today. I have been thinking a great deal about the characteristics of leadership, Mr. Speaker, and I think that one of them is not that leaders never make mistakes, but that they recognize when the best of intentions fall short of what is feasible. And so I think that this bill repealing PL 15-94 except for that particular subsection is the right thing to do and it needs to be done and I think that our constituents have been expecting it anyway and will be resigned to paying higher rates as long as there is an end in sight. I think as the Vice Speaker has noted there are positive endeavors at work right now that will, for example, lead to privatization that would help ensure transparency on that process, help ensure that the mandates for renewable energy are met during the privatization process. This is provided for in the bill that Representative Heinz Hofschneider has introduced. Within my own committee for the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation we are working to develop a long range energy plan for the district that is intended to be a model for the CNMI. So there are good things happening and for the median term efforts to provide relief for constituents who are indigent or who have debilitating illness. I will also argue that we strenuously look for relief for everybody, for the businesses and residents that have been suffering under exorbitant rates. I think that even with the repeal of PL 15-94 we should still look to provide relief for all our people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Thank you. Are you ready for the question on that amendment?

The motion to adopt the floor amendment offered by Representative Yumul to H. B. NO. 16-79 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The amendment offered by Representative Yumul is hereby adopted. Is there any further discussion? Are we ready for the main motion? Clerk, call the roll.

The Clerk called the roll on the motion to pass H. B. NO. 16-79, HD1 on First and Final Reading:

Representative Edwin P. Aldan	yes
Representative David M. Apatang	yes
Representative Oscar M. Babauta	absent (during voting)
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 Palacios: I am sort of hesitant for voting yes to this bill because by doing so we are again spoon feeding CUC and when are we ever going to stop. When are we going to get CUC to be responsible in providing affordable power. But even with that Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend you for your courage, and at this point in time we need reliable power so I will go ahead and vote "yes."

Representative Raymond D. Palacios	yes
Representative Justo S. Quitugua	yes
Representative Joseph C. Reyes	yes
Representative Christina M. Sablan	yes
Representative Edward T. Salas	yes
Representative Rosemond B. Santos	yes
Representative Ramon A. Tebuteb	yes
Representative Ralph DLG. Torres	absent (excused)
Representative Stanley T. McGinnis Torres	no
Representative Ray N. Yumul	yes
Speaker Arnold I. Palacios	yes

Representative Hofschneider: Point of order.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Hofschneider, state your point of order.

Representative Hofschneider: Before you announce the votes, can you get the Sergeant-at-Arms to look for former Speaker Babauta.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Sergeant-at-Arms, please look for Representative Babauta. We are not going into recess, we are going to wait. (Pause) With a vote of seventeen “yes” and one “no,” H. B. NO. 16-79, House Draft 1 hereby passes the House. Representative Hocog.

Representative Hocog: I am just confused. We have one member absent; now, we have two absent. How can that be, Mr. Speaker?

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Representative Ralph Torres is excused for today’s session and Representative Babauta is now absent.

Representative Hocog: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Yes. If there is no objection, I would like to ask the members that at 12:30 p.m., we will go into a lunch break and probably come back on Tuesday. Is that amenable?

There was no objection on the floor.

Representative Stanley Torres: Mr. Speaker...

Speaker Arnold Palacios: Before I recognize a motion for adjournment, I recognize Representative Stanley Torres.

Representative Stanley Torres: Mr. Speaker, before you call a recess, I have addressed another letter to you dated today. This is in regards to the Telesource’s offer to our Saipan CUC. Do you want me to read for the journal, it is only one page?

Speaker Arnold Palacios: I will consider it read. Thank you. Mr. Floor Leader, a motion to adjourn until Tuesday at 10:00 a.m.

Representative Stanley Torres: Considered read, okay, Mr. Speaker.

Representative Stanley Torres’ statement was numbered as HSE. COMM. 16-28 and made part of the day’s record:

“Mr. Speaker:

In the matter of the much publicized and generous Telesource offer to "lend one of its diesel generators on Tinian to the CUC power plant in Lower Base..." we must respectfully decline the offer despite the obvious temptation of relieving ourselves of these ridiculous power outages.

That the offer is directed by Telesource to the Office of the Lt. Governor Timothy Villagomez, who is the former long-time head of the utility, is interesting in and of itself. Why wouldn't this letter be directed to the executive director of the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation?

Without claiming to know all of the particulars, I wonder if Telesource isn't having cash flow problems. I am advised that some large power users on Tinian have not been paying their bills on a routine basis, and this is hampering power delivery on Tinian. This shortfall no doubt in the millions is subsidized by Saipan collections.

A caller to the John Gonzales Live Show last week Wednesday asked why Tinian Dynasty owes CUC close to \$800,000 in power bills? This caller also insinuated in no uncertain terms that the Tinian Dynasty owes a huge amount in payments to the general fund. The question we must begin to ask ourselves is why these special arrangements are extended to a handful of companies? What are special exemptions are given and to which entities? What is the quid pro quo?

However meritorious Telesource's utility service may be in other locales, I can say, based on the public record in the CNMI, that this company's offer should be scrutinized with a fine-toothed comb before its offer ever hits the floor of this House. The company is embroiled in construction problems that have resulted in legal challenges. The core of this controversy is serious complaint about the poor condition of the homes that hard working people have put hard-earned savings into buying. While this is not a power matter per se, it goes to the heart of whether this is a company that we want to do business with, especially when we are in the midst of a crisis. There also remain,

Mr. Speaker, many lingering questions about the original Telesource power contract on Tinian. In my mind, this whole issue has never been fully resolved.

I wonder out loud whether this offer is not made at this time precisely because we are so obviously desperate for power. Telesource cannot be faulted for exploiting business opportunities wherever they find them or make them. They are a business looking to expand their business activity and perhaps overcome their cash flow problems on Tinian who can blame them? I urge all my colleagues to approach this offer, and other similar offers with extreme caution. The responsibility for responding to their unsolicited offer is ours, and I for one, vote no.

Sincerely,
/s/
Stanley T. Torres"

Floor Leader Camacho: Mr. Speaker, a motion to adjourn until Tuesday at 10:00 a.m.

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

Speaker Arnold Palacios: The House hereby adjourns until Tuesday.

The House adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn C. Fleming, House Clerk
House of Representatives

APPEARANCE OF LOCAL BILLS

FIRST APPEARANCE: 1st Appearance of a local bill is on the date of introduction.

SECOND APPEARANCE:

H. L. B. NO. 16-8: A Local Appropriation Bill for an Act for the Second Senatorial District to appropriate \$25,000.00 from local license fees for pachinko slot machines and poker machines in the Second Senatorial District for the transition of students from the NMC Tinian campus to the NMC Saipan campus; and for other purposes. (Representative Edwin P. Aldan)

THIRD APPEARANCE:

H. L. B. NO. 16-7: A Local Bill for an Act for the Third Senatorial District to name the public beach park located near the PIC Hotel in San Antonio (Lot No. 028I01) to “Pakpak Beach Park”; and for other purposes. (Representative David M. Apatang +2)