



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TWENTY-SECOND NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION, 2021

LEGISLATIVE JOURNAL

2nd Day, Second Regular Session

Tuesday, August 31, 2021

The House of Representatives of the Twenty-Second Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature convened its Second Day, Second Regular Session on Tuesday, August 31, 2021 at 10:39 a.m., in the House Chamber on Capitol Hill, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Honorable Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez, Speaker of the House, presided.

A moment of silence was observed.

ROLL CALL

The Clerk called the roll and fifteen members were present; Representative Celina R. Babauta arrived at 10:56 a.m. Representatives Blas Jonathan "BJ" T. Attao, Joel C. Camacho and Joseph A. Flores were absent and excused.

House Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker, 15 members are present and 4 members are absent.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk. With 15 members present and 4 absent, we do have a quorum for today's session and for the record, Vice Speaker BJ Attao Representative, Joel Camacho and Representative Joseph Flores are hereby excused. They have turned in their notice. I just got word that Representative Celina Babauta is under the weather. Any word from any member if she will be coming in? okay. All right. So, we'll let that reflect for the record. Thank you. We now move down to item II, Public Comments the floor is open. Please state your name and the entity you represent. You'll be given three-minutes to give your public comments. Thank you. Floor is open.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following individuals made comments:

Ms. Grace Vaiagae, *on behalf of the family of the late †Ivan A. Blanco*
Ms. Sonia Camacho, Director of Courts – CNMI Judiciary

The Chair directed the members to item III, Adoption of Journals and recognized the Clerk.

ADOPTION OF JOURNALS

The Clerk announced the following journal:

First Day, Second Regular Session Journal – August 3, 2021

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

The Floor Leader made a motion to adopt the following House Journal:

First Day, Second Regular Session Journal – August 3, 2021

The motion was seconded.

There was no discussion and the motion to adopt the First Day, Second Regular Session Journal – August 3, 2021 was carried by voice vote. There was no “nay” vote.

The Chair directed the members to item IV, Introduction of Bills.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

House Bills:

The following bills were introduced by the author of each bill and referred to its appropriate committee by the Chair.

H. B. NO. 22-76

To rename the “Ma’afala Breadfruit Program” as the “Ivan A. Blanco Breadfruit Program”.

REP. ROY C. A. ADA of Saipan, Precinct 1 (*for himself*, Angel A. Demapan, Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero, Edwin K. Propst, John Paul P. Sablan, Leila H.F.C. Staffler, Edmund S. Villagomez, and Ralph N. Yumul)

(REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS)

H. B. NO. 22-77

To establish the CNMI Qualified Medical Travel Assistance Program or MTAP; and for other purposes.

REP. CHRISTINA M.E. SABLAN of Saipan, Precinct 2 (*for herself*, Representatives Roy C.A. Ada, Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao, Celina R. Babauta, Sheila J. Babauta, Vicente C. Camacho, Richard T. Lizama, Donald M. Manglona, Edwin K. Propst, Patrick H. San Nicolas, Leila H.F.C. Staffler, Edmund S. Villagomez, Denita Kaipat Yangetmai, and Ralph N. Yumul)

(REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND WELFARE)

Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan: I do want to express my appreciation to my colleagues to our colleagues who have added their names to this bill thus far. I understand that there have been others who have added it after the 72-hour deadline and I wanted to invite other members who haven't had a chance to sign. Once you've had a chance to review it, to add your signatures with the Clerk as well. This bill was developed working with CHCC and the Attorney General's Office, as well as stakeholders that submitted comments throughout our public hearings and we would greatly appreciate the supportive of this body. Thank you.

The Chair directed the members to House Local Bills and recognized Representative Patrick H. San Nicolas.

House Local Bills:

Representative Patrick H. San Nicolas officially introduced the following bill:

H. L. B. NO. 22-21

To appropriate \$1,000,000.00 of the Casino License Fees collected for the Second Senatorial District pursuant to Public Law 20-10; and for other purposes.

REP. PATRICK H. SAN NICOLAS of Tinian, Precinct 6 (*for himself*)

House Legislative Initiatives: None

The Chair directed the members to item VI, Messages from the Governor and recognized the Clerk.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

House Resolutions: None

House Joint Resolutions: None

House Commemorative Resolutions: None

House Concurrent Resolutions: None

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR

House Clerk Linda B. Muña: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker and members, I would like to state for the record due to an error on my part, there is a typographical error with two communications listed under item VI that should reflect Gov. Comm. instead of Sen. Comm.

The Clerk announced the following Messages from the Governor:

GOV. COMM. 22-60: (8/2/2021) Informing the House that he signed into law, H. L. B. No. 22-8, S1, (*To impose a local license fee on all electronic gaming devices as defined in Title 6 section 3154 (a) (4), inclusive of poker amusement machines on the same e-gaming premises as defined in Title 6 section 3156 (b), located within the Third Senatorial District; and for other purposes.*). Became **Saipan Local Law 22-6** [*For info*]

GOV. COMM. 22-61: (8/2/2021 received 8/3/2021) Informing the House that he vetoed S. L. B. No. 22-1, D1 (*To establish the Medical Subsistence Allowance Program for the First Senatorial District; and for other purposes.*). [**Deadline: 10/2/2021**]

GOV. COMM. 22-62: (8/2/2021 received 8/3/2021) Informing the House that he vetoed S. L. B. No. 22-2, D1 (*To amend the prohibitions of certain activities within the Sabana Heights, Talakhaya and I Chenchon Park established under Rota Local Law 9-01, codified under 10 CMC §1801.*). [**Deadline: 10/2/2021**]

GOV. COMM. 22-63: (8/20/2021) Informing the House that he signed into law, S. B. No. 22-26, SD1, (*To amend 1 CMC § 2263 to require a special election to fill a Board of Education vacancy; to clarify when an elected member of the board must resign from his or her PSS employment; to amend 1 CMC § 6502(f); and for other purposes.*). Became **Public Law 22-04** [*For info*]

~~SEN.~~ GOV. COMM. 22-64: (8/20/2021) Informing the House that he signed into law, S. B. No. 22-29, HD1, (*To authorize government agencies, boards, and commissions to promulgate regulations to utilize electronic means to participate in official meetings.*). Became **Public Law 22-05** [*For info*]

~~SEN.~~ GOV. COMM. 22-65: (8/20/2021) Informing the House that he signed into law, S. B. No. 22-40, HD1, (*To protect the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands from Per and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) contamination.*). Became **Public Law 22-06** [*For info*]

There was no discussion; the Chair directed the members to item VII, Senate Communications and recognized the Clerk.

