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OFFICIAL RULES OF PROCEDURE

SAIPAN AND NORTHERN ISLANDS LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION
TWENTY-SECOND NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
THIRD SENATORIAL DISTRICT

THE HONORABLE JESUS P. MAFNAS MEMORIAL BUILDING
CAPITOL HILL • SAIPAN

SAIPAN AND NORTHERN ISLANDS LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION
TWENTY-SECOND NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
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RULE I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SAIPAN AND NORTHERN ISLANDS LEGISLATIVE DELEGATION.

Section 1. Rules. The Rules of the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation shall govern the conduct of business at all sessions of the Delegation. If any question of procedure arises which is not specified in the Rules, it shall be decided by the Chair, in accordance with Rule XVI, Section 2. The SNILD rules of the previous legislative term shall govern until the adoption of new official rules of the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation.

Section 2. Officers of the Delegation.

(a) Elected Officers. The elected officers of the Delegation shall be the Chair, the Vice Chair and the Floor Leader.

(b) The Chair, the Vice Chair and the Floor Leader shall be elected by majority vote at the First Organizational Session of the Delegation except as provided in Rule II, Section 1.

(c) Appointed Officers. The Chair shall appoint a Clerk and a Sergeant-at-Arms and may appoint such other clerks and officers as he/she deems necessary utilizing existing staff of the House, the Senate, and the Legislative Bureau.

(d) Pro Tem Officers. The Speaker of the House shall be the Chairperson Pro Tem and the Floor Leader of the House shall be the Floor Leader Pro Tem. The Chairperson Pro Tem shall call and preside over the Organizational Session until the election of SNILD officers.

Section 3. Organizational Notification. At the first meeting of the first session of the Delegation, the Chair shall notify the Governor, Speaker of the House, Senate President, Chairperson of the Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council and the Mayors of Saipan and the Northern Islands that the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation is organized and ready to receive any communication that they may be pleased to make. Such communications shall include notifications of the election and appointment of the officers of the Delegation.

Section 4. No Suspension of Rule I. The Chair shall not entertain a request for suspension of Rule I by unanimous consent or otherwise; provided, that each new Delegation has the absolute right, at its organization meeting, not to adopt these rules, or to adopt these rules in a modified or limited way, in accordance with general parliamentary law.

Rule II. TERMS AND DUTIES OF OFFICERS.

Section 1. Terms of Office. The Chair, the Vice Chair and the Floor Leader shall hold office until the expiration of the Legislature of which they were elected to such office, unless

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such tenure is terminated at an earlier date by death or resignation, or, until reorganization of the majority of the members of the Delegation.

Section 2. Chair. The Chair shall have the following powers and duties:

- (a) To preside over the new Delegation;
- (b) To preside over the meetings of the Delegation, taking the Chair at the appointed hours and immediately calling the Delegation to order;
- (c) To preserve order and decorum in debate, in the gallery, and elsewhere in the Delegation;
- (d) To have general control, except as may be provided by law or the Constitution, of all property of the Delegation;
- (e) To assign each member a seat on the Floor of the Chamber and to change such assignment when he/she deems it appropriate;
- (f) To sign all acts, resolutions, writs, warrants, subpoenas, and other papers of, or issued by order of the Delegation;
- (g) To decide all points of order and interpret the Delegation Rules, subject to an appeal by any member to the Delegation;
- (h) To put all questions before the Delegation, pursuant to Rule XI, vote upon such questions, and announce the results thereof;
- (i) To appoint the Chair of every standing, special, or conference committee;
- (j) To officially receive all communications, present such communications before the Delegation, and dispose of such communications pursuant to Rule VI, Section I;
- (k) To have general direction over all of the officers and employees of the Delegation;
- (l) To designate any member as Chair pro tempore to perform the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, or, upon his/her stepping down in order to join in Floor debate, and may withdraw such designation; provided, that in the absence of the Chair, Vice Chair, Floor Leader, and any Chair Pro Tempore, the Delegation shall proceed to elect by motion an Acting Chair Pro Tempore;
- (m) To designate any member, officer, or employee of the Delegation to travel on the business of the Delegation within or outside the Commonwealth;

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(n) To direct and employ such persons as he/she may deem necessary to protect the interests of the Delegation and its members and employees in a lawsuit as long as the Delegation is a party;

(o) To administer the oath of office to any member, officer or employee of the Delegation and designate any other person to administer such oath;

(p) To call a recess at any time during a session, to a time and date certain, which call is subject to appeal by the Delegation;

(q) To have the sole authority to assign or remove a chairperson of a standing committee. This authority shall not be subject to appeal to the Delegation; and

(r) To perform such other duties as required by law or the Rules of the Delegation or as may properly appertain to the office of the Chair.

Section 3. Vice Chair. The Vice Chair shall exercise all the duties and powers of the Chair in the absence of the Chair from the Commonwealth or his/her incapacity due to illness, and any other duty which he may be assigned by the Chair or the Delegation.

Section 4. Floor Leader. It shall be the duty of the Floor Leader:

(a) To serve as Floor Leader during sessions of the Delegation, proposing routine motions that contribute to the orderly and speedy conduct of business, and acting as Floor Manager in the adoption of a local bill or resolution;

(b) To have the sole authority to prepare the calendar, procedures and/or agenda for each session. The Floor Leader shall consult regularly with the Chair on the calendar, procedures and/or agenda to facilitate a productive and smooth session;

(c) To have the sole authority to recall any bill, report, resolution and/or other legislative document from committee. This authority to recall shall not be subject to appeal to the Delegation;

(d) To have the sole authority to place on the calendar and/or agenda on any item. This authority to pass on the calendar and/or agenda shall not be subject to appeal to the Delegation;

(e) To refer bills, resolutions, and other matters to appropriate committees;

(f) To administer the oath to any member as may be directed by the Chair from time to time;

(g) To perform the duties of the Chair in the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair from the Commonwealth or in their incapacity due to illness; and

(h) To perform such other duties as the Chair or the Delegation may designate.

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Section 5. Delegation Clerk. The Delegation Clerk shall have the following duties:

(a) Prepare the roll of members of the Delegation and call the roll of members of the Delegation at the beginning of every session; thereof or whenever so directed by the Chair.

(b) To provide all notices of committee meetings and public hearings, when so advised by the respective chair, pursuant to Rule VII.

(c) To engross all Delegation bills and resolutions, certify or attest to the passage of all bills and resolutions, and attest to all writs, warrants, subpoenas, and other papers issued by order of the Delegation;

(d) To have charge of all the records of the Delegation and never permit any original thereof to be withdrawn from his/her keeping, unless ordered by the Delegation; and to preserve all public records as defined under 1 CMC §9902 that are in his/her possession;

(e) To assist the Delegation in the conduct of its business by transmitting messages and papers, reading bills, resolutions, amendments, motions, and other questions, calling the roll, preparing the Calendar, receiving messages on behalf of the Chair; and

(f) To perform such other duties as required by law, the Rules, the Chair, the Delegation, or the Director of the Legislative Bureau.

Section 6. Journal Clerk. It shall be the duty of the Journal Clerk:

(a) To attend all scheduled Delegation Sessions, unless excused by the Chair, keep records of session recordings, and transcribe session journals pursuant to Rule XIV;

(b) Provide a draft transcription of the session journal to the members within 5 business days after the session for the members to review. Transcription for committee meetings and public hearings shall be drafted upon request from the respective Committee Chairperson;

(c) Provide the final draft of the transcription of the session journal within 10 business days after a session to be placed on the next session agenda for adoption;

(d) Ensure all committee meetings and public hearings are audio-recorded and/or video-recorded and recordings are filed with the Delegation Clerk;

(e) Assist the Delegation Clerk in maintaining an up-to-date status table of legislative

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documents;

(f) Assist the Delegation Clerk in duplicating and disseminating documents;

(g) Act in the capacity of the Delegation Clerk in the absence of the Delegation Clerk; and

(h) To perform such other duties as required by law, the Rules, the Chair, the Delegation, or the Director of the Legislative Bureau.

