



**Arnold I. Palacios**  
Governor

**David M. Apatang**  
Lieutenant Governor

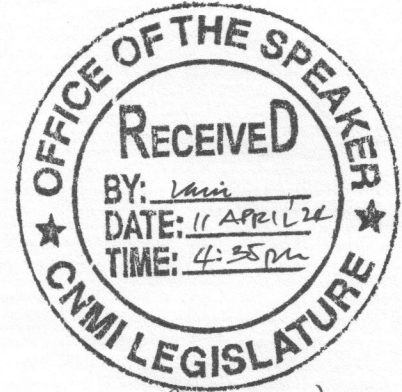
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

April 11, 2024

LT2024-040

The Honorable Edmund S. Villagomez  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Twenty-Third Northern Marianas  
Commonwealth Legislature  
Saipan, MP 96950

The Honorable Edith E. Deleon Guerrero  
President of the Senate  
Twenty-Third Northern Marianas  
Commonwealth Legislature  
Saipan, MP 96950



4/11/24

Dear Mr. Speaker and Madame President:

This is to inform you that I have signed into law **House Bill No. 23-104, HD1, SD1**, entitled, "To appropriate \$5,236,000.00 of the dividends collected by the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority (CEDA) from the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) for the Twenty Five Percent (25%) retirees' pension for all retirees of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.", which was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

This bill becomes **Public Law No. 23-18**. Copies bearing my signature are forwarded for your reference.

Sincerely,

**DAVID M. APATANG**  
Acting Governor

HOUSE CLERK'S OFC  
RECEIVED BY *lela*  
DATE 4/11/2024 TIME 4:52 pm

cc: Governor; Attorney General; Commonwealth Law Revision; Secretary of Finance;  
Public Auditor; Special Assistant for Administration; Commonwealth Utilities Corporation;  
Commonwealth Economic Development Authority; Programs and Legislative Review Office



**TWENTY-THIRD NORTHERN MARIANA COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**THIRD REGULAR SESSION**

**MARCH 28, 2024**

**REPRESENTATIVE BLAS JONATHAN “BJ” T. ATTAO OF SAIPAN, PRECINCT 3** (*for himself*, Representatives Vincent R.S. Aldan, Roman C. Benavente, Angelo A. Camacho, Diego V. F. Camacho, Joel C. Camacho, Vicente C. Camacho, Manny G. T. Castro, Marissa R. Flores, Julie M. A. Ogo, Malcolm J. Omar, Edwin K. Propst, Patrick H. San Nicolas, and Edmund S. Villagomez) in an open and public meeting with an opportunity for the public to comment, introduced the following Bill:

**H. B. No. 23-104, HD1, SD1**

**AN ACT**

**TO APPROPRIATE \$5,236,000.00 OF THE DIVIDENDS COLLECTED BY THE COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CEDA) FROM THE COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION (CUC) FOR THE TWENTY FIVE PERCENT (25%) RETIREES’ PENSION FOR ALL RETIREES OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS.**

**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

The Bill was not referred to a House Committee.

**THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON  
FIRST AND FINAL READING, MARCH 28, 2024;**

*with amendments* in the form of H. B. No. 23-104, HD1 and transmitted to **THE SENATE.**

**IN THE SENATE**

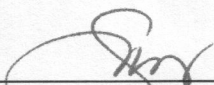
The Bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Fiscal Affairs, which submitted Standing Committee Report 23-81 (Amended); adopted 4/10/2024.

**THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE SENATE ON FIRST AND FINAL READING, APRIL 10, 2024;**

*with amendments* in the form of H. B. No. 23-104, HD1 SD1  
and returned to **THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.**

The House of Representatives accepted the Senate amendments and passed H. B. No. 23-104, HD1, SD1 during its 1st Day, First Special Session on April 11, 2024.