SENATE COMMUNICATIONS

The Clerk announced the following Senate Communications:

SEN. COMM. 22-34: (8/13/2021) Returning H. J. R. NO. 22-8, entitled, “*To honor and commend the Honorable Serafina Rosario King-Nabors for her dedicated service and remarkable contributions to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.*”, which was adopted by the Senate, without amendments on August 12, 2021. [*For info*]

SEN. COMM. 22-35: (8/13/2021) Returning H. J. R. NO. 22-9, entitled, “*To recognize and acknowledge the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve and the Guam-CNMI State Committee and their volunteer members for their exceptional service and commitment to our service men and women by recognizing the week of August 16th through August 20th, 2021, as “Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week”.*”, which was adopted by the Senate, without amendments on August 12, 2021. [*For info*]

SEN. COMM. 22-36: (8/13/2021) Returning H. J. R. NO. 22-10, entitled, “*To authorize the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, through its Governor, to submit to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Action Plan for the Community Development Block Grant Application No. B-*

21-ST69-0001; the HOME Investment Partnership Grant Application No. M-21-ST69-0203; and, the Emergency Solutions Grant Application No. E-21-DC69-0001; to receive the funds requested therein, and to assume all responsibilities that may be imposed by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnership Program, and the Emergency Solutions Grant Programs.”, which was adopted by the Senate, without amendments on August 12, 2021. [*For info*]

SEN. COMM. 22-37: (8/13/2021) Transmitting for House action S. B. NO. 22-05, SS1, entitled, “*To establish a Behavioral Health Professional Scholarship; and for other purposes.*”, which was passed by the Senate on August 12, 2021. [*For action*]

SEN. COMM. 22-38: (8/13/2021) Transmitting for House action S. B. NO. 22-08, SS1, entitled, “*To enact the CNMI Higher Education Act of 2021; and for other purposes.*”, which was passed by the Senate on August 12, 2021. [*For action*]

SEN. COMM. 22-39: (8/13/2021) Transmitting for House action S. B. NO. 22-17, SD1, entitled, “*To establish mandatory presentation of valid personal photo identification for any debit card or credit card transaction made in person and any check cash exchange or purchase for all business establishments in the Commonwealth.*”, which was passed by the Senate on August 12, 2021. [*For action*]

SEN. COMM. 22-40: (8/13/2021) Transmitting for House action S. B. NO. 22-46, entitled, “*To repeal and reenact 1 CMC § 2502 to clarify the rank and file at the Department of Public Safety; and for other purposes.*”, which was passed by the Senate on August 12, 2021. [*For action*]

SEN. COMM. 22-41: (8/13/2021) Transmitting for House action S. B. NO. 22-47, SD1, entitled, “*To amend 1 CMC § 2484(b) to authorize the Central Statistics Division to request vital statistics data and fish, game, wildlife and endangered and threatened species data.*”, which was passed by the Senate on August 12, 2021. [*For action*]

SEN. COMM. 22-42: (8/13/2021) Transmitting for House action S. L. I. NO. 22-2, SD1, entitled, “*To propose a constitutional amendment to Article V, section 4, of the NMI Constitution to require the Delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives from the Northern Mariana Islands to provide a report to the legislature in a joint session.*”, which was passed by the Senate on August 12, 2021. [*For action*]

SEN. COMM. 22-43: (8/20/2021) Returning H. B. 22-74, HD3, entitled, “*To make appropriations for the operations and activities of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, its agencies, instrumentalities, and independent programs, and to provide budget authority for government corporations for Fiscal Year 2022; and for other purposes.*”, which was passed

by the Senate with amendments on August 19, 2021, in the form of **H. B. No. 22-74, HD3, SD1**. [*For action on Senate amendments*]

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

The Floor Leader made a motion to accept Senate Communications 22-34 to 22-43 so they may become property of the House.

The motion was seconded.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Any discussion?

Several members voiced “ready.”

The Chair referred the following Senate Communications accordingly:

- *Senate Communication 22-37 (S.B. 22-05, SS1) referred to the Committee on Education*
- *Senate Communication 22-38 (S.B. 22-08, SS1) referred to the Committee on Education*
- *Senate Communication 22-39 (S.B. 22-17, SD1) referred to the Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations*
- *Senate Communication 22-40 (S.B. 22-46) referred to the Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations*
- *Senate Communication 22-41(S.B. 22-47, SD1) referred to the Committee on Natural Resources*
- *Senate Communication 22-42 (S.L.I. 22-2, SD1) referred to the Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations*

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader to make a motion to place House Bill 22-74, HD3 (Senate Communication 22-43) on the Bill Calendar for action.

The Floor Leader made a motion suspend Rule IX, Section 8 so they may place H.B. 22-74, HD3 (Senate Communication 22-43) on the Bill Calendar for action.

RULE IX. BILLS, RESOLUTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

Section 8. Referral of Bills and Resolutions

(a) Bills and resolutions shall be read by title upon introduction and (except as provided in subsection (b), the Speaker shall refer such measures to an appropriate committee or to more than one committee, jointly or sequentially. The Clerk shall endorse such reference on the measure before duplication and shall enter such reference upon the Journal. In the case of error of reference, correction may be made by the House, with debate, immediately after the reading and approval of the Journal, by unanimous consent, or upon motion of either committee claiming jurisdiction or the committee to which the measure has been erroneously referred.

(b) The Speaker may place a resolution directly on the Resolution Calendar, rather than refer it to a committee, subject to appeal to the House.

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote. There was no “nay” vote.

The Chair directed the members to item VIII, House Communications and recognized the Clerk.

HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS

The Clerk announced the following House Communications:

HSE. COMM. 22-27: (8/9/2021) From Speaker Villagomez officially informing the Governor of a vacancy in the Twenty-Second House of Representatives and to call for a special election pursuant to 1 CMC Division 6, Section 6502 and CNMI Constitution Art. II, Section 9. [*For info*]

HSE. COMM. 22-28: (8/9/2021) From Vice Speaker Attao informing the Speaker that he will be out of the Commonwealth on personal matters beginning August 11, 2021 and request to be excused from any and all official functions during his absence. In addition, authorizes Floor Leader Yumul to officially introduce pending legislations on his behalf. [*For info*]

HSE. COMM. 22-29: (8/9/2021) From Representative Flores informing the Speaker that he will be out of the Commonwealth on personal business on August 16, 2021—September 20, 2021 and request to be excused from any and all scheduled meetings or sessions during his absence. [*For info*]

HSE. COMM. 22-30: (8/9/2021) From the minority caucus appointing Representative Angel A. Demapan as the Minority Leader for the House of Representatives—22nd Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature. [*For Info*]

HSE. COMM. 22-31: (8/18/2021) From Representative Joel C. Camacho informing the Speaker that he will be out of the Commonwealth on official business on August 30, 2021—September 8, 2021 and request to be excused from any and all scheduled meetings or sessions during his absence. [*For info*]

There was no discussion; the Chair directed the members to item X, Communications from Departments & Agencies and recognized the Clerk.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

The Clerk announced the following Communications from Department & Agencies:

DEPT./AGCY. COMM. 22-25: (8/4/2021) From the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) submitting *CUC's FY 2021—Third Quarter Expenditure Report*. [*For info*]

(REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS)

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk. Any discussion under item X?

Several members voiced “ready.”

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Ready. Alright, I will refer Department and Agency Communication 22-25 to the Committee on Ways and Means just for reference.