Section 7. Sergeant-at-Arms. The Sergeant-At-Arms shall have the following duties:

(a) To attend the Delegation on every day of meeting, unless excused by the Chair;

(b) To maintain order under the direction of the Chair;

(c) To notify the Chair on the attendance of any person with communications or otherwise;

(d) To attend to committees if requested by the Committee Chair;

(e) To execute the commands of the Delegation and serve any order or process issued by authority thereof, as directed by the Chair;

(f) To make all required arrests of members or other persons and to restrain the same in custody;

(g) To prevent anyone from entering onto the Floor of the Chamber during a meeting of the Delegation, or committee thereof, except Members, officers, authorized employees of the Delegation, and guests of the Delegation or Committee concerned; and

(h) To perform such other duties and responsibilities as required by the Chair, the law, the Rules of the Delegation, or the Director of the Legislative Bureau.

RULE III. SESSIONS AND MEETINGS.

Section 1. Schedule of Sessions.

(a) The Delegation shall meet in Four Regular Sessions, which shall be as follows:

(1) First Regular Session, Fourth Monday of January of each year for not more than sixty (60) days before April 1 of the first year;

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(2) Second Regular Session, for not more than thirty (30) days after July 31 of the first year;

(3) Third Regular Session, Fourth Monday of January of each year for not more than sixty (60) days before April 1 of the second year; and

(4) Fourth Regular Session, for not more than thirty (30) days after July 31 of the second year.

(b) Time of Sessions and Meetings, Filing of Schedule. From time to time the Delegation may file in the Commonwealth Register a schedule of the time and place of regular session days, and may do the same for meetings of committees or for public hearings. Except for legal holidays, the Delegation may meet on such other days and at such other times as the presiding officer may designate at a meeting of the Delegation, subject to appeal to the Delegation. If a regularly scheduled meeting falls on a legal holiday, it shall be rescheduled for the next business day.

(c) Notice of Meetings. Not less than seventy-two (72) hours prior to convening a session or meeting, the presiding officer of the Delegation or respective committee thereof shall file a written public notice of the date, time, and place of a session or meeting with the Clerk and post the same at the executive branch administration building. When possible, notices under this section shall appear in at least one newspaper of general circulation. Notices shall contain an agenda of items to be considered at the session or meeting. Once filed as part of this notice, an agenda may only be changed by adding items thereto by the recorded vote of the majority of the members of the Delegation or committee. Once a session or meeting is properly noticed and convened, it may continue from day to day as necessary to address the agenda, provided that rules concerning agenda items are followed.

(d) Special Sessions. The Delegation may be called into special session by the Chair at any time or by the Governor between Regular Sessions. If a special session is called by the Chair, he/she may state in the call whether the business of the session shall be limited to specific subjects or if the Delegations may proceed to consider all regular business. Pursuant to the Constitution, a special session called by the Governor is limited to only those subjects described in the call. A special session called by the Governor shall continue until it has completed consideration of the subjects described in the call, but in no event for more than ten (10) consecutive days.

(e) Special meetings. A special meeting may be called at any time by the presiding officer of the Delegation or of a committee thereof, or by a majority of the members of the Delegation or committee thereof by delivering personally, by fax, by mail, or by electronic means, a written notice to each member of the Delegation or committee, and to each local newspaper of general circulation, and to each local radio or television station or cable television station which has on file with the governing body a written request to be notified of such special meeting or of all special meetings.

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Notice shall be delivered at least twenty-four (24) hours before the time of such meeting. The call and notice shall specify the time and place of the special meeting and the business to be transacted. Final disposition shall not be taken on any other matter at such meeting. Written notice may be dispensed with as to any member who at or prior to the time the meeting convenes files with the Clerk a written waiver of notice. Written notice may also be dispensed with as to any member who is actually present at the meeting at the time it convenes.

(f) Emergency Meetings. If, by reason of typhoon, flood, pandemic, fire, other natural or manmade disaster, or law enforcement or other emergency, there is need for expedited action by the Delegation or a committee thereof to meet the emergency, the presiding officer of the Delegation or committee may provide for a meeting site other than the regular meeting site and notice requirements of this chapter shall be suspended during such emergency. In the event of an emergency meeting the Delegation or committee shall:

- (1) State in writing the reasons for its finding that an emergency exists;
- (2) Take a vote whereby two-thirds (14) of all members of the Delegation or committee agree that an emergency exists;
- (3) File an emergency agenda and the findings on the emergency with the Clerk.

Section 2. Schedule of Meetings. The Delegation shall meet regularly for the transaction of business during sessions, at a time appointed by the Chair.

Section 3. Place of Meetings. The Delegation shall meet at the House Chamber in Capitol Hill, Saipan, Mariana Islands, or as designated by the Chair.

Section 4. Public Sessions. Except as provided herein, sessions of the Delegation shall be open and public. A member of the public shall not be required, as a condition of attendance at a session or meeting of the Delegation or of a committee of the Delegation, to register his/her name or other information, to complete a questionnaire, or otherwise fulfill any condition precedent to attendance other than compliance with necessary security requirements. Voluntary sign-in sheets may be distributed. The Delegation may meet in executive sessions pursuant to the Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands and 1 CMC §9912. Final action on any legislative matter may not be taken in executive session.

RULE IV. ATTENDANCE AND QUORUM.

Section 1. Attendance. Every member shall be present during its meetings unless he/she has given prior written or verbal notice to the Chair and has the approval of the Chair to be absent, subject to appeal to the Delegation if the Chair declines to grant such approval.

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Section 2. Quorum.

(a) A majority of the members of the Delegation shall constitute a quorum. Except as provided in clause (d) of this Section, any member, or the Chair on his/her own initiative, may make a point of order to suggest the absence of a quorum. The Chair shall thereupon immediately count the members present in the session and announce the result. A majority of less than a quorum, but not fewer than three (3) members including the Chair, may order a call of the Delegation to compel the attendance of absent members. Otherwise, the Delegation shall adjourn to the next regular meeting date.

(b) Under a call of the Delegation, the Clerk shall call the roll, and absent members for whom no sufficient excuse is made shall be sent for and arrested, wherever they may be found, by the Sergeant-At-Arms or officers appointed by the Chair, and the attendance of such members secured and retained, and the Delegation shall determine upon what conditions they shall be discharged. Members who voluntarily appear shall not be subject to arrest and shall report to the Clerk who shall enter their names upon the Journal as present. On demand of any member or at the suggestion of the Chair, the presence of members sufficient to make a quorum who do not answer to the roll shall be recorded by the Clerk and counted in determining the presence of a quorum.

(c) Whenever a quorum fails to vote on a question and the vote is objected to for that cause and a point of order that a quorum is not present is sustained, there shall be a ***Call of the Delegation***, unless the Delegation adjourns, and members responding to the call shall record their presence by voting “yes” or “no” on the question; provided, that any member arrested shall be brought before the Delegation, noted as present, discharged from arrest, and given an opportunity to record his vote. If those voting and those present who decline to vote together make a majority of the Delegation, the Chair shall declare a quorum present, and the vote shall be decided by the majority of those voting, and further proceedings under the call shall be considered as dispensed with.

(d) It shall not be in order to make or entertain a point of order suggesting the absence of a quorum before or during the prayer, during the administration of the oath, during the reading of the Journal, during a Call of the Delegation, or during the consideration of miscellaneous business, announcements, or adjournment. Once the presence of a quorum is established, no such point of order may be made or entertained until additional business intervenes.

Section 3. Call of the Roll.

(a) Upon every ***Call of the Roll***, the names of the members shall be called alphabetically by surname, except that if two members have the same surname the whole name shall be called. After calling the names of all members, the Clerk shall call again the names of members not responding to the first call. Members appearing after the second call, but before the result is announced may vote or announce their

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presence as appropriate to the call. The Clerk shall enter the names of absent members upon the journal.

Section 4. No Suspension of Rule IV. The Chair shall not entertain a request for the suspension of Rule IV by unanimous consent or otherwise.

Section 5. Emergency Electronic Appearance. In the event of a bona fide emergency as determined by the Chair, a member may appear, participate, and vote in a Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation session electronically using a telephone, video, or other electronic means provided that the member is physically present in the CNMI. This rule shall not apply to the presiding officer of the Delegation.

RULE V. DECORUM AND DEBATE.

Section 1. Language of Proceedings. Delegation proceedings may be conducted in English, Chamorro, or Carolinian as deemed appropriate by the Delegation.

Section 2. Sitting in or Entering the Chamber. No member may sit at the desk of the Chair, or of another member, or of the Clerk, except by permission of the Chair. Only members, officers, and authorized employees of the Delegation may enter upon the Floor during a session. At the invitation or with the permission of the Chair, other persons may enter upon the Floor during a session.

