



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TWENTY-SECOND NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

SPECIAL SESSION, 2022

LEGISLATIVE JOURNAL

2nd Day, First Special Session

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

The House of Representatives of the Twenty-Second Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature convened its Second Day, First Special Session on Wednesday, April 27, 2022 at 10:06 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.

The Chair appointed Representative Donald M. Manglona to serve as Floor Leader Pro Tempore.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Please rise for a moment of silence and I ask that you please keep our good colleague Representative John Paul Sablan and his family in your prayers as his mother passed away earlier this morning. Thank you.

A moment of silence was observed.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Before we move forward with the roll call, colleagues, after the roll call, we will take a short recess for our resolution presentation. I now recognize the Clerk to please call the roll.

ROLL CALL

The Clerk called the roll and seventeen members were present; Representatives Sheila Therese J. Babauta, John Paul P. Sablan and Ralph N. Yumul were absent and excused.

House Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker, 17 members are present and 3 members are absent.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk. Can you repeat that number again?

House Clerk Linda B. Muña: 17 members are present and 3 members are absent.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk. With 17 members present and 3 absent this constitutes a quorum. Please note that Representative Sheila Babauta, Representative John Paul Sablan and Representative Yumul are hereby excused for today's session. Before we

move forward I also like to recognize the presence of former Representative Andrew Salas. Thank you, members. We will now take a recess for the resolution presentation.

The House recessed at 10:08 a.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 10:15 a.m.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: We now rise back to session. We now move down to item II, Public Comments. The floor is open for public comments. Please keep your comments to three-minutes. Hold on, my bad. We have got to remember that the Clerk and the Legal Counsel is very vital to the session. So my apologies for the inconvenience. Floor is open for public comments. Please state your name and the entity you represent and you have three-minutes. Thank you. Floor is open.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

The Chair directed the members to item IV, Introduction of Bills and recognized the Representative Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao.

ADOPTION OF JOURNALS

None

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. 22-99

To amend 1 CMC, Division 6. Elections specifically §§6213, 6222, 6521(a), 6524(a) and 6528(f) of the Commonwealth Code; and for other purposes.

REP. BLAS JONATHAN “BJ” T. ATTAO of Saipan, Precinct 3 (*for himself*, Representatives Joel C. Camacho, Richard T. Lizama, Christina M.E. 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. 22-100

To further enable recruitment, retention, and appropriate classification and compensation of Medicaid personnel; and for other purposes.

REP. LEILA H.F.C. STAFFLER of Saipan, Precinct 5 (*for herself*, Representatives Celina R. Babauta, Corina L. Magofna, Donald M. Manglona, Christina M.E. Sablan, and Ralph N. Yumul)

(REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND WELFARE)**H. B. NO. 22-101**

To provide a tax incentive for business entities that hire qualified ex-offenders; and for other purposes.

REP. ANGEL A. DEMAPAN of Saipan, Precinct 1 (*for himself*)

(REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS)

The Chair directed the members to House Local Bills.

House Local Bills:**H. L. B. NO. 22-32**

To re-appropriate One Thousand, Sixteen Dollars (\$1,016.00) allotted under Saipan Local Law 19-2, specifically under Business Unit 3400X; Twelve Dollars (\$12.00) allotted under Saipan Local Law 19-2, specifically under Business Unit 3500A; Sixteen Thousand Dollars (\$16,000.00) allotted under Saipan Local Law 19-24, specifically under Business Unit 7177I; Thirteen Thousand, One Hundred Seventy-Three Dollars (\$13,173.00) allotted under Saipan Local Law 20-04, specifically under Business Unit 3754; Forty-Two Thousand, Fifty-Nine Dollars (\$42,059.00) allotted under Saipan Local Law 20-26, specifically under Business Unit 7190B; and Seventy-Nine Thousand, One Hundred Seventy-One Dollars (\$79,171.00) allotted under Saipan Local Law 20-26, specifically under Business Unit 7186X; and for other purposes.