The Chair directed the members to item XI, Miscellaneous Communications and recognized the Clerk.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS

The Clerk announced the following Miscellaneous Communications:

MISC. COMM. 22-52: (7/29/2021) From the honorable Alexander R. Narruhn, Governor, State of Chuuk—*extending its sincerest condolences and deepest sympathies on behalf of the people of the State of Chuuk on the passing of the †Representative Ivan Alafonso Blanco.* [For info]

MISC. COMM. 22-53: (7/30/2021) From the Chairperson of the Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council (SNIMC) re: *Request additional (5) NOPs for the SNIMC.* [For info]

(REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS)

MISC. COMM. 22-54: (8/9/2021) From MP Holdings LLC staff representatives re: *Submitting ethics complaint against Representative Ralph N. Yumul.* [For info]

(REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS)

MISC. COMM. 22-55: (8/16/2021) From the LB Director re: *Response to Open Government Act request for records on S.L.L. 22-6 (HLB 22-8, S1).* [For info]

(REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS AND THE COMMITTEE ON GAMING)

MISC. COMM. 22-56: (8/16/2021) From MP Holdings LLC re: *Submitting petition to recall S.L.L. 22-6, entitled, To impose a local license fee on all electronic gaming devices as defined in Title 6 section 3154 (a) (4), inclusive of poker amusement machines on the same e-gaming premises as defined in Title 6 section 3156 (b), located within the Third Senatorial District; and for other purposes.* [For info]

MISC. COMM. 22-57: (8/17/2021) Transmitting a certified copy of TALD Resolution No. 22-4, entitled, *“To commemorate the distinguished and honorable life of the late †Vicente M. Cing, Jr. and to recognize his years of exceptional service to the people of Tinian”*, which was adopted by the Tinian and Aguiguan Legislative Delegation on August 12, 2021. [For info]

MISC. COMM. 22-58: (received 8/23/2021) Garapan revitalization re: *An Improvement District for Garapan—Proposal and Recommendations submitted by Mufi Hannemann, Principal MFH Enterprises.* [For info]

(REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND TOURISM)

MISC. COMM. 22-59: (8/25/2021) From the Chairperson of the Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council re: *Delegation of Authority—Vice Chairperson Antonia M.*

Tudela will serve as Acting Chairperson from September 4, 2021—October 4, 2021. [For info]

MISC. COMM. 22-60: (8/27/2021) From MP Holdings LLC Consultant Gus Noble re: *letters of support by the staff of the Saipan Vegas and Club 88 for an amendment to Saipan Local Law 22-6. [For info—Note: Letters were not attached to correspondence when delivered.]*

(REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS AND THE COMMITTEE ON GAMING)

The Chair referred the following Miscellaneous Communications accordingly:

- *Miscellaneous Communication 22-53 referred to the Committee on Ways & Means*
- *Miscellaneous Communication 22-54 referred to the Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations*
- *Miscellaneous Communication 22-56 referred to the Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations and the Committee on Gaming*
- *Miscellaneous Communication 22-58 referred to the Committee on Commerce and Tourism and the Committee on Cannabis*
- *Miscellaneous Communication 22-60 referred to the Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations and the Committee on Gaming*

There was no discussion; the Chair directed the members to item XII, Reports of Standing Committees and recognized the Clerk.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

The Clerk announced that there are four Reports of Standing Committees ready for House action.

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

The Floor Leader made a motion to adopt the following Standing Committee Report:

S. C. R. NO. 22-23: Reporting on H. B. No. 22-22 entitled: “To establish laws to regulate bioprospecting activities within the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in order to ensure prior, informed consent and equitable sharing of benefits.” *Your House Committee on Natural Resources recommends that the House pass the bill in the form of **H. B. NO. 22-22, HD1.***

The motion was seconded.

There was no discussion and the motion to adopt Standing Committee Report 22-23 was carried by voice vote. There was no “nay” vote.

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

The Floor Leader made a motion to adopt the following Standing Committee Report:

S. C. R. NO. 22-24: Reporting on H. B. No. 22-31 entitled: “To authorize the Department of Public Lands to issue licenses and use permits and charge fees for the use of the public lands located within 150 feet of the high-water mark.” *Your House Committee on Natural Resources recommends that the House pass the bill in the form of H. B. NO. 22-31, HSI.*

The motion was seconded.

There was no discussion and the motion to adopt Standing Committee Report 22-24 was carried by voice vote. There was no “nay” vote.

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

The Floor Leader made a motion to adopt the following Standing Committee Report:

S. C. R. NO. 22-25: Reporting on H. B. No. 22-38 entitled: “To amend Title 6, Division 5, Chapter 3, Article 2. Protection of Abused Children, to enact a new §5326. Discovery of evidence of child abuse or recordings of child witnesses, and for other purposes.” *Your House Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations recommends that the House pass H. B. No. 22-38 in its current form.*

The motion was seconded.

There was no discussion and the motion to adopt Standing Committee Report 22-25 was carried by voice vote. There was no “nay” vote.

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

The Floor Leader made a motion to adopt the following Standing Committee Report:

S. C. R. NO. 22-26: Reporting on H. B. No. 22-58 entitled: “To amend 7 CMC §4101 to lower the interest rate of civil money judgments from nine percent (9%) to three percent (3%).” *Your House Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations recommends that the House pass H. B. No. 22-58 in its current form.*

The motion was seconded.

There was no discussion and the motion to adopt Standing Committee Report 22-26 was carried by voice vote. There was no “nay” vote.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: For the record, just please note Representative Celina Babauta is here present in the chamber for today's session.

The Chair directed the members to item XVI, Bill Calendar and recognized the Floor Leader.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL AND CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

RESOLUTION CALENDAR

None

BILL CALENDAR

Floor Leader Ralph N. Yumul: Mr. Speaker, short recess.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Short recess.

The House recessed at 10:58 a.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 11:00 a.m.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Before we went on recess, the Floor Leader had the floor.

The Floor Leader made a motion to reject the following legislation:

H. B. No. 22-74, HD3, SD1

To make appropriations for the operations and activities of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, its agencies, instrumentalities, and independent programs, and to provide budget authority for government corporations for Fiscal Year 2022; and for other purposes.

The motion was seconded.

Under discussion; the Chair recognized Representative Donald M. Manglona.

Representative Donald M. Manglona: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And good morning colleagues. While we appreciate the speedy review from the Senate and the approval of certain provisions that the House has proposed based on the committee's response to the Senate version, there are several provisions that were of concern that we would like to address in the conference committee. Main, particularly the salary adjustments for cabinet members. While the House approved the spending plan, the ARPA spending plan under current statute, there's a cap set on salaries. And so even by approving the Governor's spending plan, there are still statutes set in place, which would not allow any or certain individuals to go beyond that cap. But according to the Senate version, they've approved any salary adjustments, and they've also taken out Section 604 and overtime payments, which will now essentially allow those that are affected by this cap to receive any additional payments. In addition to that, we've also heard through the public comment that there maybe a concern regarding certain individuals and their salary proposal and so that's one of the issues that we would like to address in the conference committee. Lastly, the

\$2.6 million that was taken from the CHCC subsidy, we would need to address where those funds are – or how can we put some money back into CHCC. Additionally, we also receive communications from MVA, while they did not submit any comments at the time of the passing of this bill in the House. After seeing the Senate version, they have reached out and have requested that we consider their requests and so that's something that we can bring up to the conference committee. So therefore, members with the consent of the committee we urge you to vote on the rejection of this bill and we will bring this up with the Senate and see where we can compromise. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Manglona. Any further discussions on the bill? Recognize Representative John Paul Sablan.

Representative John Paul P. Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I just want to state for the record, my position, although there are some amendments made by the Senate that I agree upon such as the restoration of local fundings for the Scholarship Office, but there are some amendments that I don't actually necessarily support and that is one as the Chairman had mentioned the \$2.6 that was caught for the subsidy of CHCC. Therefore, my vote for the record will be yes for rejection. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative John Paul Sablan. Any further discussion, recognize Representative Angel Demapan.

Representative Angel A. Demapan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to inquire with the Chairman if he has any information from the Senate what the rationale is for all of these \$1 contingencies in the municipalities?

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Recognize Chairman Manglona.

Representative Donald M. Manglona: We have not gotten the clarification regarding that and so that's another thing that we would like to address in the conference.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: You still have the floor Representative Demapan.

Representative Angel A. Demapan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And with that said, I also want to echo colleague John Paul Sablan. I do appreciate the restoration of the scholarship funds, but I do not appreciate the removal of the CHC funds and I was kind of looking forward to a budget that we can all agree upon, but this one is hard to swallow at this point. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Demapan. Any further discussion?

Several members voiced “ready.”

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Alright. Again, the motion to is reject the Senate amendments on House Bill 22-74, HD3, SD1. Clerk, please call the roll.

The Clerk called the roll on the motion to reject House Bill 22-74, House Draft 3, Senate Draft 1 on First and Final Reading with the following results:

Representative Roy Christopher A. Ada	yes
Representative Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao	absent (<i>excused</i>)
Representative Celina R. Babauta	yes
Representative Sheila Therese J. Babauta	yes
Representative Joel C. Camacho	absent (<i>excused</i>)
Representative Vicente C. Camacho	yes
Representative Angel A. Demapan	yes
Representative Joseph A. Flores	absent (<i>excused</i>)
Representative Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero	yes
Representative Richard T. Lizama	yes
Representative Donald M. Manglona	yes
Representative Edwin K. Propst	yes
Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan	yes
Representative John Paul P. Sablan	yes
Representative Patrick H. San Nicolas	no
Representative Leila Haveia F. C. Staffler	yes
Representative Denita K. Yangetmai	yes
Representative Ralph N. Yumul	yes
Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez	yes

House Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker, 15 members voted “yes” and 1 member voted “no”.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk. With 15 voting in favor of the rejection and 1 voting “no” – House Bill 22-74, HD3, SD1 is hereby rejected. We will be going into conference committee and before we move forward to the next bill on the calendar, I would like to go ahead and announce the conferees on the House side, we have our Chairman Representative Donald Manglona, Representative Tina Sablan, Representative Leila Staffler and our alternate will be Representative John Paul Sablan. Okay, members ready? And I'll recognize the Floor Leader.

The Floor Leader made a motion to pass the following legislation:

H. B. No. 22-38

To amend Title 6, Division 5, Chapter 3, Article 2. Protection of Abused Children, to enact a new §5326. Discovery of evidence of child abuse or recordings of child witnesses, and for other purposes.

The motion was seconded.

There was no discussion; the Chair recognized the Clerk for a roll call vote.

The Clerk called the roll on motion for the passage of House Bill 22-38 on First and Final Reading with the following results:

Representative Roy Christopher A. Ada	yes
Representative Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao	absent (<i>excused</i>)
Representative Celina R. Babauta	yes
Representative Sheila Therese J. Babauta	yes
Representative Joel C. Camacho	absent (<i>excused</i>)
Representative Vicente C. Camacho	yes
Representative Angel A. Demapan	yes
Representative Joseph A. Flores	absent (<i>excused</i>)
Representative Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero	yes
Representative Richard T. Lizama	yes

Representative Donald M. Manglona	yes
Representative Edwin K. Propst	yes
Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan	yes
Representative John Paul P. Sablan	yes
Representative Patrick H. San Nicolas	yes
Representative Leila Haveia F. C. Staffler	yes
Representative Denita K. Yangetmai	yes
Representative Ralph N. Yumul	yes
Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez	yes

House Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker, all 16 members present voted “yes.”

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk. With all 16 members voting “yes,” House Bill 22-38 hereby passes the House. Floor Leader.

The Floor Leader made a motion to pass the following legislation:

H. B. No. 22-22, HD1

To establish laws to regulate bioprospecting activities within the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in order to ensure prior, informed consent and equitable sharing of benefits.

The motion was seconded.

Under discussion; the Chair recognized Representative Sheila Therese J. Babauta.

Representative Sheila Therese J. Babauta: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As Chairwoman of the Natural Resources Committee, your committee did spend many months soliciting comments and we have received well over 10 comments in regards to this bill. I would like to thank the committee and the author Representative Angel Demapan for this bill that will allow for bio prospecting activities to be regulated within the CNMI to ensure prior informed consent and equitable sharing of benefits. Members and the viewing public your committee found that bio prospecting is defined as any search analysis or study of naturally occurring, biological processes, organic compounds, living or dead organisms, genetic information and DNA, and any other naturally occurring substances processes and outputs found in the CNMI. And so basically, we are surrounded by this blessing of natural resources in our oceans and this bill will allow for any scientists, any organizations to come out to the CNMI and study our natural organisms around us opening opportunities for our people to engage in, you know, medicinal pharmaceuticals or any other kind of any kind of processes that these compounds can produce. And so, this is something that the committee supports. We did have a lengthy committee meeting, where we went through the bill and the author of the bill is in the Natural Resources Committee and he was a part of the process and so I am ready to vote. I highly encourage everyone to support this bill. And thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Sheila Babauta. Any further discussion? Recognize Representative Angel Demapan.

Representative Angel A. Demapan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I just want to thank also Chairwoman Sheila and the members of the committee for the work and the support in marking up House Bill 22-22 in the form of HD1. As many of you may know, this is another run at this

bill. This was the vision of the late Representative Richard Seman and so I have included a short title provision to name this bill after the late Richard Seman, but having read everything that's in the committee report and having heard the committee chairs a statement before me, I'm also just respectfully asking everyone for their support in passing this legislation. It is an environmentally responsible bill and it's also a bill that ensures that we as people of the land have a stake when parts of our resources are harvested for commercial use. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Demapan. Any further discussion?

Several members voiced "ready."

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Clerk, please call the roll.

The Clerk called the roll on motion for the passage of House Bill 22-22, House Draft 1 on First and Final Reading with the following results:

Representative Roy Christopher A. Ada	yes
Representative Blas Jonathan "BJ" T. Attao	absent (<i>excused</i>)
Representative Celina R. Babauta	yes
Representative Sheila Therese J. Babauta	yes
Representative Joel C. Camacho	absent (<i>excused</i>)
Representative Vicente C. Camacho	yes
Representative Angel A. Demapan	yes
Representative Joseph A. Flores	absent (<i>excused</i>)
Representative Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero	yes
Representative Richard T. Lizama	yes
Representative Donald M. Manglona	yes
Representative Edwin K. Propst	yes
Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan	yes
Representative John Paul P. Sablan	yes
Representative Patrick H. San Nicolas	yes
Representative Leila Haveia F. C. Staffler	yes
Representative Denita K. Yangetmai	yes
Representative Ralph N. Yumul	yes
Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez	yes

House Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker, all 16 members present voted "yes."