Section 3. Communications Media. The Chair may assign a portion of the gallery or other area for use of members of the press and other representatives of the public communications media desiring to report the proceedings of the Delegation to the public; provided that such use shall not be permitted to interfere with such proceedings.

Section 4. Recognition. When a member desires recognition, he/she shall raise his/her hand and address the Chair. When recognized, he/she shall confine himself/herself to the question under debate and the purpose for which he/she sought recognition. The Chair shall not recognize a member for the purpose of speaking to a motion for a second time until every member wishing to speak on the question has had an opportunity to be heard. Only members may address the Delegation while it sits in session except when the Delegation sits as a Committee of the Whole.

Section 5. Holding the Floor and Manner of Address.

(a) A member shall continue to hold the Floor until such time as he/she ceases to speak on the question or otherwise yields the Floor, except that he/she may yield time to another member and still retain the Floor, and except that no member may speak for more than ten (10) minutes each time he/she is recognized; provided, that no member be recognized to speak more than twice upon consideration of a bill or resolution.

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(b) A Member shall refer to his/her fellow members as “*Representative*” or “*Senator*”, and all personal references shall be avoided.

(c) No member shall hold the Floor nor speak for more than five (5) minutes during Miscellaneous Business and Announcements. No member shall debate another member during Miscellaneous Business and Announcements.

Section 6. Closing Debate and Voting on the Question. The Chair may close debate and call for a vote on the question before the Delegation, at any time that he/she is satisfied that every member desiring to speak on the question has spoken or has had an opportunity to do so, subject to the objection of any Member which shall be decided upon appeal to the Delegation. Alternatively, he/she may entertain at any time a motion for the previous question, pursuant to Rule X, Section 8.

Section 7. Points of Order. When a member believes the Rules are being violated, he/she may interrupt the proceedings to make a point of order. When recognized, he/she shall specify the Rule being violated. The point of order is not debatable; however, the Chair, before ruling under Rule II, Section 2 (g), may permit the member additional time to be heard on such point of order and may permit such other member to speak to such point, as he/she deems appropriate. If the ruling of the Chair is appealed to the Delegation, the member appealing the ruling and the Chair shall each have five (5) minutes to explain their positions on the ruling to the Delegation.

Section 8. Dress Code. All members, officers and employees appearing on the Floor shall be suitably and professionally attired. Island appropriate business attire is encouraged. Neckties are optional.

Section 9. Interruptions. No member may engage in private conversations when the Chair or another Member is speaking. When the Chair is presenting a question or addressing the Delegation, no Member may leave the Chamber nor walk between a Member who is speaking and the Chair. Electronic communication devices such as cell phones, pagers, etc., shall be placed on silent mode at all times in the Chamber, except by order of the Chair.

Section 10. Disorderly Manner of Members. No member shall conduct himself/herself in a disorderly manner during any session of the Delegation. Disorderly conduct includes the use of profane language during Delegation proceedings. If the member shall persist in his/her disorderly conduct, the Chair may order the Sergeant-At-Arms to take such action as the Chair deems necessary to restore and maintain order.

Section 11. Discipline of Members. The Delegation may discipline its members by censure or, subject to limitation by the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth, by such other punishment as the Delegation may deem proper, for disorderly conduct, neglect of duty, commission of a felony, breach of the peace, violation of the oath of office, or violation of these Rules.

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Section 12. Disturbance. In case of disturbance or disorderly conduct that renders the orderly conduct of a session or meeting unfeasible and order cannot be restored by the removal of the individuals who are interrupting the meeting, the presiding officer of the Delegation or committee may have the session or meeting cleared of all persons, except members and officers, in order to abate the disturbance or disorderly conduct. In the alternative, the Delegation or committee may adjourn the meeting and reconvene at another location selected by majority vote of the members. In such session, final disposition may be taken only on matters appearing on the agenda. Representatives of the press and other news media, except those participating in the disturbance, shall be allowed to attend any session or meeting held pursuant to this section. The Delegation or committee may readmit an individual or individuals not responsible for disturbing the orderly conduct of a meeting. Demonstrations of any type shall take place in an orderly fashion outside of the Legislative buildings. Under no circumstances shall demonstrators, signs or placard carriers be allowed in the chambers, offices, hallways or any parts of the Legislative buildings.

Section 13. Who May Address the Delegation. Only members may address the Delegation while in session. When legal advice is requested, Legal Counsel may address the Delegation while in session. The Delegation may, by motion, receive public comments on bills, resolutions, and other agenda items during a scheduled session. When public comment is taken, the Delegation shall resolve into the Committee of the Whole.

RULE VI. ORDER OF BUSINESS.

Section 1. Order of Business. After prayer or a moment of silence the daily order of business in the Delegation shall be as follows:

- (a) Roll Call;
- (b) Reading and approval of the Journal of the Day unless the Delegation, by motion, dispenses with such reading;
- (c) Public Comments;
- (d) Introduction of Local Bills as provided in these Rules;
- (e) Introduction of Local Resolutions as provided in these Rules;
- (f) Messages from the Governor;
- (g) Messages from the Mayors of Saipan and the Northern Islands;
- (h) Reports and communications from the Heads of Departments/Agencies;
- (i) House Communications;

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- (j) Senate Communications;
- (k) Delegation Matters;
- (l) Miscellaneous Communications;
- (m) Reports of Standing Committees;
- (n) Reports of Special and Conference Committees;
- (o) Unfinished Business upon which the Delegation was engaged at the time of its last adjournment;
- (p) Resolution Calendar;
- (q) Bill Calendar (including First and Second reading of Delegation bills);
- (r) Miscellaneous Business;
- (s) Announcements; and
- (t) Adjournment.

Section 2. Same: First Day of First Regular Session. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 1 of this Rule, the Order of Business on the first day of the First Regular Session shall be as follows:

- (a) Call to Order;
- (b) Opening Prayer;
- (c) Call of the Roll by Election District;
- (d) Adoption of Delegation Rules;
- (e) Election of Chair;
- (f) Election of Vice Chair and Floor Leader;
- (g) Appointment of Clerk and Sergeant-at-Arms;
- (h) Notification of House, Senate, Governor and Mayors of Saipan and Northern Islands;
- (i) Communications;

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- (j) Statements by Members;
- (k) Appointment of Ad Hoc Committee on Rules and Procedures;
- (l) Announcements; and
- (m) Adjournment.

Section 3. Interruptions of Order of Business.

(a) Except as provided in subsection (b), privileged matters which may interrupt the order of business, upon recognition by the Chair, are as follow:

- (1) Motions to adjourn, or to adjourn to a day and time certain;
- (2) Motions to recess for or to a set time or to the Call of the Chair;
- (3) Reception of messages;
- (4) Disposal of veto messages;
- (5) Consideration of conference reports or amendments;
- (6) Motions to request or agree to a conference; or
- (7) Questions of privilege.

(b) Matters set forth in subsection (a) shall not interrupt a member who has the Floor unless the member yields, nor shall they interrupt any vote or Call of the Roll, nor be in order in the Committee of the Whole, except questions of privilege arising from the proceedings therein.

RULE VII. COMMITTEES GENERALLY.

Section 1. Types of Delegation Committee. There shall be standing committees created by the Rules. Special committees may be established by the Chair as required to consider and report on such special or temporary matters as are referred to them. Conference committee shall be established by the Chair, if the Delegation requests or agrees to a conference to consider differences between the Delegation and the House, Senate, or any other party, or between the senatorial Delegations, on any matter. Special and conference committees shall be temporary committees which shall remain in existence until discharged by the Chair, subject to appeal to the Delegation. The Delegation may, by a majority vote of the members present and voting, resolve itself into the Committee of the Whole, consisting of the entire membership of the Delegation, whenever it decides to consider a matter as a committee. The Committee of the Whole shall remain in being until such time as it dissolves itself and

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reports back to the Delegation. A quorum in the Committee of the Whole shall be the same as in the Delegation.

Section 2. Orders of the Delegation. All committees of the Delegation shall be subject to the orders of the Delegation and shall faithfully carry out such orders.

Section 3. Power and Authority of Committees. Each committee of the Delegation is hereby authorized to study and analyze all facts relating to the subjects which would fall within its jurisdiction as indicated by the Rules, including the need for legislation in a particular area or revision of existing laws, and to oversee activities carried out pursuant to laws regarding such subjects, and for such purposes shall constitute an investigating committee. Each committee may compel the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of records in accordance with Section 14(b), Article II of the Constitution, and everything shall be done to bring all facts pertaining to matters before the Delegation.

Section 4. Duties of Committees. It shall be the duty of a committee to make a diligent and careful inquiry and investigation into all of the facts and circumstances connected with bills, resolutions or other matters referred to it, and to report its recommendations on any matter it deems worthy of consideration by the Delegation.

Section 5. Meetings.

(a) Meetings of the committees shall be open and public. Executive sessions shall be conducted in accordance with the Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands and 1 CMC §9912. No committee may sit at a time when the Delegation is in session.

(b) Notice of committee meetings shall be provided to the Delegation Clerk and further in accordance with Rule III. The public shall be given opportunity to comment at committee meetings. All committee meetings shall be audio-recorded and/or video-recorded pursuant to Rule II, Section 6. Recordings may be broadcasted live on cable television and/or streamed online; or may be broadcasted at a later time.

(c) Three (3) members of a committee shall constitute a quorum to hold a public hearing or meeting; except that for the Ways and Means Standing Committee a quorum shall be at least five members. Provided that a majority of the members of the committee shall constitute a quorum to report any measure to the Delegation. Proxy voting shall not be permitted. The Rules of the Delegation shall govern the meetings of committees, insofar as they are applicable, and explicit mention of committees or meetings thereof in any rule shall be without prejudice to the applicability of any other rule not containing such explicit mention. Committees may adopt additional rules to govern their procedures.

(d) The Chair of a standing or special committee may arrange for the joint meeting of his/her committee with another committee of the Delegation, and to conduct their business jointly. Final action shall be taken by each committee separately.

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Section 6. Appointment and Removal of Members.

(a) Members of special and conference committees shall be appointed by the Delegation Chair, subject to appeal to the Delegation.

(b) Members of standing committees shall be appointed by the Committee Chair. With the exception of the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedure and Ad Hoc, the Delegation Chair, Vice Chair, and Floor Leader shall not serve on any standing committee; but shall have the option to sit in any committee at any time he/she so chooses as an honorary non-voting member.

(c) The Delegation Chair shall have the right to remove a Chair, Vice Chair, or member from a committee subject to appeal of the Delegation.

Section 7. Chair and Vice Chair.

(a) The Chair of each standing, special, or conference committee, and the Chair of the Committee of the Whole for each individual matter referred to it, shall be appointed by the Delegation Chair, subject to appeal to the Delegation.

(b) The Chair of each committee shall call meetings, preside at committee meetings, prepare and post the agenda, invite witnesses to appear before the committee, and prepare committee reports subject to the requirements of the Rules. The Vice Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair in his/her absence.

Section 8. Committee Reports.

(a) Special committees shall report within the time allowed by the Chair. Standing, special, and conference committees shall submit their reports in writing to the Clerk who shall number the reports consecutively in the order received, cause such reports to be reviewed for legal sufficiency, reproduced and furnished to each member of the Delegation at least three (3) calendar day prior to the session at which it is to be considered. A committee report shall state findings of facts and conclusions based thereon together with a specific recommendation as to the manner in which the bill, resolution or other matter referred to the committee should be disposed of by the Delegation. A report recommending a bill or resolution for passages shall clearly state the purpose of the bill. A report on a bill or resolution shall show clearly any proposed amendments and the Clerk shall place such bill or resolution on the appropriate calendar.

(b) A report shall be adopted by a committee when a majority of the members of the committee have approved the report in an open and public meeting. A member or members not concurring in the report of the majority may so indicate by signing the report "*I do not concur*" or by submitting a separate minority report.

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(c) No Committee Report shall be entertained by the Delegation unless copies have been distributed to members at least three days prior to session.

Section 9. Rights of Members. A majority of the members of a committee may require the Chair to place any bill, resolution or other matter referred to the committee on the agenda for committee consideration, to submit any bill, resolution or other matter to the committee for its decision, to report promptly any bill referred to the committee, to call up such bill for prompt consideration by the Delegation, and to request that the Delegation discharge the committee from further consideration of any matter which has been referred to it.

Section 10. Joint Committees. Joint committees may be created by resolution or statute, and shall have such members, powers and procedures as provided therein.

RULE VIII. STANDING COMMITTEES.

The Standing Committees of the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation shall be as specified herein.

Section 1. Ways and Means. The Committee on Ways and Means shall consist of not more than nine (9). It shall be the duty of this Committee to consider all bills, resolutions and other matters referred to it by the Delegation relating to taxes and other revenues; identification of resources; government bonds; federal grants; the financial administration of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in and for the Third Senatorial District; and, related matters. Bills, resolutions and other matters referred to the Committee on Ways and Means pertaining to the subject matter of another standing committee may be referred by the Committee on Ways and Means to such other committee for preliminary examination and report to the Committee on Ways and Means.

Section 2. Natural Resources. The Committee on Natural Resources shall consist of not more than nine (9) members. It shall be the duty of this committee to consider and report on all bills, resolutions, and other matters referred to it by the Delegation pertaining to the state of the Natural Resources of the Commonwealth in and about the Third Senatorial District, including long range planning and policies therefore; fisheries and ocean resources; agriculture; housing; land managements; parks and recreation; water and soil conservation; energy and related matters.

Section 3. Health and Welfare. The Committee on Health and Welfare shall consist of not more than nine (9) members. It shall be the duty of this committee to consider and report on all bills, resolutions, and other matters referred to it by the Delegation pertaining to health care and planning, including mental and environmental health; consumer protection; and environmental protection; the social well-being of the people, including youth and senior programs; and related matters, in and for the Third Senatorial District.

Section 4. Education. The Committee on Education shall consist of not more than nine (9). It shall be the duty of this committee to consider and report on all bills, resolutions,

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and other matters referred to it by the Delegation pertaining to all matters, programs, and concerns on education, including financial assistance and vocational education programs and related matters in and for the Third Senatorial District.

Section 5. Judiciary and Governmental Operations.

(a) **Committee: General.** The Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations shall consist of not more than nine (9) members. It shall be the duty of this committee to consider and report on all bills, resolutions, and other matters referred to by the Delegation pertaining to civil and criminal law; traditional rights; judicial administration and organization; judicial and executive appointments; labor and immigration; suffrage and elections; citizenship; statute revision; civil service; inter-island relations; building codes; and related matters.

(b) **Appointments: General.** A person appointed to a position requiring the advice and consent of the Delegation shall be a citizen or a national of the United States, a resident of the Commonwealth, and at least eighteen (18) years of age. No person appointed to a position requiring the advice and consent of the Delegation shall be considered by the Delegation if that person has been convicted of a crime carrying a maximum sentence of imprisonment of more than six (6) months unless a full pardon has been granted or unless a period of three (3) years has elapsed since the time of the conviction or from completion of any sentence, whichever is later.

(c) **Appointments: Failure to Report.** A person appointed to a position requiring the advice and consent of the Delegation who refuses or fails to timely submit to the Delegation a statement of financial interest shall not be considered by the Delegation.

(d) **Appointments: Drug Test Result.** A person appointed to a position requiring the advice and consent of the Delegation shall submit an official drug test result not more than thirty (30) days old under seal to the Delegation before being considered by the Delegation. Results of the drug test shall be maintained by the Clerk under seal and made available to members of the Delegation and Legal Counsels only. Any person failing to submit a drug test result shall not be considered by the Delegation.

(e) **Appointments: Failure to Confirm.** If an appointment is not confirmed by the Delegation within ninety (90) consecutive calendar days from the date the person was appointed, the Delegation shall not act on the appointment.

Section 6. Military Affairs. The Committee on Military Affairs shall consist of not more than nine (9) members. It shall be the duty of this Committee to consider and report on all bills, resolutions and other matters referred to it by the Delegation pertaining to all matters related to the armed forces; military development; military planning; military training; and related matters in and about the Third Senatorial District.

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Section 7. Commerce and Tourism. The Committee on Commerce and Tourism shall consist of not more than nine (9) members. It shall be the duty of this committee to consider and report on all bills, resolutions, and other matters referred to it by the Delegation pertaining to business and commerce; banking insurance; economic development; tourism; and related matters in and about the Third Senatorial District.

Section 8. Roads and Transportation. The Committee on Roads and Transportation shall consist of not more than nine (9) members. It shall be the duty of this Committee to consider and report on all bills, resolutions and other matters referred to it by the Delegation pertaining to all matters related to streets, roads, and highways; transportation; public bus stops; public parking; boating; seaport; airport and other related matters in and about the Third Senatorial District.

Section 9. Public Utilities, and Communications. The Committee on Public Utilities; and Communication shall consist of not more than nine (9) members. It shall be the duty of this committee to consider and report on all bills, resolutions, and other matters referred to it by the Delegation pertaining to electrical power generation and distribution; water supply and distribution; wastewater disposal; solid waste disposal and landfill management; communications; and related matters in and about the Third Senatorial District.

Section 10. Gaming. The Committee on Gaming shall consist of not more than nine (9) members. It shall be the duty of this Committee to consider and report on all bills, resolutions and other matters referred to it by the Delegation pertaining to all matters related to gambling in the Third Senatorial District, including hotel casino, poker, electronic and internet gambling; the impact of the gambling industry and problem gambling on families and communities, implication for regulatory mechanisms, revenue collection, community welfare and consumer protection.

Section 11. Cannabis. The Committee on Cannabis shall consist of not more than nine (9) members. It shall be the duty of this Committee to consider and report on all bills, resolutions and other matters referred to it by the Delegation pertaining to all matters related to cannabis in the Third Senatorial District, the impact of the cannabis industry and the effects on families and communities, implication for regulatory mechanisms, revenue collection, community welfare and consumer protection.

Section 12. Zoning. The Committee on Zoning shall consist of not more than nine (9) members. It shall be the duty of this Committee to consider and report on all bills, resolutions and other matters referred to it by the Delegation pertaining to all matters related to the Saipan Zoning Law; building and zoning codes; zoning map; zoning procedures; and related matters. Appointment and confirmation of members to the Zoning Board shall fall under Rule VIII, Section 5.

Section 13. Rules and Procedure. The Committee on Rules and Procedure shall consist of the Delegation Chair, Vice Chair, and Floor Leader. The Floor Leader shall chair this committee. This committee shall be the policymaking body of the Delegation and shall have the following duties:

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To consider and report on all proposed amendments to these Rules;

(a) To determine the priority of all matters and the order which all bills, resolution, reports, communication, or correspondence shall be placed on the session agenda for debate or discussion on the Floor;

(b) To review referral of proposed legislation to the committees of the Delegation as made by the Floor Leader, and to make reassignments or additional referrals as necessary and appropriate;

(c) To consider all communications from the House, Senate, Governor, Mayors, Judiciary, or other parties and to make appropriate assignment or otherwise provide for appropriate disposition of the same;

(d) To inform the Delegation Leadership on policies governing the administration and operation of the Delegation, including staff organization, functions, personnel policies and rates of compensation for Delegation employees, or as determined by the individual Senators and Representatives due to the decentralization of accounts and expenditure authority of those accounts.

(e) To consider all matters concerning the properties, inventory and use of physical space and premises of the Delegation and recommend appropriate action to the Delegation Chair.

The Committee on Rules and Procedure shall continue in existence during any recess of the Delegation. The Chair, Vice Chair and Floor Leader shall constitute the Executive Committee for this committee. The Executive Committee shall prepare the agenda prior to each Delegation session, and shall perform such other duties and have such other responsibilities as may be assigned to it by the Committee on Rules and Procedure. In performance of duties enumerated in subsections (a), (d) and (e) above, action by the Committee shall require a majority vote.

RULE IX. BILLS, RESOLUTIONS AND AMENDMENTS.

Section 1. Property of the Delegation. All bills referred to and all resolutions introduced in the Delegation, and committee reports thereon, shall be deemed the property of the Delegation and under its control.

Section 2. Types of Local Bills and Resolutions. The following types of local bills and resolutions may be considered by the Delegation, subject to the right of the Senate and House to designate measure originating in such body by titles different from those indicated:

(a) A Saipan and Northern Islands Local Bill (S.N.I.L.B.) which shall propose new law, changes in or repeal of existing local law, or appropriations; and

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(b) A Saipan and Northern Islands Local Resolution (S.N.I.L.R.), which expresses the sentiments or will of the Delegation alone and requires action only by the Delegation.

Section 3. Format of Local Bills and Resolutions. Subject to the right of the Senate and the House to designate another format for measures originating in such body;

(a) All bills and resolutions shall be printed out in one-and one-half (1-1/2) space upon paper which is traditional letter size, leaving a left margin of one-and one-half (1-1/2) inches and with the number of the line appearing on each line at the left margin.

(b) Bills and resolutions for introduction shall be submitted in an original, which shall be signed by the member introducing the measure on the last page thereof, and the name of such member shall be typed or printed legibly under the signature. The introducer thereof may permit other members to affix their signatures to the measure. When a member wishes to indicate he is introducing a measure by specific request without necessarily agreeing to it, he may affix the words “*(By request)*” after his/her signature.

(c) Local resolutions may be introduced or prefiled in the House or Senate or directly to the Delegation. Local resolutions introduced or prefiled in the House or Senate shall be received by the Delegation Clerk without delay, for formal introduction at the next session of the Delegation. Local resolutions also may be prefiled directly with the Clerk for formal introduction at the next session of the Delegation.

Section 4. Numbering of Local Bills and Resolutions. Delegation bills and resolutions shall be dated by the Clerk on the day introduced, and shall be numbered by the type of measure followed by a two-part numerical designation, the first part of which shall be the number of the current Legislature followed by a hyphen, and the second part shall be numerical in consecutive order, corresponding with the respective order of introduction. The first time a local bill resolution is reprinted after being amended by the Delegation, the designation “*SNILD 1*” shall be appended after the number designation of the bill or resolution to indicate “*Saipan and Northern Islands Local Draft 1*”. Each time the bill or resolution is subsequently amended by the Delegation, the number designation shall be increased by one, and only the latest such designation shall appear.

Section 5. Form of Bill. To pass First or Second Reading, each bill shall:

(a) Contain an enacting clause reading: “*Be it enacted by the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation.*”

(b) Embrace but one subject and matters properly connected with it, which subject shall be expressed in the title all in accordance with Article II, Section 5(b) of the Constitution.

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Section 6. Duplication and Distribution of Bills and Resolutions. The Clerk shall provide each member with a copy of each bill and each resolution and each amended version thereof, prior to First Reading, following report with amendments by a committee, at the time of transmittal, or after amendments by a committee, at the time of transmittal, or after amendment from the Floor if otherwise required by this Rule.

Section 7. Referral of Bills and Resolutions.

(a) A local bill or resolution prefiled with the Clerk shall appear on the agenda for the next session provided that it is prefiled not less than seventy-two (72) hours before that session and appears on the session agenda as required under Rule III. Prefiled bills shall be placed on the Bill Calendar for First Reading. The First Reading of a bill shall be by its title. The seventy-two (72) hour notice and agenda requirements may be dispensed with only in accordance with Rule III.

(b) Bills and resolutions shall be read by title upon introduction and [except as provided in subsection (b)] the Floor Leader shall refer such measures to an appropriate committee or to more than one (1) 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 Delegation, with debate, immediately after the reading and approval of the Journal, by unanimous consent, or upon motion of either the committee claiming jurisdiction or the committee to which the measure has been erroneously referred.

(c) If a measure has been referred to more than one (1) committee, and has been reported by one (1) of the committees, the Floor Leader shall set a time limit for any other committee to report the measure.

Section 8. Public Comment on Bills and Resolutions. Prior to enacting a bill or resolution introduced in the Delegation, the Delegation or a committee thereof shall afford interested persons the opportunity to submit data, views, or arguments, in writing. In addition, the Delegation or a committee thereof shall afford interested persons an opportunity to present oral testimony on any bill or resolution. Agendas of such open and public forums shall comply with notice requirements of Rule III and may consider single or multiple bills or resolutions. This requirement shall not apply to emergency legislation enacted in a session called pursuant to Rule III, Section 1(f).

Section 9. First Reading of Bills and Resolutions.

(a) When a bill or resolution is read by the Delegation the first time, the Clerk shall report the bill by title, unless a majority orders it read in full, or by such subdivisions as the motion to read may indicate. The Delegation shall then proceed to debate the measure, and no other amendment shall be in order until all committee amendments shown in the Committee Report are disposed of except that such committee amendments shall themselves be subject to amendment. At the conclusion

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of debate the Delegation shall vote on passing the measure on First Reading after affording an opportunity for one motion to recommit with or without instructions. If the measure passes with amendments, the Clerk shall engross such amendments and cause the measure or any page thereof, to be reprinted as provided in Section 4 and 6 of this Rule.