REP. ANGEL A. DEMAPAN of Saipan, Precinct 1 (*for himself*, Representatives Joseph A. Flores, and Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero)

House Legislative Initiatives: None

The Chair directed the members to item V, Introduction of Resolutions and recognized Representative Leila H.F.C. Staffler.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS***House Resolutions:***

Representative Leila H.F.C. Staffler officially introduced the following resolution and request that the resolution be introduced as a Committee of the Whole:

H. RES. NO. 22-18

To recognize Community College Month in the month of April and to commend the Northern Marianas College for the reaffirmation of its accreditation for a historic eight-year term and its contributions to the workforce development needs of the Commonwealth.

REP. LEILA H.F.C. STAFFLER of Saipan, Precinct 5 (*for herself*, Representatives Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao, Celina R. Babauta, Joel C. Camacho, Richard T. Lizama, Corina L. Magofna, Donald M. Manglona, Christina M.E. Sablan, Edmund S. Villagomez, and Ralph N. Yumul)

Several members voiced “no objection.”

The Chair placed House Resolution 22-18 on the Resolution Calendar for action and recognized Representative Leila H.F.C. Staffler for the next introduction.

Representative Leila H.F.C. Staffler officially introduced the following resolution and request that the resolution be introduced as a Committee of the Whole:

H. RES. NO. 22-19

To honor Mrs. Aiko Mihara for reaching the delightful age of 100 years old.

REP. LEILA H.F.C. STAFFLER of Saipan, Precinct 5 (*for herself, Representatives Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao, Celina R. Babauta, Joel C. Camacho, Richard T. Lizama, Corina L. Magofna, Donald M. Manglona, Christina M.E. Sablan, Edmund S. Villagomez, and Ralph N. Yumul*)

Several members voiced “no objection.”

The Chair placed House Resolution 22-19 on the Resolution Calendar for action.

House Joint Resolutions: None

House Commemorative Resolutions: None

House Concurrent Resolutions: None

The Chair directed the members to item VII, Senate Communication and recognized the Clerk.

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR

None

SENATE COMMUNICATIONS

The Clerk announced the following Senate Communications:

SEN. COMM. 22-93: (4/22/2022) Senate President on the matter of the Notice to File an Appearance by Representative Corina L. Magofna as House Prosecutor. [*For info*]

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

The Floor Leader made a motion to accept Senate Communication 22-93 so it becomes property of the House.

The motion was seconded.

There was no discussion and the motion to accept Senate Communication 22-93 so it becomes property of the House was carried by voice vote. There was no “nay” vote.

There was no discussion; 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. 22-80: (4/20/2022) From Representative Guerrero informing the Speaker that he will be out of the Commonwealth on personal matters from April 21—April 24, 2022 and request to be excused from any and all official functions during his absence.
[For info]

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

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

None

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS

None

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

The Clerk announced that there is 1 Standing Committee Reports ready for adoption.

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

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

S. C. R. NO. 22-44: Reporting on H. B. No. 22-80 entitled: “To have the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) join the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT) to improve and expand access to mental health care in the CNMI; and for other purposes.” *Your House Committee on Health and Welfare recommends that the House pass H. B. No. 22-80 in its current form.*

The motion was seconded.

Under discussion; the Chair recognized Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan.

Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan: Thank you. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, in preparing this committee report, your Health and Welfare Committee reviewed, written and oral comments that were received on the bill from practicing psychologists, licensed in the CNMI, as well as comments from the Commonwealth Health Care Corporation, the Community Guidance Center, the Health Care Professions Licensing Board among other stakeholders. The committee conducted several public meetings and receive testimonies on the bill during committee hearings