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk. With all 16 members present voting "yes," House Bill 22-2, HD1 hereby passes the House. Floor Leader.

The Floor Leader made a motion to pass the following legislation:

H. B. No. 22-58

To amend 7 CMC §4101 to lower the interest rate of civil money judgments from nine percent (9%) to three percent (3%).

The motion was seconded.

Under discussion; the Chair recognized Representative John Paul Sablan.

Representative John Paul P. Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I am in support of House Bill 22-58. Although Mr. Speaker, just for the record, I would like to ask the Committee on JGO because I don't see any solicited comments from any governmental agencies or any public hearing and for that reason, if there's any it seems that the way I look at the committee report that this is a full policy call. And but for the record, maybe we can give the opportunity to the Chairwoman of JGO to expound. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative John Paul Sablan. Recognize Chairwoman Celina Babauta.

Representative Celina R. Babauta: I'm sorry, Rep. Sablan which bill are you talking about?

Representative John Paul P. Sablan: 22-58 the interest rate civil money judgement from 9% to 3%.

Representative Celina R. Babauta: That bill was, we did solicit comments for those bills. And so far, the comments we got are in favor of it, unanimously, all the comments we have received. So, I'm asking the committee as a whole to support the bill as it was provided for in the committee report. I found no agency that significantly went against that bill.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Chairwoman. Recognize John Paul Sablan.

Representative John Paul P. Sablan: Thank you, Madam Chair for that explanation. I just didn't find any in the committee report that there was solicited comments. So perhaps, maybe I don't have the amended version of the committee report or is there any other committee report copy other than what we have in place right now?

Representative Celina R. Babauta: We can provide it to you once a –

Representative John Paul P. Sablan: Okay. So, the solicitor comments were not embedded in the committee report. Is that clear Madame Chairwoman?

Representative Celina R. Babauta: Let me take a look.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: We'll call for a short recess.

The House recessed at 11:17 a.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 11:21 p.m.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Before we went on recess, Representative John Paul Sablan had the floor. I now recognize representative John Paul.

Representative John Paul P. Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And on recess, I did have a discussion with some of the committee members including the Chairwoman of the committee on JGO and I'm ready for the vote. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative John Paul Sablan. Any further discussion? I recognize Chairwoman Babauta.

Representative Celina R. Babauta: I just wanted to note for the record, Representative John Paul Sablan for your support of the bill that through public meetings to contradict or go against this bill. And so, the committee decided to support it based on previous committee reports in consideration of indigent clients, they agreed to the bill is proposing to reduce it to 3%, rather than 5% as the old bill had reflected and that was the consideration that the JGO committee took into account. We're ready to vote on this.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Celina Babauta. Any further discussion? I recognize Representative Richard Lizama.

Representative Richard T. Lizama: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you Floor Leader for your concern, Representative Sablan it was a bill that was introduced in the last legislature, went up to the Senate and it slept there. We brought it back and it was suggested that we go down to even 1% because all the other countries that have gone down to that percent, that was, well, we don't want to hurt the attorneys as well. And as a matter of fact, my initial suggestion or recommendation was 6%, but it was the committee from the last legislature that brought it down to 3%. There should be no challenges because at that time we were the minority. So, I thank you for the record.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you for that, Representative Richard. Any further discussion on the floor? Recognize Representative Tina Sablan.

Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And just to further add to the clarification that our Chair provided and as Representative Sablan inquired you know it really is a policy call of the legislature. I think just reflecting on the discussions that took place on a similar version of this bill, that Representative Lizama introduced last legislature it was the opinion of this previous body and now the committee that 9% is quite high in terms of interest rates for money judgements. And the committee did look at the range of interest rates that other jurisdictions assess. And you know, it does range from 1% to 6%. And you know, as Chair Celina indicated at the previous legislature proposed lowering it from the current 9% to 5% and in this committee, we agreed on 3%. So you know, we're trying to strike a balance where considering the interests of indigent defendants who have these judgements we don't want to drive them further into debt, but we also think that there should be you know, some incentive for people to pay their money judgements. It doesn't have to be 9%, but we think 3% is more than fair. Thank you. And just to clarify, there were several public meetings in which this bill was on the agenda and was up for discussion and there was opportunity for public comments at all of those meetings. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Tina Sablan. Any further discussion? Ready? Clerk, please call the roll.

The Clerk called the roll on motion for the passage of House Bill 22-58 on First and Final Reading with the following results:

Representative Roy Christopher A. Ada	yes
Representative Blas Jonathan "BJ" T. Attao	absent (<i>excused</i>)

Representative Celina R. Babauta	yes
Representative Sheila Therese J. Babauta	yes
Representative Joel C. Camacho	absent (<i>excused</i>)
Representative Vicente C. Camacho	yes
Representative Angel A. Demapan	yes
Representative Joseph A. Flores	absent (<i>excused</i>)
Representative Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero	yes
Representative Richard T. Lizama	yes
Representative Donald M. Manglona	yes
Representative Edwin K. Propst	yes
Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan	yes
Representative John Paul P. Sablan	yes
Representative Patrick H. San Nicolas	yes
Representative Leila Haveia F. C. Staffler	yes
Representative Denita K. Yangetmai	yes
Representative Ralph N. Yumul	present
Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez	yes

House Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker, 15 members voted “yes” and 1 member is present.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk. With 15 voting “yes” and 1 voting “present,” House Bill 22-58 hereby passes the House. I now recognize the Floor Leader.

The Floor Leader made a motion to pass the following legislation:

H. B. No. 22-31, HS1

To authorize the Department of Public Lands to issue licenses and use permits and charge fees for the use of the public lands located within 150 feet of the high-water mark.

The motion was seconded.

Under discussion; the Chair recognized Representative Sheila Therese J. Babauta.

Representative Sheila Therese J. Babauta: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Colleagues and the general public, this bill to authorize the Department of Public Lands to issue encroachment permits. We did change the title to specify that this bill will only allow DPL to issue encroachment permits and charge fees for the use of public lands located within 150 feet of the high watermark is and has always been a controversial bill. And so, the committee as Chairwoman of the Natural Resources we insured, I ensured that we held public hearings on every island, Rota, Tinian, and Saipan dating back since April of this year, we also solicited comments from over 20 departments and agencies and we received comments from well over 20 community members, organizations, and public entities. And so, colleagues and Mr. Speaker and the viewing public for clarification, the changes that are made that are proposed in this bill will allow DPL to charge for encroachments of existing structures only. This will not allow for the construction of new buildings by any new buildings or permanent structures by any businesses. This is only for public lands and these are existing structures. So, at this time, DPL, the people of the CNMI are losing out on funds that we can be charging these businesses on existing structures. And that's because DPL has no authority to collect from these businesses. They only have the authority to tell them to demolish the existing structures that when it was built, was compliant with the law, but because of climate change and because of our shorelines, you know, now that we're losing land, we are literally losing land because of climate change and this is a good example of that.

Many of our very loyal and long-time businesses who have built structures at the time when our shorelines were well beyond 150 feet of the water high water mark are now encroaching. And so that's the only changes that are really proposed by this bill. We did ensure that any of the encroachment permits that are granted will not interfere with the public's access to these beaches and to these public spaces, because it is very important to me. It's very important to the committee that our people still have access to our beautiful lands. And so that language is included in this substitute. And so, I would like to thank the author Rep Leepan Guerrero for introducing this bill to finally address, you know, the issues that our long-term businesses are experiencing and so that we can collect on these public lands. And so, if there are any questions, I'd be happy to answer any questions that the members have. I am in support of this piece of legislation. I do encourage my colleagues to support this bill as well. And I'm ready to vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Sheila Babauta. Recognize Representative Leepan.

Representative Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to commend the committee on NR for their work on this bill, even though it was a house substitute bill. It was well intent, the Chair really did an awesome condition on the bill and I salute her and the committee members. And I hope that with that explanation, the Senate would act on this bill because we can't just sit and wait for DPL to start collecting this public facilities that were built on or private that are built on the encroachment aspect of this. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I am ready to vote. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Leepan Guerrero. Any further discussion? Ready? Okay, Clerk please call the roll.

The Clerk called the roll on motion to for the passage of House Bill 22-31, House Substitute 1 on First and Final Reading with the following results:

Representative Roy Christopher A. Ada	yes
Representative Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao	absent (<i>excused</i>)
Representative Celina R. Babauta	yes
Representative Sheila Therese J. Babauta	yes
Representative Joel C. Camacho	absent (<i>excused</i>)
Representative Vicente C. Camacho	yes
Representative Angel A. Demapan	yes
Representative Joseph A. Flores	absent (<i>excused</i>)
Representative Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero	yes
Representative Richard T. Lizama	yes
Representative Donald M. Manglona	yes
Representative Edwin K. Propst	yes
Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan	yes
Representative John Paul P. Sablan	yes
Representative Patrick H. San Nicolas	yes
Representative Leila Haveia F. C. Staffler	yes
Representative Denita K. Yangetmai	yes
Representative Ralph N. Yumul	yes
Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez	yes

House Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker, all 16 members present voted “yes”.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk. With all 16 members present voting “yes”, House Bill 22-31, HS1 hereby passes the House. Thank you, members. I know we have one bill on the calendar, but at the request of the author, we will leave it on calendar. Recognize Representative Celina Babauta.

Representative Celina R. Babauta: Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I'd like to state for the record that this bill was initially to be yanked out of the JGO Committee at the request of the author, because he deemed it urgent against my better judgment and the judgment of the committee members. We agreed to have it placed on calendar at least for one calendar day pursuant to the rules and today is the session, I believe that we should be voting on it after it has been put on the bill calendar. So despite being under medication today, I came here to vote for this bill at the request of the author. The fact that the author has prioritized a softball game over his duties here at the legislature is not my concern. And I believe with the – I am ready to vote on this and I'd like to hear from the Floor Leader, why it has been deferred and really why should we delay the inevitable of this bill?

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: I'd like to call for a recess.

The House recessed at 11:34 a.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 11:43 a.m.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Those are the bills that we're going to be acting on just for today on today's session. We'll go ahead and move down to the next item on the agenda item 17, which is Miscellaneous Business. Floor is open, recognize Representative Roy Ada.

No action taken for the following legislation:

H. B. No. 22-3

A Bill for an Act to amend 9 CMC §2101(d) by requiring the motor vehicle liability insurance expiration to be consistent with the vehicle registration expiration; and for other purposes.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Representative Roy Christopher A. Ada: Thank you, Speaker. Just for the record, I would like to recognize the presence of the late Ivan Blanco's family and friends. Also, the Chuuk Association, the President for their presence today in support of the bill, House Bill 22-76. Thank you all and we are communicating with everybody here, all my colleagues, we are all in support of this bill and we appreciate your presence here today. Also, Carmen Sablan, the late Ivan Blanco's wife was here. I don't know if she's still in here today, but yes thank you all for your presence.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Roy Ada. Anymore? Floor is still open under Miscellaneous. Recognize Representative Sheila Babauta.

Representative Sheila Therese J. Babauta: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and colleagues for just allowing and supporting the US Army Corps of Engineers to host a community meeting here at the Legislature on Wednesday, September 1st, that is tomorrow. And so, if the weather is

cooperative, the community meeting will be in the parking lot just to allow for a more comfortable and casual environment for our community to come out and hear about the formerly used dumpsite in Talafofo that was a former hospital during World War II it was constructed by the US Navy and demolished around the 1960s. The site is on the King Fisher golf course, but the US Army Corps of Engineers has drafted a plan for no action to clean any of the physical debris or the contaminants because according to their research it poses no significant risks to human or environmental health, and I just want to state for the record that, you know, those studies were funded and completed by their agencies. And so colleagues that's happening tomorrow. If the weather is uncooperative, the community meeting will move into the House Chamber and that's from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. So it is after working hours and I highly encourage you to participate and to attend the Natural Resources Committee is assisting in just organizing the community meeting to ensure that our community is informed and that they have access to the information that they understand the proposed plan and the proposed action by the US Army Corps of Engineers. And so, if you have any questions, you can contact me or my office. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Sheila Babauta. Recognize Representative Angel Demapan.

Representative Angel A. Demapan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a quick note of appreciation to you and all of our colleagues for your support today in passing House Bill 22-22 HD1. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Demapan. Floor is still open. Ready? Oh, recognize Representative Edwin Propst.

Representative Edwin K. Propst: Thank you, Speaker and thank you colleagues. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to I don't know, share my – I don't know if it's discussed or frustration right now with what has been ongoing with the daily articles in the paper making or trying to make it look like we're all just horrible, horrible lawmakers. I'm talking about our Saipan lawmakers. So, Tinian and Rota, you're excused. For moving expeditiously, recklessly, trying to hurt 70 employees by shutting down Saipan Vegas and Club 88, shame on Saipan lawmakers, shame, shame, shame. I've been reading about this and op-eds and everything else. And I think we have some here today. I'm frustrated because they conveniently miss out on many important facts, but they also have lied to us. And I stayed that for the record because on August 18, there was an article in the variety headline news that stated that effective immediately, immediately Club 88 was shutting down. Last I checked, effective immediately means now. Lo and behold, a good friend of mine, not going to say her name, but it rhymes with Pina Pablan was going to Majesty Restaurant to order takeout because apparently, it's her favorite restaurant. Nonetheless, she had noticed that the lights were on at Club 88. She went in and she looked and she saw gambling and she saw things going on and it wasn't shutdown. So, who's the liar, we or them. And the thing that bothers me is they somehow in their deceitful ways, singled out one particular person and made him the enemy. And I'm talking about our good colleague and our Floor Leader Represented Ralph Yumul because he happened to be the author of the bill. He carried that bill. There was actually somebody else that had written it and the intent was to include all businesses in this local law and tax them and that included IPI whether or not that is the case it's something that is debatable and we can discuss that later, but certainly to file an ethics complaint supposedly because his brother happens to be the CEO of IPI is insulting to our intelligence. And I say this because unless you're