(b) If a bill passes First Reading, the Clerk shall place it on the Bill Calendar for Second Reading the next Session day.

(c) First Reading of a resolution shall be the only and final reading, and upon its adoption, the Clerk shall dispose of it pursuant to Section 11 of this Rule.

Section 10. Second Reading of Bills.

(a) When a bill is read in the Delegation the second time, it shall be considered in the same manner as for First Reading, except that further amendments shall be in order without regard to whether or not they are proposed by the committee reporting the bill.

(b) Second Reading of a bill shall be the final reading, and upon its passage, which shall be by call of the Roll, the Clerk shall dispose of it pursuant to Section 11 of this Rule.

Section 11. Amendments. Amendments to bills or resolutions may be offered on the Floor by any member; provided, that the proposed amendments are in writing and are germane to the measure. Such amendment shall be read by the Clerk. If the Chair, subject to appeal, deems it necessary, the Clerk shall reprint any portion of the measure affected by passage of any amendments, prior to a vote on passing the measure. No amendment proposing legislation shall be in order on an appropriations bill. Only two (2) degrees of amendment shall be in order, except that a member may offer a substitute amendment embracing the same subject, and both the substitute and the original amendment shall be subject to one (1) additional degree of amendment. If an amendment is defeated it shall not be in order to bring it up again during the same reading of a measure.

Section 12. Adoption. Final action of the Delegation shall occur at an open and public meeting for which notice has been given in accordance with Rule III.

Section 13. Disposal of Adopted Measures.

(a) The Clerk shall attest to the passage of any bill, resolution, or amendment following passage and transmit such matter to the Governor as promptly as possible, noting the date of such passage. The proofreader may without further action by the Delegation correct all clerical errors of form and content prior to any transmittal.

(b) The Clerk shall enroll any Delegation bill which has passed, obtain the signature of the Delegation Chair, and shall, pursuant to law, transmit a single original

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copy to the presiding officer of the house of origin without delay, authenticating it by his/her signature thus certifying and attesting to the accuracy of the bill so transmitted. The presiding officer of the house origin shall thereupon certify the bill transmit it to the Governor without delay for his/her consideration pursuant to Article II, Section 7 of the Constitution.

(c) The Clerk shall prepare in final form and obtain the signature of the Delegation Chair on any adopted Local Resolution and shall transmit signed originals or copies to the addressees, if any, without delay, authenticating them by his/her signature thus certifying to their accuracy.

(d) All signatures shall be placed on the last page of a measure after the last line of text.

Section 14. Repassage following Disapproval by the Governor.

In the event the Governor vetoes a local bill, local appropriation bill or item, or local revenue bill, pursuant to 1 CMC §405 it shall be reconsidered by the Legislature, which may enact the local bill over the Governor's veto by affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of each house of the Legislature pursuant to Article II, Section 7 of the Commonwealth Constitution.

(a) If the Legislature re-passes a local bill disapproved by the Governor, the Clerk shall transmit the signed original thereof to the Attorney General as proof of its enactment, and shall inform the Governor of such enactment.

RULE X. MOTIONS.

Section 1. Seconding. No motion may be considered by the Delegation until it has been seconded. The requirement shall not apply to points of privilege, information, or order, or to request to withdraw a motion.

Section 2. Property of the Delegation. After a motion is stated by the Chair or read by the Clerk, it shall be the property of the Delegation and shall be disposed of by the Delegation unless withdrawn as provided in this Rule.

Section 3. Main and Subsidiary Motions. A member of the Delegation may be the mover of a main motion at the time provided for in the order of business, which main motion shall have as its purpose the carrying out of business of the Delegation. Whenever any main motion shall be under discussion, the only subsidiary motions relative thereto which shall be entertained are:

- First: For the previous question;
- Second: To lay on the table;
- Third: To defer to a date certain or indefinitely;

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- Fourth: To commit or recommit to a committee with or without instruction from the Delegation; or
Fifth: To amend;

which motions shall have precedence in the order named. The first, second, and third motions shall be decided without debate and shall be put to vote as soon as made and seconded. The fourth and fifth motions and the main motion shall be subject to debate and shall be put to vote in accordance with the provisions of this Rule.

Section 4. Privileged Motions and Questions of Privilege.

(a) A member, when recognized, may be the mover of a privileged motion at any time such a motion is appropriate to the order of business. A privileged motion shall take precedence over main and subsidiary motions and shall be disposed of before the Delegation proceeds with other business.

(b) A member, when recognized, may raise a question of privilege concerning a matter which relates to him/her as a member of the Delegation or which relates to the privileges or welfare of the Delegation. When a member raises a question of privilege, the Chair shall interrupt the proceedings of the Delegation and ask the member to briefly state his/her question. The question shall not be debatable, except that the Chair may allow the right of reply. If the Chair rules that the member raises a valid question of privilege, and such member proposes a motion or resolution incident thereto, such motion or resolution may become the pending business of the Delegation, and be subject to debate or subsidiary motion as provided in Section 3 of this Rule.

(c) A member, when recognized, may request move to recess subject to approval by the Chair for or to a specific time, or subject to the call of the Chair. The motion to recess shall be decided without debate and shall be put to vote as soon as possible. The Chair may recess the Delegation for or to a specific time or subject to the call of the Chair.

(d) The Floor Leader, when recognized, may move to adjourn, and such a motion shall take precedence over all other motions. The motion shall decide without debate and shall be put to vote as soon as made; provided, that the motion to adjourn to a day and time certain or sine die shall be subject to debate and amendment. If the motion to adjourn is adopted, action on the question before the Delegation shall be discontinued and shall be considered on the next meeting day as *“Unfinished Business.”* If the motion to adjourn is defeated, such a motion shall not again be in order until additional business intervenes.

Section 5. Incidental Matters.

(a) A member of the Delegation may raise an incidental matter, at any time such a matter is appropriate to the order of business, but must await recognition by the Chair or be yielded to by the member holding the Floor.

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(b) A member may raise a point of information regarding the procedure governing the disposal of a matter or motion before the Delegation. When a member rises to a ***“Point of Information,”*** the Chair shall ask the member to state his/her procedural point. The point shall not be debatable. The Chair shall respond to the point of information as soon as raised or request another member of the Delegation to respond. The Chair may consider the question improper and choose not to consider the point if it does not address the procedures for disposal of a matter or motion before the Delegation. A point of information may not be used to make a statement or engage in debate.

(c) A member may raise a point of order at any time the point is relevant to the order of business, pursuant to Rule V, Section 7 and Rule IV, Section 2 (d).

(d) A member may ask unanimous consent to accomplish any reasonable purpose not forbidden by the Constitution, except no member may ask unanimous consent for the suspension of Rules VI (Attendance and Quorum) or I (Organization of the Delegation). If no member present objects, the request is considered to be agreed to. A member may reserve the right to object in order to briefly question the requesting member as to the purpose or effect of the request.

(e) A member may ask to withdraw his/her motion. When a member asks to withdraw his/her motion, the Chair shall interrupt the proceedings and permit the motion to be withdrawn if there has been no decision on or amendment to the motion as of the time the member requests withdrawal of his/her motion. Otherwise, the motion may only be withdrawn by unanimous consent.

(f) A member may move for division of a question when he/she finds two or more specific subjects within the same general subject of a bill, resolution or other question before the Delegation and desires that each such specific subject be considered and voted on separately. When a member moves for division of the question, the Chair shall interrupt the proceedings and permit the member to make his/her motion, which motion shall specify the specific subjects to be considered and voted on separately. The motion shall be decided without debate and shall be put to vote as soon as made. If the motion for division of the question is adopted, each subject specified shall be considered a separate bill or resolution and shall be considered and voted on for final passage as a separate entity as provided in these Rules.