as well. Additionally, several members of the committee myself included, attended a meeting of the Healthcare Professions Licensing Board, which had placed review of the bill on their agenda that day earlier this month or last month I should say to share our own comments on the bill and answer questions of the board, which would play a significant role in overseeing the implementation of PSYPACT here in the CNMI. And finally, we closely reviewed PSYPACT informational resources available online at the PSYPACT website and looked at the increasing number of states now more than half of the states in the country that have enacted legislation to participate in PSYPACT. The CNMI, for the members information, would be the first among the territories to join PSYPACT if this bill is signed into law. I do want to offer just a very minor technical correction to the committee report if I may, Mr. Speaker. On page two of the report, the very bottom of the page second line to the last, the word “being” should actually read “become” and if that could just be considered technical for the Clerk to make before the report is transmitted. I would appreciate that. Thank you. I yield.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Tina Sablan. Legal Counsel and Clerk, please note that as a technical. Thank you. Recognize Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Pro Tem Donald M. Manglona: My apologies, Mr. Speaker and members. Your House Committee in regards to Standing Committee Report 22-44 your House Committee on Health and Welfare recommends that the House passes House Bill 22-80 in its current form with the technical amendments made by Rep. Sablan.

There was no further discussion and the motion to adopt Standing Committee Report 22-44 was carried by voice vote. There was no “nay” vote.

The Chair directed the members to item XV, Resolution Calendar and recognized the Floor Leader.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL AND CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

RESOLUTION CALENDAR

The Floor Leader made a motion to adopt the following resolution:

S. J. R. NO. 22-08 A Senate Joint Resolution Requesting the Governor and the Secretary of Finance to provide financial assistance to meet the increased demand of fuel costs in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands by implementing a \$500.00 fuel voucher program. [See SEN. COMM. 22-91]

The motion was seconded.

Under discussion; the Chair recognized Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan.

Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I fully support this joint resolution and want to thank our colleagues in the Senate and particularly Senator Edith Deleon Guerrero for championing this form of relief. We all know and have felt the pain ourselves of rising gas prices in the CNMI and this would help. This would alleviate some of that pain at the gas pump. I do want to note that we also have a House joint resolution that is still pending in the Senate that proposes a new local stimulus in the form of not debit cards, but by cash payments to qualify taxpayers in the CNMI, as well as their dependents and I'd like to ask our Senate colleagues to consider that resolution and past that as well. The administration has so far, at least acknowledged that there's a need for a local stimulus. It sounds like they're still leaning in the direction of debit cards, which we know came with all kinds of inconveniences and hardships and now we're learning from constituents about debit cards that have expired and they weren't aware that there was an expiration date. So, the funds that they've been saving you know, all of these inconveniences would not be an issue if we would just give taxpayers who need this assistance, the freedom and the flexibility to decide how these funds should be spent. So, I wanted to state that for the record and ask our colleagues also for your assistance in reaching out to the Senate to show their support for a new local stimulus that our people really need. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Tina Sablan. Recognize the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Pro Tem Donald M. Manglona: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to enter for the record that there might be a possible conflict of interest. So, I will be abstaining from this vote. Thank you.

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

The Clerk called the roll on the motion for the adoption of Senate Joint Resolution 22-08 with the following results:

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

House Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker, 16 members voted “yes” and 1 abstention.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk. With 16 members voting in favor and 1 abstention, Senate Joint Resolution 22-08 is hereby adopted. Floor Leader.

The Floor Leader made a motion to adopt the following resolution:

H. RES. NO. 22-18

To recognize Community College Month in the month of April and to commend the Northern Marianas College for the reaffirmation of its accreditation for a historic eight-year term and its contributions to the workforce development needs of the Commonwealth.

The motion was seconded.

Under discussion; the Chair recognized Representative Leila H.F.C. Staffler.

Representative Leila Haveia F.C. Staffler: Thank you, Speaker. Colleagues, if you recognize the language of that bill. Yes, I am re-introducing a house resolution versus a joint resolution it was an error on my part, which I accept and acknowledge, because in order for this resolution to be ready for presentation by Friday we needed to make sure that it was a house resolution and not a joint one because the Senate was not going to meet in time. So, I thank you for your indulgence and forgive my error. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Staffler. You are forgiven. Any more discussions on the floor?