living in Jupiter or Mars, we already know that IPI has already shutdown. They're on it's last legs. They can't even pay to take down the crane. They're struggling. What is their future? It looks bleak. Right now CCC has suspended license and they're looking at revoking it. And based on everything that we look at, all the evidence, it does look like they are going to have their license revoked. Nonetheless, to try and bully us and to try to shame us into somehow bowing and we're going to suddenly repeal this because we're being threatened and coerced and tricked and bamboozled is not going to work for me. And I'm certain it will not work for you. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, if we really thought that they were sincere in negotiating or trying to talk to us and explain to us to have better judgment, would they not have simply come and try to do that instead of launching a lawsuit instead of going out and trying to insult our good colleague and trying to insult us our intelligence, now that is hurtful. If they hit on and attack him, who's next? When we don't bow and kowtow. This was a policy call and that's what we do as policy makers. They ignore the fact that this was pre-filed on April 14, introduced on April 23rd, transmitted for action on June 18 and not passed into law signed by the Governor until August 2nd, 115 days or so, that passed during that time. And they pretend that they didn't know anything about it. Are you serious? I'm sorry, but I am really disappointed at what has been happening and what has been said, because it's so easily to gaslight and to lie and to hide the obvious truth. Mr. Gus Noble needs to first and foremost, follow the law and register as a lobbyist. Same as anyone else who is paid by that company to register as a lobbyist. They also should make an apology to our good colleague and if they want to negotiate, they should be sincere. The golf course shutting down, how did we do that? If the golf course is profitable, it should have stayed open. So don't blame us for all your shortfalls. And last I finished with something that was very wise and I complimented him then and I compliment him again our leader Angel Demapan, our good colleague had recommended that we have them open their books and so we can have a better understanding. We can invite our fiscal analysts to look at those books and see what we can determine is fair in and I appreciate that sincerely. He was being sincere. The question is, are they willing to do so? I'm willing to bet they're not. So, let's call their bluff. Come on in, bring in your books. We can talk. And then we can make the decision with our fiscal analyst. I apologize, Speaker and I apologize colleagues, but again, what has been done to a colleague? What has been said about us, a Saipan lawmakers is degrading and unacceptable. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Propst. Any further? Ready? Recognized Representative Tina Sablan.

Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Since my name coincidentally rhymes with Pina Pablan, I thought I should also just weigh in. I was startled, frankly, colleagues you know, I was in Garapan picking up take-out dinner from the restaurant next door and notice that the lights were on and cars were parked outside Club 88 and people were going in and I just walked right in, doors were open, lights were on, people were gambling, machines were doing their thing and staff were working. And, you know, I like many of you have been taking note of the all-out media campaign that's been happening at least in one of our local newspapers in support of this industry and their interest, these particular e-gaming business interests. And you know, I think that we have seen quite a few examples of these agents operating in bad faith. I am concerned as Chairman Propst has mentioned that we have a number of people representing these businesses that are not registered lobbyists, who are actively lobbying the members of the SNILD to change the law, to benefit their businesses. I was able to verify with the Secretary of Finance that not a penny has been collected and additional fee on these machines since the local law was enacted. And so you know, why they're in the headlines claiming that this bill takes

immediate effect and their businesses will be shutdown immediately when, you know, it's not true. I mean, it's just plainly not true. The businesses are still operating the license. The additional license fees have not been collected. It's also not true that this bill was rushed. It took months. It appeared on calendar. All our public meetings are public and there's opportunities for comment. You know, at this point, we should be used to being lobbied by special interests by gaming interests in particular. I would like to echo the calls of our Chairman, Leader Demapan, other colleagues here to invite MP holdings, to open up their books and, and really show us that their businesses cannot sustain additional fees that still taken altogether are a fraction of what poker establishments are already paying, a fraction. I would also like to note that the owners and executives and agents of MP holdings are also the owners, executives, and agents of Bridge Capital, which is the beneficiary of a qualifying certificate. The people of the Commonwealth have been extremely generous to the owners, executives, and agents of bridge capital. And just, for the members' information I recently obtained a copy of that qualifying certificate, corporate income tax, individual income tax, business gross revenue tax, excise tax abatement, earnings tax abatement, a hundred percent abatement of these taxes for 25 years. These are the same people owning and operating these e-gaming businesses and they cannot pay an additional fee. That again is still far below what poker establishments are paying right now. And they haven't even begun to pay it. So, I'd like to see the records. I like to see some verification. I'd like them to be more forthcoming and more honest. And you know, let's stop with the media campaign, the accusations, the false hoods that are being propagated in our headlines. You know, there is pending litigation. It's my opinion that as long as there is a lawsuit against the government, like none of us should be engaging. Let the lawsuit run its course and let these guys register to be lobbyists and you know, let's follow the law. And you know, I'm glad Mr. Speaker that you have referred the MP holdings communications to the Gaming Committee. I do think that we should take them up further and in an investigative hearing and really review all the records in front of us and you know, find some resolution, but, you know, the policy call of lawmakers to assess fees and taxes, that is a policy call. And you know, we followed our procedures and I don't appreciate, the demonstrations of very bad faith and dishonesty, frankly, that we are seeing from these agents and representatives of MP holdings. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Tina. Any further under Miscellaneous?

Several members voiced "ready."

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Alright, we move down to item XVIII, Announcements. Any announcements? Recognize Representative Sheila Babauta.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Representative Sheila Therese J. Babauta: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, as acting Chair for the SNILD, we will be having a SNILD session tomorrow at 1:30. Today at 2:00 PM, the SNILD members are invited to attend a meeting to just go over the agenda and so I would also like to announce that as acting Chairwoman, I have appointed Representative Tina Sablan to serve as the acting Floor Leader for the SNILD for the duration of Chairman Vinnie Sablan's absence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Sheila, acting Chairwoman. Any further announcements, recognize Representative Leila Staffler.

Representative Leila Haveia F.C. Staffler: Thank you, Speaker. I just like to put on record happy birthday to our Chairman of Vinnie Sablan who is off-island, but it is his birthday today. I was told.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Whoop, whoop! Happy birthday. Any more under announcement? Alright, we now move down to adjournment and I recognize the Floor Leader.

ADJOURNMENT

Floor Leader Ralph N. Yumul: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I now offer a motion to adjourn subject to the call of the Chair.

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote. There was no “nay” vote.

The House adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Venetia S. Rosario
House Journal Clerk

APPEARANCE OF LOCAL BILLS

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

SECOND LEGISLATIVE DAY:

H. L. B. NO. 22-19: To amend 10 CMC, Division 3, §3702, Authorization to the Municipalities, to require dog owners to be responsible for their pets solid waste disposals. Introduced by REP. DENITA KAIPAT YANGETMAI of Saipan, Precinct 3 (*for herself*, Representatives Richard T. Lizama, and Ralph N. Yumul) on August 3, 2021.

H. L. B. NO. 22-20: To prohibit the hunting of Sambar Deer on Tinian until the year 2026; and for other purposes. Introduced by REP. PATRICK H. SAN NICOLAS of Tinian, Precinct 6 (*for himself*) on August 3, 2021.

THIRD LEGISLATIVE DAY:

H. L. B. NO. 22-15: To prohibit the hunting of Micronesia Starling or *Paluman Sali* on Tinian until the Year 2025 and for other purposes. Introduced by REP. PATRICK H. SAN NICOLAS of Tinian, Precinct 6 (*for himself*) on July 6, 2021.