(g) A member may move to suspend one or more sections or paragraphs of these Rules. Such a motion shall state the specific purpose to be accomplished by suspension of the Rules and the specific sections or paragraphs of the Rules which shall be suspended. The Chair may decline to recognize a member for the purpose of moving to suspend the Rules. When recognized for such purpose, the member shall have ten (10) minutes to explain his/her reasons for the desired suspension, and one (1) member in opposition shall have ten (10) minutes for reply. Either member may waive his/her time. The motion shall require a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present for

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adoption; provided, that Rule VII, Section 8 and Rule IX, Sections 7 and 8 may be suspended by majority vote of the members present for adoption. Any suspension of the Rules shall terminate when the specific purpose to be accomplished by suspension of the Rules has been disposed of by the Delegation. The Rules shall not be suspended regarding consideration of the current question before the Delegation, except by unanimous consent.

Section 6. Motion to Reconsider. When a main motion has been made once and carried in the affirmative or negative, it shall be in order for any member of the Delegation to move to reconsider it on the same or succeeding day of the session during the appropriate order of business. The motion shall be decided without debate and shall be put to vote as soon as made. A simple majority shall be required for passage. When a motion for reconsideration has been defeated, a second motion for reconsideration of the same question shall not be in order.

Section 7. Motion to Recall. When a bill, resolution or other matter upon which a vote has been taken has passed out of the possession of the Delegation, and has been transmitted to the Governor, it shall be in order for any member of the Delegation to move for recall of the bill, resolution or other matter by requesting the Governor to return the bill, resolution or other matter to the Delegation, and such motion shall take precedence over all motions except a motion to adjourn or recess. The motion shall be decided without debate and shall be put to a vote as soon as made. When a motion for recall has been decided and defeated, a second motion for recall of the same matter shall not be in order. If the motion for recall is adopted and the bill, resolution, or other matter is returned as requested, it shall then be before the Delegation for reconsideration in the regular order of business.

Section 8. Previous Question. A member may move for the previous question which shall be decided without debate and shall be put to vote as soon as made and seconded. The adoption of the motion for the previous question shall close debate and require the Chair to put the previous question before the Delegation for a vote.

RULE XI. VOTING.

Section 1. Methods of Voting: There shall be three methods of voting:

First: By voice;

Second: By standing or raising hands; and

Third: By Call of the Roll of the members and a recording of the vote of each member by the Clerk.

Section 2. Voice Vote. Voice vote shall be the usual and ordinary method of voting by the Delegation. Whenever the Delegation shall be ready to vote on any question, the Chair shall state the question. He/She shall then request all those in favor of the motion to vote

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“yes” in a clear, loud voice. Following this, he/she shall request all those against the motion to vote “no” in a clear, loud voice. The Chair shall then announce the results of the vote to the Delegation.

Section 3. Standing Vote or Raising Hands. If any member doubts the results as announced by the Chair, he/she may request a standing vote or raising hands. The Chair shall again state the question. He/She shall then call upon those in favor of the motion to stand or raise their hands and be counted by the Clerk who shall report the number standing or the hands raised to the Chair. The Chair shall then call upon those against the motion to stand or raise their hands and be counted by the Clerk who shall report the number standing or the hands raised to the Chair. Any member failing to stand or raise his/her hand in favor or against the motion shall not be counted. The Chair shall announce the result to the Delegation.

Section 4. Call of the Roll. If a least five (5) members presents shall request a *Call of the Roll*, then the Chair shall announce a Call of the Roll. The Chair shall state the question calling upon those in favor of the motion to respond “yes” and those opposed to the motion to respond “no” when their names are called. The Clerk shall call the roll, recording the vote of each member in the Journal. He/She shall inform the Chair of the results of the Call of the Roll, who shall in turn announce the results of the vote to the Delegation. The Chair may require a Call of the Roll at his discretion. Call of the Roll is automatic in the absence of a quorum if a vote is objected to for such reason.

Section 5. Non-Voting. If any member present in the session fails to respond to the call of his/her name upon a roll call, his/her name shall be called again and if he/she fails to respond to the call of his/her name upon the second Call of the Roll, he/she may vote present, otherwise the Clerk shall record him/her as absent, except as provided in Rule IV, Section 2.

Section 6. Conflict of Interest. Pursuant to Article II, Section 15 of the Commonwealth Constitution, and the applicable provisions of Public Law 8-11, no member shall vote upon any matter in which he/she has a distinct financial or personal interest, or any matter, which will affect his/her right to a seat in the Delegation or in which his/her individual conduct is involved. When any member has a distinct financial or personal interest which he/she believes might disqualify him/her from voting on a question, he/she shall disclose such interest to the Delegation or vote present pursuant to Section 5 of this Rule. The Chair shall thereupon rule as to whether or not the member is disqualified from voting on the question. The Chair’s decision shall be subject to appeal by any member. A member disqualified under this section may vote present. A member may be disciplined for violation of this Section.

Section 7. Change of Vote. A member shall not vote or change his/her vote after the announcement of the result of the vote by the Chair.

Section 8. Action of the Delegation. In accordance with Article II, Section 6 of the Commonwealth Constitution, any action of the Delegation shall require the affirmative vote of the majority of the Delegation.

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Section 9. Confirmation of Public Comment. Prior to a vote on final passage, the Presiding Officer and Clerk shall confirm that a local bill or resolution that has been offered for public comment in conformity with these Rules. No bill or resolution that has not been offered for public comment shall be finally passed.

RULE XII. WARRANTS, SUBPOENAS, OATHS AND CONTEMPT.

Section 1. Warrants, Subpoenas, and Oaths.

(a) Warrants, subpoenas, and other processes may be issued as provided in Article II, Section 14 of the Constitution and 1 CMC, Division 1, Chapter 3. Any committee Chair or other authorized person may issue subpoenas by majority committee vote. Any witness neglecting or refusing to attend a session of the Delegation or a committee meeting after being properly subpoenaed may be arrested by the Sergeant-at-Arms or any police officer of the Commonwealth and brought before the Delegation or a committee thereof, as the case may be. The Chair may issue a warrant to carry into effect the orders of the Delegation or any Delegation committee in the arrest of an offender.

(b) The Committee Chair or designee may administer oaths to witnesses in any case under their examination. The person taking the oath holds up his or her right hand, while the Chair or designee administering the oath addresses him or her: “You do solemnly swear, under the penalty of perjury, that the testimony you shall give in the matter at hand, shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.”

Section 2. Contempt. Any person who shall be guilty of disrespect of the Delegation by any disorderly or contemptuous behavior in its presence or before any of its committees, or who shall fail to appear to testify before the Delegation or any of its committees after being subpoenaed, or who shall assault or detain any witness of the Delegation or its committees, or who shall violate 1 CMC, Division 1, Chapter 3, shall be in contempt of the Delegation. The Chair may issue a warrant of arrest to the Sergeant-at-Arms or any police officer of the Commonwealth for the arrest of a person found to be in contempt of the Delegation.

RULE XIII. ADMINISTRATION.

Section 1. Management. The administrative affairs of the Delegation shall be jointly managed by the leadership committee, composed of the Chair, Vice Chair, Floor Leader, and Chairs of all the Standing Committees.

Section 2. Travel.

(a) Members who travel on official Delegation business shall submit a written trip report to the Delegation Chair within fifteen (15) calendar days of their return, in addition to travel requirements set forth by the CNMI Department of Finance. The

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report shall summarize the official business activities undertaken during the trip. If no report is filed, the cost of travel shall be deducted from the member's Delegation account.

Section 3. Budget Plan, Financial Report, and Inventory.

(a) The Chair shall issue a budget plan for the expenditure of Delegation funds and shall thereafter issue an annual report and full accounting of the finances and property of the Delegation. The report shall be made public.

(b) Each year the Chair shall request the Public Auditor or his/her designee to audit the financial accounts and inventory records of the Delegation. The audit report shall be made public.

Section 4. Employees of the Delegation. Subject to the availability of funds and the limitations imposed by Constitutional Amendments 9 and 10, as amended, the Chair shall engage such professional and clerical employees of the Delegation pursuant to a Delegation staffing plan with established pay levels as approved by the Delegation leadership. All employees of the Delegation shall be employed subject to these Delegation Rules, a *Conditions of Employment Agreement* with the Chair, and to a Code of Ethics similar to that adopted for Personnel Service System employees. All employees of the Delegation shall accrue, as unused leave, no more than fifty percent (50%) of the total leave they are entitled to under their employment contract. This means that an employee who is employed by the Delegation for two (2) years and is entitled by the terms of his/her employment to two hundred (200) hours of leave may only have a maximum of one hundred (100) hours of unused leave at the end of his contract. This shall be the maximum amount the employee may accumulate and redeem for cash payment. The Chair shall establish a reserve fund in the budget of the Legislature to pay for the maximum amount which may be due to employees under the computation in this Section. On October 1, of the second year of the Delegation member's term, employees will be paid for the amount of leave accrued to that date. In computing the maximum payment allowable, the time remaining from October 1, until the termination of employee contracts will be reserved. If the employee takes no leave during that period, he will be paid for accrued leave only to the extent such payment and the payment made on October 1, do not exceed the maximum allowable amount in this Section. Any employee who works less than the entire period of his/her contract shall be paid a maximum of fifty percent (50%) of the maximum leave which the employee could have accumulated up to his/her date of termination. The provisions of this Section shall also be included in the employee's Conditions of Employment Agreement.