Several members voiced “ready.”

There was no further discussion and the motion to adopt House Resolution 22-18 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 resolution:

H. RES. NO. 22-19

To honor Mrs. Aiko Mihara for reaching the delightful age of 100 years old.

REP. LEILA H.F.C. STAFFLER of Saipan, Precinct 5 (*for herself, Representatives Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao, Celina R. Babauta, Joel C. Camacho, Richard T. Lizama, Corina L. Magofna, Donald M. Manglona, Christina M.E. Sablan, Edmund S. Villagomez, and Ralph N. Yumul*)

The motion was seconded.

Under discussion; the Chair recognized Representative Leila H.F.C. Staffler.

Representative Leila Haveia F.C. Staffler: Thank you, Speaker. And I want to thank all of the colleagues for coming together in celebration of Ms. Mihara. Her birthday was this weekend and she celebrated with the family and they're really grateful for us honoring her in this way, especially while she's alive, we can give her this awesome gift that we'll recognize all the years

that she's been and seen the history of the Marianas since before we were a US territory. So, it's pretty awesome. Thank you.

There was no further discussion and the motion to adopt House Resolution 22-19 was carried by voice vote. There was no “nay” vote.

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

BILL CALENDAR

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

H. B. No. 22-95, SS1

A Bill for an Act to amend the Appropriations Act of Fiscal Year 2022 (Public Law 22-08) to establish a business unit for Retirees' Bonus and to reappropriate personnel lapses within departments and line-item vetoes within Public Law 22-08 to fund the Retirees' Bonus; and for other purposes. [See SEN. COMM. 22-92]

The motion was seconded.

The Chair called for a short recess.

The House recessed at 10:34 a.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 10:36 a.m.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Before we went on recess the Vice Speaker had the floor, so I recognized the Vice Speaker.

Vice Speaker Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a brief history of a 22-95, SS1 the Senate passed their version that took lapse funds for WGI's – a potential job WGIS for the remainder of the fiscal year and that was a concern that was brought up by a few government employees that their anniversaries are coming up after the fact of these legislation being passed by the Senate. So, we reached out to OPM and they raised the same concerns. So, with those concerns, we contacted the Secretary of Finance. The Secretary of Finance assured that those monies were actually pre-date backwards. So, the first and second quarter monies that we're supposed to have been reserved for WGI's we're already there. Fortunately, I guess those funds are not used up yet because the anniversary date comes up in May, June, July, August, and September. So those monies are available in addition to those monies that were line item vetoed by the Governor during the budget process under 22-8. So those that freed up the money, the actual amount of money is actually greater than the \$2.6 million that's needed to address the retiree bonuses and the 1% to OPA. So, just a little brief history so that there's knowledge that this is not going to affect the government employees that are due up for their WGI's and even in the submission of the budget proposal, which became 22-8 the WGI's were being addressed by the ARPA funds. So, this won't touch the WGI's that will

be or the government employees that will be receiving their WGI's forward after this bill becomes a law. So with that being said, Mr. Speaker, I'm ready to support 22-95, SS1 and thank you for allowing me to speak.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Vice Speaker. I now recognize Representative Celina Babauta.

Representative Celina R. Babauta: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you for the explanation Vice Speaker, but due to what may be perceived as a conflict of interest, I will abstain from voting while I fully support the bonuses for the retirees, my husband is a retiree and I will indirectly benefit from this bonus. So, I will be abstaining. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Celina Babauta. Any more discussions on the floor? Recognize Representative Tina Sablan.

Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to express my appreciation to our colleagues in the House and especially Vice Speaker BJ Attao and Chairman Donald Manglona for the leadership that has been shown in one, supporting the retiree bonus and two, making sure that this bonus was appropriated the right way. Meaning, in the form of legislation as an amendment to the budget act, originating in the House as constitutionally required. Identifying the sources of funding and without granting unlimited 100% reprogramming power to the Governor, which now the Administration acknowledges the Department of finance acknowledges was never necessary in the first place. I also appreciate our Senate colleagues and the Department of Finance for at last bringing to the table the information that we've been asking for identifying the sources of funding and again, acknowledging that this 100% reprogramming power was not needed to make this bonus available to our retirees. I do wish we could have come to this table together sooner, but it is what it is and I'm glad that we're all at the same table now. I'm ready to support this bill. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Tina Sablan. Recognize Leader Demapan.

Representative Angel A. Demapan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And in that same regard, I also want to express my appreciation to the members of the Senate and our colleagues here in the House and the Administration for finally coming together and finding a resolution to this matter. We've seen it go in numerous, different directions and it became really worrisome for our own retirees and not so much for the legislature. So, to finally get to this point and I'm hoping that at the end of this roll call this bill will be sent to the Governor for action and I too am ready to support this bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Leader Demapan. I recognize the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Pro Tem Donald M. Manglona: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And as the author of this bill, you know, initially 22-95 was introduced to counter the 22-91 and what the Senate had proposed was the a hundred percent reprogramming authority, but you know, as Rep. Sablan had mentioned, you know, all we ever really wanted was to ensure that the monies will be taken out from or will be identified and that's what this substitute did and again, I would like to thank the

Vice Speaker for going the extra mile to ensure that WGI's will not be affected for employees not having, not meeting their anniversary date yet, but moving forward, you know, a part of a transparent and accountability, part of being transparent and accountable for the funds, it's important to identify where these monies are coming from so that we can carefully plan out the next budget or the next requests that we receive from any agencies. And so, with that, with what the Senate had substituted, we're more than ready to support this version. It's something that we, I know our retirees have been waiting for and, we thank them for their patients. And so, I fully support this bill. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Floor Leader. Recognize Representative Richard Lizama.

Representative Richard T. Lizama: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you everyone for this bill that we're now do pass for the retirees. I want to speak on behalf of the retiree, as myself, a retiree, but I have not received my pension due to my situation or position right now, but I want to thank them for being patient and I know that they are the backbone of the CNMI progress and they economy. With this \$1,000 bonus that will be given to each retiree will benefit them for sure. As we all know that they have been suffering due to COVID-19 pandemic and the prices have gone up due to the war in Ukraine. So, I salute them and thank you for your patience and a job well done. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Lizama. Any further discussions on the floor? Ready?

Several members voiced "ready."

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Ready? I now recognize the Clerk to please call the roll.

The Clerk called the roll on the motion for the passage of House Bill 22-95, Senate Substitute 1 on First and Final Reading with the following results:

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

House Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker, 14 members voted “yes” and 1 abstention.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk was 16 voting “yes” and 1 abstention, House Bill 22-95, SS1 hereby passes the House. Floor Leader.

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

H. B. No. 22-80

To have the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) join the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT) to improve and expand access to mental health care in the CNMI; and for other purposes. [S. C. R. NO. 22-44]

The motion was seconded.

Under discussion; the Chair recognized Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan.

Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Colleagues, this legislation House Bill 22-80 represents the first step that the Commonwealth must take in order to join the Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact known as PSYPACT, which would greatly improve and expand access to mental health care services for residents in the CNMI. We are aware of a significant and urgent need for increased mental health care across the nation, really, but acutely so here in the Marianas, especially in the aftermath of multiple typhoon disasters and a global pandemic in a relatively short period of time. The CNMI is considered an underserved area and mental health care providers here report that their patients commonly must endure long wait times from months to even over a year before they're able to get care. PSYPACT helps bridge the gap in underserved areas like ours. The compact enables residents in participating PSYPACT states to more easily access, a larger pool of licensed mental health care professionals in participating states particularly through the practice of tele-psychology as well as licenses to conduct temporary practice in participating PSYPACT states. PSYPACT also expands access to specialize mental health services that are often not available in areas like ours, such as services for people with autism or for LGBTQ youth and while PSYPACT helps ease regulatory barriers in order to allow practice across state lines across jurisdictions, it also provides a mechanism for rigorous screening and vetting providers and ensuring the competent and ethical practice of psychology across PSYPACT state. So, colleagues, this bill has received strong support across our community of mental health care professionals, including providers in private practice, in our school system and in the Commonwealth Health Care Corporation and the Community Guidance Center. The Healthcare Professions Licensing Board, which would play a central role in the implementation of PSYPACT here in the CNMI has also expressed their support for the passage of this bill and I'd like to thank everyone who took the time to review this legislation, all the members of the committee, the staff for their diligence and presenting this bill to the full House and I asked for your support as well today, colleagues Happy to answer any questions. Thank you.

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

The Clerk called the roll on the motion for the passage of House Bill 22-80 on First and Final Reading with the following results:

Representative Roy Christopher A. Ada

yes

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

House Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker, all 17 members present voted “yes.”

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk. With all 17 members present voting “yes,” House Bill 22-80 hereby passes the House. With no more bills under Bill Calendar. We now move down to item XVII, Miscellaneous Business and the floor is open. Recognize the Floor Leader.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Floor Leader Pro Tem Donald M. Manglona: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just for the members information, I sent the tentative schedule for the budget hearings to all Ways and Means members. I will be finalizing the schedule by Friday after I get feedback from all the members. Basically, that's so that you guys can reserve those dates as well as plan for any public hearings that you would like on the other senatorial districts. If any of the dates conflict with any major events in your committee, please let me know and I'd be happy to move them, but for now if no one has any objections by end of business tomorrow, then I'll publish that schedule by Friday so that we may begin. Again, we are looking to start budget hearings on May 11th with the Secretary of Finance or the Department of Finance to be the first agency to bring in addition to asking questions about the proposed budget from the Governor. In addition, we hope to finish by mid-June so that the Fiscal Analysts and LA can finalize the budget package in anticipation of a budget amendment come July 1st, which is the deadline. And so, if there's any amendments to that submission, then we have about another week after the July 1st to make the corrections and adopt the product so that the Senate can have ample time to review the House version. If you have any questions or you would like to have your public hearings coincide with the budget hearings on Rota or Tinian, please let my office know so that we can coordinate and get that planned out. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Floor Leader. Floor is still open under miscellaneous. Ready. All right. We will now move down to item XVIII, Announcements. Floor is open. Recognize Representative Tina Sablan.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Representative Christina Marie E. Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to invite our colleagues to a presentation today. It's a sponsored by the Humanities Council presentation of photography from across Micronesia, including the Northern Marianas photos dating back to the 1960s. This is sponsored by the Humanities Council, Mr. Floyd Takeuchi, a long time photographer writer, veteran journalist of more than 40 years. He's based on Hawaii, but is here on island after being gone for several years, he was actually born in the Marshall Islands in the 1950s and grew up on Saipan, went to Hopwood High School and went on to become a journalist working in the Pacific Daily New and the Micronesian News Service, took photos that whole time and he'll be sharing some of those today. He actually covered the CNMI's very first election back in 1978 and has great stories, great historical knowledge and it would be it would be a great opportunity for anyone in the community to be able to join the presentation tonight. It will be at the American Memorial Park visitors center, doors open at 5 30 it starts at 6:00 and it's free and open to the public. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Tina Sablan. Recognize Representative Leila Staffler.

Representative Leila Haveia F.C. Staffler: Thank you, Speaker. I would like to let the general community know that precinct 5, will be hosting a basketball tournament for youth in the month of May and the last day to sign up for teams across the island, it doesn't matter what precinct they live in, but we want to invite them all the way to precinct 5 to play ball. And so, the last day to sign up for teams will be on Friday. The online sign up is a Google for, the address is really simple bit.ly/P5Hoops. Please join us and if you are down in the precinct in May come and watch some games in the evenings. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Staffler. Recognize Representative Yangetmai.