H. L. B. NO. 22-18: To amend Title 10, Division 3 of the Commonwealth Code by inserting a new Chapter 15 to establish permitting requirements for aircraft and/or personal landings in the Northern Islands; and for other purposes. Introduced by REP. SHEILA J.

BABAUTA of Saipan, Precinct 4 (*for herself*, Representative Joel C. Camacho) on July 6, 2021.

Appearance of Measures introduced on the House Floor during the House Session on August 3, 2021:

H. B. NO. 22-73: To amend certain sections under Title 2, Division 3, Chapter 4 of the Commonwealth Code to enable the mayors of each municipality to enforce provisions in the Litter Control Act of 1989, as amended; and for other purposes. Introduced by REP. LEILA H.F.C. STAFFLER of Saipan, Precinct 5 (*for herself*, Representatives Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao, Celina R. Babauta, Sheila J. Babauta, Vicente C. Camacho, Richard T. Lizama, Donald M. Manglona, Edwin K. Propst, Christina M.E. Sablan, Patrick H. San Nicolas, Denita Kaipat Yangetmai, and Ralph N. Yumul) on August 3, 2021; subsequently referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.

H. B. NO. 22-74: To make appropriations for the operations and activities of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, its agencies, instrumentalities, and independent programs, and to provide budget authority for government corporations for Fiscal Year 2022; and for other purposes. Introduced by REP. DONALD M. MANGLONA of Rota, Precinct 7 (*for himself*, Representatives Celina R. Babauta, Sheila J. Babauta, Vicente C. Camacho, Richard T. Lizama, Edwin K. Propst, Christina M.E. Sablan, Patrick H. San Nicolas, Leila H.F.C. Staffler, and Denita Kaipat Yangetmai) on August 3, 2021; subsequently moved and placed on the Bill Calendar.

H. B. NO. 22-75: To add a new Expungement procedure as section 4120 to Division 4 of Title 6 of the Commonwealth Code; and for other purposes. Introduced by REP. PATRICK H. SAN NICOLAS of Tinian, Precinct 6 (*for himself*, Representatives Joseph A. Flores, John Paul P. Sablan, Denita Kaipat Yangetmai, and Ralph N. Yumul) on August 3, 2021; subsequently referred to the House Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations.

H. L. B. NO. 22-19: To amend 10 CMC, Division 3, §3702, Authorization to the Municipalities, to require dog owners to be responsible for their pets solid waste disposals. Introduced by REP. DENITA KAIPAT YANGETMAI of Saipan, Precinct 3 (*for herself*, Representatives Richard T. Lizama, and Ralph N. Yumul) on August 3, 2021.

H. L. B. NO. 22-20: To prohibit the hunting of Sambar Deer on Tinian until the year 2026; and for other purposes. Introduced by REP. PATRICK H. SAN NICOLAS of Tinian, Precinct 6 (*for himself*) on August 3, 2021.

H. L. I. NO. 22-1: To amend Article III, Section 14 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth Northern Mariana Islands to authorize the election of a Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety; and for other purposes. Introduced by REP. EDWIN K. PROPST of Saipan, Precinct 1 (*for himself*, Representatives Celina R. Babauta, Christina M.E. Sablan, Edmund S. Villagomez and Ralph N. Yumul) on August 3, 2021; subsequently referred to the House Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations.

H. RES. NO. 22-10: Paying just tribute and commending the Honorable Felicidad Leiwamal Taman Ogumoro upon serving more than 50 years of distinguished service to the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Introduced by REP. DENITA KAIPAT YANGETMAI of Saipan, Precinct 3 (*for herself*, Representatives Roy C.A. Ada, Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao, Celina R. Babauta, Sheila J. Babauta, Joel C. Camacho, Vicente C. Camacho, Angel A. Demapan, Joseph A. Flores, Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero, Richard T. Lizama, Donald M. Manglona, Edwin K. Propst, Christina M.E. Sablan, John Paul P. Sablan, Patrick H. San Nicolas, Leila H.F.C. Staffler, Edmund S. Villagomez, and Ralph N. Yumul) on August 3, 2021; subsequently placed on the Resolution Calendar.

H. RES. NO. 22-11: To honor the memory of the late Veteran U.S. Army Sergeant First Class, Antonio C. Tomokane, better known as “Mitch”, and to express our sincere gratitude for his twenty-one years of military active-duty service and for his many contributions toward the security of our nation particularly, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands through his dedication, commitment, and service both in the United States and the CNMI Government. Introduced by REP. VICENTE C. CAMACHO of Saipan, Precinct 3 (*for himself*, Representatives Roy C.A. Ada, Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao, Celina R. Babauta, Sheila J. Babauta, Joel C. Camacho, Angel A. Demapan, Joseph A. Flores, Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero, Richard T. Lizama, Donald M. Manglona, Edwin K. Propst, Christina M.E. Sablan, John Paul P. Sablan, Patrick H. San Nicolas, Leila H.F.C. Staffler, Edmund S. Villagomez, Denita Kaipat Yangetmai, and Ralph N. Yumul) on August 3, 2021; subsequently placed on the Resolution Calendar.

H. J. R. NO. 22-9: To recognize and acknowledge the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve and the Guam-CNMI State Committee and their volunteer members for their exceptional service and commitment to our service men and women by recognizing the week of August 16th through August 20th, 2021, as "Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week". Introduced by REP. VICENTE C. CAMACHO of Saipan, Precinct 3 (*for himself, Representatives Roy C.A. Ada, Blas Jonathan "BJ" T. Attao, Celina R. Babauta, Sheila J. Babauta, Joel C. Camacho, Angel A. Demapan, Joseph A. Flores, Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero, Richard T. Lizama, Donald M. Manglona, Edwin K. Propst, Christina M.E. Sablan, John Paul P. Sablan, Patrick H. San Nicolas, Leila H.F.C. Staffler, Edmund S. Villagomez, Denita Kaipat Yangetmai, and Ralph N. Yumul*) on August 3, 2021; subsequently placed on the Resolution Calendar.

H. J. R. NO. 22-10: To authorize the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, through its Governor, to submit to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Action Plan for the Community Development Block Grant Application No. B-21-ST69-0001; the HOME Investment Partnership Grant Application No. M-21-ST69-0203; and the Emergency Solutions Grant Application No. E-21-DC69-0001; to receive the funds requested therein, and to assume all responsibilities that may be imposed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Community Development Block Grant, HOME Investment Partnership Program, and the Emergency Solution Grant Programs. Introduced by REP. JOHN PAUL P. SABLAN of Saipan, Precinct 2 (*for himself, Representatives Roy C.A. Ada, Blas Jonathan "BJ" T. Attao, Celina R. Babauta, Sheila J. Babauta, Ivan A. Blanco, Joel C. Camacho, Vicente C. Camacho, Angel A. Demapan, Joseph A. Flores, Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero, Richard T. Lizama, Donald M. Manglona, Edwin K. Propst, Christina M.E. Sablan, Patrick H. San Nicolas, Leila H.F.C. Staffler, Edmund S. Villagomez, Denita Kaipat Yangetmai, and Ralph N. Yumul*) on August 3, 2021; subsequently placed on the Resolution Calendar.

House information on deadlines for override: None