Section 5. Accounts of the Delegation. The Chair or his/her authorized designee shall draft regulations governing the expenditure of funds from all Delegation accounts. The regulations shall include policies governing the use of the Chair's contingency fund, community funds and official representation allowances. Such regulations shall be effective upon the approval of the Chair.

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Section 6. Purchases and Payments. Purchases made by the Delegation or expenditures chargeable to funds available to the Delegation shall be made in accordance with the CNMI Procurement Policy. Purchases shall be previously approved in writing by the Chair or his/her authorized designee. Such person shall direct the proper department or the Commonwealth Government to pay all lawful bills and accounts included within the expenses of the Delegation for which provision is made by law and which have been authorized by the Delegation and previously approved in writing by the Chair or his/her authorized designee. For purposes of this Section, “*authorized designee*” shall include individual members who have expenditure authority over their individual allotment accounts.

Section 7. Property of the Delegation. With the exception of such property as is purchased by the Members of the Delegation or Delegation employees solely from their salaries, all funds appropriated for operation and activities of the Delegation shall be obligated and spent solely in furtherance of the official business of the Delegation. The official business of the Delegation shall not include obligations or expenses incurred by members or Delegation employees for the private gain or the entertainment of themselves or their constituents.

Section 8. Use of Property of the Delegation.

(a) The Chair or his/her authorized designee through the CNMI Procurement Office, shall at all times control, administer, tag and assign the property of the Delegation to the members or employees of the Delegation.

(b) The Chair shall authorize governing the use of Delegation property.

Section 9. Public Records. It shall be the responsibility of each member of the Delegation to preserve all public records, as defined in 1 CMC §9902, that are or come to be in their respective possession and control.

RULE XIV. THE JOURNAL.

Section 1. The Journal. The Delegation shall keep a journal of its proceedings and shall compile and publish the Journal for each session of the Delegation. The Journal of the Session shall include the Journals of the Day compiled by the Clerk and the statements of members appended to the Journals of the Day, and may include such other matters as the Delegation or the Chair, subject to the action of the Delegation, may direct. The Clerk shall keep note of all questions of order not specified in these Rules and decided under Rule 1, Section 1 and append them for publication in the Delegation Journal.

Section 2. Contents. The Journals of the Day shall account for the business and proceedings of the Delegation for each legislative day, including a summary of the debate, the messages for the Governor, messages from the Mayor, all other messages and communications, the time of day the Delegation was called to order, recessed and adjourned, each question before the Delegation and its disposition, all votes and quorum calls, the titles of all bills and resolutions introduced together with their assigned numbers and reference, the full

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text of all Floor amendments, and the text of such part of any bill or resolution prior to amendment as may be necessary to make clear the effect of the proposed amendment. A digital recording shall be made of the business and proceedings of the Delegation for each legislative day. The Delegation Clerk shall maintain custody of the recordings.

Section 3. Reading of the Journal. The Journal of each day shall be distributed the day following its preparation and shall be corrected or approved by vote of the Delegation; Provided, that the Chair shall correct and approve the Journal of the last days of the Legislature. The Delegation, by majority vote of the members present, may dispense with such reading. Prior to the approval of the Journal of the Day, the Chair may delete debate and statements which are inconsistent with Rule V, Section 10, and Rule XV, Section 1(c). Subsequent to the approval of the Journal of the Day, the Clerk, with the permission of the Chair, may make non-substantive corrections therein, including such matters as spelling of words and grammatical construction of sentences.

Section 4. Appendices. Each member shall have the right to append to the Journal of the Day a statement explaining his/her vote on any bill, resolution or other matter being voted upon by the Delegation on that day. Such a statement or statements shall not exceed in total three hundred (300) words in a single day and shall be submitted to the Clerk on the day in which the action occurs.

Section 5. Transmittal to Northern Marianas College. Pursuant to 1 CMC §9914, the Clerk shall transmit a copy of each journal adopted by the Delegation to the archives of the Northern Marianas College within thirty (30) days of adoption.

RULE XV. CODE OF OFFICIAL CONDUCT.

Section 1. Code of Official Conduct. There is established for the Delegation the following *Code of Conduct*, which is based on the Code of Official Conduct of the United States House of Representative and which may be cited as the “*Code of Official Conduct*”:

(a) A member, officer or employee of the Delegation shall conduct himself/herself at all times in a manner which shall reflect creditably on the Delegation.

(b) A member, officer or employee of the Delegation shall adhere to the spirit and the letter of the Rules of the Delegation and to the policies thereof.

(c) A member, officer or employee of the Delegation shall receive no compensation nor shall he/she permit any compensation to accrue to his/her beneficial interest from any source, the receipt of which would occur by virtue of influence improperly exerted from his/her position in the Delegation.

(d) A member, officer or employee of the Delegation shall not accept gifts [other than personal hospitality of an individual or with a fair market value of Thirty-

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Five Dollars (\$35.00) or less] in any calendar year aggregating One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) or more in value, directly or indirectly, from any person (other than from a relative of his/her) having a direct interest in local legislation before the Legislature. The term “*relative*” means, with respect to any member, officer or employee of the Delegation, an individual who is related as father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, uncle, aunt, first cousin, nephew, niece, husband, wife, grandfather, grandmother, grandson, granddaughter, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, stepsister, half brother, half sister, or who is the grandfather or grandmother of the spouse of the person reporting. The term “*gift*” shall not include campaign fund contributions.

(e) A member, officer or employee of the Delegation shall accept no honorarium for a speech, writing for publication, or other similar activity, from any person, organization, or corporation in excess of the usual and customary value for such services.

(f) A member of the Delegation shall keep his/her campaign funds separate from his/her personal funds. He/She shall convert no campaign funds to personal use in excess of reimbursement for legitimate and verifiable prior campaign expenditures and he/she shall expend no funds from his/her campaign account not attributable to bona fide campaign purposes.

(g) A member of the Delegation shall treat as campaign contributions all proceeds from his/her testimonial dinners or other fund-raising events.

(h) A Member of the Delegation shall retain no employee who does not perform duties commensurate with the compensation he/she receives.

(i) A member, officer or employee of the Delegation shall not discharge or refuse to hire any individual or otherwise, discriminate against any individual with respect to compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of the individual’s race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

(j) A member of the Delegation who has been convicted by a court of record for the commission of a crime should refrain from participation in the business of each committee of which he/she is a member and should refrain from voting on any question at a meeting of the Delegation, or of the Committee of the Whole, unless or until judicial or executive proceedings result in reinstatement of the presumption of his/her innocence or until he/she is re-elected to the Legislature after the date of such conviction.

(k) A member of the Delegation shall not authorize or otherwise allow a non-Delegation individual, group or organization to use the words “*Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation,*” or “*Official Business,*” or any combination of words thereof, on any letterhead or envelope.

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(l) In the event that there is a conflict between this Rule and P.L. 8-11, the “*Government Code of Ethics*,” the provisions of P.L. 8-11 shall prevail.

RULE XVI. AMENDMENT OF THE RULES.

Section 1. Amendment of the Rules. These Rules shall only be amended by resolution which has been on the calendar at least one (1) session day, and adopted by a majority vote of the membership of the Delegation. Minor technical amendments may be made by a majority vote of the members present and voting. “*Minor technical amendments*” (shall mean correction of typographical errors or omissions). Or amendments to the resolution.

Section 2. Construction and Interpretation. These Rules shall be construed according to their plain meaning. In the event that any ambiguity or conflict should arise regarding these Rules, or in the event that these Rules do not address a question or situation which may arise, then such controversy shall be resolved according to the rules and principles set for in “*Mason’s Manual of Legislative Procedure.*”