Representative Denita K. Yangetmai: Thank you, Speaker. I'm making an announcement for the Rematao Music Society Incorporated or RMS. They are trying to raise funds to buy instruments. So, they are selling tickets \$10.00 a booklet of six coupons or six tickets and the drawing will be in June. They're going to make your life exciting on June 26 at the Carolinian Utt. So, they're inviting all of you to go there and enjoy the music outdoors because you're just staying in the house listening to music, so you should get outdoors. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Yangetmai. Recognize the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Pro Tem Donald M. Manglona: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we all know, Flame Tree is this weekend. I just want to invite you to come visit the Rota booth, my office is assisting the DCCA Rota and sending delegates artists and what's the term practitioners – so there will be Chamorro medicine there if any of you guys are trying to get pregnant or, you know, *pasmo*, you know, all these stuffs, they'll be selling those medicines onsite. So, please help support our Rota practitioners and artists and so they'll be here this weekend to sell some of those stuff. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Floor Leader. I recognize Leader Demapan.

Representative Angel A. Demapan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Because I think Chairman Donald made a good segue into my comment. I'm not sure if we're going to have a session next week so in the event we don't have one, I want to wish all the mothers in this chamber, a happy mother's day and the mothers of CNMI a happy mother's day and those that are not yet mothers to visit the Rota booth.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Leader Demapan. I recognize again, Rep. Yangetmai.

Representative Denita K. Yangetmai: Sorry. I forgot, in all of that excitement, I forgot to announce the phone number you should go to, you know, buy the tickets, it's 989-9464 and it belongs to Mr. Jesus Elameto. Thank you. *Biba*.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Yangetmai. Representative Staffler.

Representative Leila Haveia F.C. Staffler: Thank you, Speaker. One other announcement, my colleague Rep. San Nicolas and I would love to also let everyone know that the Tinian San Jose Fiesta is also this weekend. It is happening at the same time as the Flame Tree. So, if you aren't going to the Flame Tree, please go to the Tinian Fiesta and if you can go to both, go to both. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Staffler. Will they have the same stuff as the Rota booth?

Representative Leila Haveia F.C. Staffler: I think they are probably all going to be there this time.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you. Any further announcements? None. This afternoon at one o'clock the Youth Congress will be presenting a resolution to the family of my late staff Kina and so they will be presenting that at one o'clock. So, very fitting day for that presentation as well as she would have been 39 years old on this day. So, if you have the time, I know Kina has helped everyone in this office from the LB to each of your staff and your offices, and also to all the constituents around the precinct. So, if you have the time, it will be here in the House Chamber at one o'clock, the Youth Congress will be presenting the resolution to the family. Thank you. Any further announcements? Recognize Representative Celina Babauta.

Representative Celina R. Babauta: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to wish a happy administrative assistance day to everybody and recommend that they hit up their bosses for their lunch. They're entitled to it. Certainly, we can't do our work and be organized without their assistance. So, I want to recognize everybody's administrative assistance. Today's their day. Thank you for everything that you do for us and for all your bosses, including in the private sector. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Are you sure you're done with that statement? I thought you said you're going to cover all our... Alright, any more announcements ready? Representative Staffler before we adjourn.

Representative Leila Haveia F.C. Staffler: I am so sorry. I really appreciate you giving me this additional time. I do need to invite all of our colleagues to the community college presentation of the resolution that we passed today it is on Friday at one o'clock. The location I'm blanking right now, because I almost forgot that one, but I will message you in the chat. If you are able to make it, please RSVP with me because they need to know the numbers. I apologize and thank you. Sorry.

Speaker Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez: Thank you, Representative Staffler. Any more before we adjourn? Ready? All right, Floor Leader for the motion.

ADJOURNMENT

Floor Leader Ralph N. Yumul: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time, I moved 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 11:00 a.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: NONE

THIRD LEGISLATIVE DAY: NONE

Appearance of Measures introduced on the House Floor during the House Session on April 19, 2022:

H. B. NO. 22-98: To reestablish a CNMI Minimum Wage by repealing and reenacting 4 CMC §§ 9221, 9222 and 9223; to repeal and amend certain sections of the Minimum Wage and Hour Act; to abolish the Wage Review Committee; and for other purposes. Introduced by REP. CHRISTINA M.E. SABLAN of Saipan, Precinct 2 (*for herself*, Representatives Celina R. Babauta, Richard T. Lizama, Leila H.F.C. Staffler, Edmund S. Villagomez, and Denita K. Yangetmai) on April 19, 2022; subsequently referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means.

[Added 4/19/2022 H. L. B. NO. 22-31: To appropriate un-obligated funds under Saipan Local Law 22-10 \$430,000) from fees collected pursuant to Public Law 20-10; and for other purposes. Introduced by REP. CORINA L. MAGOFNA of Saipan, Precinct 3 (*for herself*) on April 19, 2022.

H. RES. NO. 22-17: To extend our sincere condolences and sympathies to the family of the late Honorable Donald Edwin Young and to acknowledge his lifelong derive and contributions to the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Introduced by REP. ANGEL A. DEMAPAN of Saipan, Precinct 1 (*for himself*, Representatives Roy C.A. Ada, Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao, Celina R. Babauta, Sheila J. Babauta, Joel C. Camacho, Vicente C. Camacho, Joseph A. Flores, Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero, Richard T. Lizama, Corina L. Magofna, Donald M. Manglona, 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 April 19, 2022; subsequently referred to the Resolution calendar.

H. J. R. NO. 22-15: To recognize Community College Month in the month of April and to commend the Northern Marianas College for the reaffirmation of its accreditation for a historic eight-year term and its contributions to the workforce development needs of the Commonwealth. Introduced by REP. LEILA H.F.C. STAFFLER of Saipan, Precinct 5 (*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, Corina L. Magofna, Donald M. Manglona, Edwin K. Propst, Christina M.E. Sablan, John Paul P. Sablan, Patrick H. San Nicolas, Edmund S. Villagomez, Denita Kaipat Yangetmai, and Ralph N. Yumul) on April 19, 2022; subsequently referred to the Resolution calendar.

C. RES. NO. 22-11: To honor the memory and legacy of the late Ivan Kenneth Propst, Jr., and his exceptional contributions in service of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Pacific region, especially in the fields of education and the humanities; and to extend heartfelt condolences to his bereaved family. Introduced by REP. RALPH N. YUMUL 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, Vicente C. Camacho, Angel A. Demapan, Joseph A. Flores, Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero, Richard T. Lizama, Corina L. Magofna, Donald M. Manglona, Christina M.E. Sablan, John Paul P. Sablan, Patrick H. San Nicolas, Leila H.F.C. Staffler, Edmund S. Villagomez, and Denita Kaipat Yangetmai) on April 19, 2022; subsequently referred to the Resolution calendar.

H. C. R. NO. 22-2: To approve revenues and resources of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, as identified pursuant to Article III, Section 9(a) of the Constitution, as amended, and 1 CMC, Division 7, for Fiscal Year 2023, beginning October 1, 2022, and ending on September 30, 2023. Introduced by REP. DONALD M. MANGLONA of Rota, Precinct 7 (*for himself*, Representatives Edmund S. Villagomez and Denita K. Yangetmai) on April 19, 2022; subsequently referred to the Resolution calendar.

House information on deadlines for override:

GOV. COMM. 22-117: (3/1/2022) Informing the House that he vetoed S. L. B. No. 22-6 (*To amend 10 CMC §12114 to provide for the Rota Casino Gaming Commission member’s compensation.*). [*Deadline: 4/30/2022*]