**H. B. No. 23-104, HD1, SD1 IS DULY PASSED BY THE TWENTY-THIRD NORTHERN MARIANAS  
COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE.**

  
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**Linda B. Muña, House Clerk**



TWENTY-THIRD NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE  
**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

FIRST DAY, FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

APRIL 11, 2024

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**H. B. No. 23-104, HD1, SD1**

**AN ACT**

TO APPROPRIATE \$5,236,000.00 OF THE DIVIDENDS COLLECTED BY THE COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CEDA) FROM THE COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION (CUC) FOR THE TWENTY FIVE PERCENT (25%) RETIREES' PENSION FOR ALL RETIREES OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE TWENTY-THIRD NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:**

1            **SECTION 1. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

2            The Legislature finds that the Central Government of the Commonwealth of the  
3 Northern Mariana Islands is in dire need of revenue to pay for its obligations to its employees  
4 and inherited arrears to contracts that the government had entered into. The Legislature further  
5 finds that the Administration along with the Legislature had implemented a ten-hour work  
6 reduction for government employees. Additionally, the Legislature finds that the

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**HOUSE BILL 23-104, HD1, SD1**

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1 Administration has been using its reprogramming authority to pay for the constitutional  
2 obligation to the Public School System (PSS).

3 Furthermore, the Legislature finds that the Administration, through its reprogramming  
4 authority, has been funding twenty-five percent of the retirees' pension. The Legislature finds  
5 that those funds are becoming scarce, placing the Administration in a situation where it must  
6 decide whether to cut further expenses in order to meet its obligations. The Legislature is well  
7 aware that funding retirees' pension for all retirees of the CNMI cannot be compromised and  
8 cutting additional hours from the hard-working employees of the Commonwealth Government  
9 will be detrimental to their livelihood.

10 Therefore, the intent of this Act is to appropriate dividends collected by the  
11 Commonwealth Economic Development Authority (CEDA) from the Commonwealth Utilities  
12 Corporation (CUC) to pay 25% of the retirees' pension. This includes all retirees of the  
13 Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

14 **SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION.**

15 Notwithstanding any provision(s) of law, statutes, rules or regulations to the contrary  
16 and pursuant to the authority vested to the House of Representatives to appropriate dividends  
17 collected by CEDA from CUC, the Legislature through the House of Representatives hereby  
18 appropriates \$5,236,000.00 of the dividends collected by CEDA from CUC to pay 25% of the  
19 retirees' pension, inclusive of all retirees of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana  
20 Islands.

21 **SECTION 3. REPROGRAMMING.**

22 Funds appropriated under this act shall not be reprogrammed for any other purpose.

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**HOUSE BILL 23-104, HD1, SD1**

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**SECTION 4. EXPENDITURE AUTHORITY.**

1           The expenditure authority of the funds allocated under Section 2 of this Act shall be  
2  
3 the Secretary of the Department of Finance.

**SECTION 5. SEVERABILITY.**

4           If any provisions of this Act or the application of any such provision to any person or  
5  
6 circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this  
7 Act or the application of its provisions to persons or circumstances other than those to which  
8 it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

**SECTION 6. SAVINGS CLAUSE.**

9           This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be construed as affecting any  
10  
11 existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes repealed or under any rule,  
12 regulation, or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect  
13 any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior law. The enactment of the Act shall not  
14 have the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal, which  
15 shall already be in existence on the date this Act becomes effective.


**HOUSE BILL 23-104, HD1, SD1**

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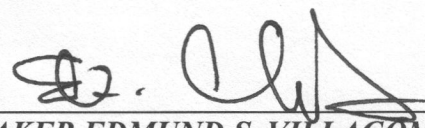
1           **SECTION 7. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

2           This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the Governor, or it becoming law without  
3 such approval.

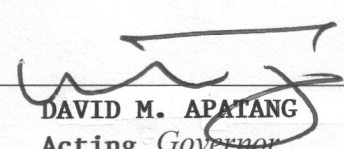
Attested to by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Linda B. Muña, House Clerk**

Certified by:

  
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**SPEAKER EDMUND S. VILLAGOMEZ**  
*House of Representatives*  
*23<sup>rd</sup> Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature*

*Approved* this *11th* day of *April*, 2023

  
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**DAVID M. APATANG**  
*Acting Governor*  
*Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands*