

FIFTEENTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

THIRD REGULAR SESSION, 2007

H. B. NO. 15-219

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To provide for the establishment, regulation and control of casino gambling in the First Senatorial District (Rota); and for other purposes.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE FIFTEENTH NORTHERN MARIANAS
COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:**

1 **Section 1. Short Title.** This Act may be cited as the “Rota Casino Act of 2007.”

2 **Section 2. Definitions.** As used in this Act, the term --

3 (a) “Casino” means a place, area, structure, subject to license under
4 Section 6(a) of this Act for the conduct and playing of one or more games,
5 including associated activities, such as money counting, surveillance, accounting,
6 and storage, related to such conduct and playing, provided, that such terms shall
7 not include areas of a resort complex or other facility exclusively devoted to other
8 activities, such as a hotel, golf course, etc., in which no game is conducted or
9 played;

10 (b) “Casino service provider” means a person subject to license under
11 Section 6(b) of this Act that offers goods or services directly related to gaming,
12 including such persons as gaming equipment manufacturers, importers,
13 distributors, or repairers; schools that teach gaming, including playing, dealing, or
14 other techniques; and casino security services;

15 (c) “Commission” means the Rota Casino Gaming Commission
16 established under Section 3 of this Act;

17 (d) “Commissioner” means a commission member of the Rota Casino
18 Gaming Commission;

19 (e) “Commission Officer” or “Employee” means any person appointed as
20 a member, an officer, or employee of the Rota Casino Gaming Commission

1 whose duties and responsibilities are related to or are in support of the effectual
2 administration of this Act;

3 (f) “Commonwealth” means the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana
4 Islands;

5 (g) “Council” means the Rota Municipal Council;

6 (h) “Domicile” means the place in which a person maintains a residence
7 with the intention of continuing that residence for an unlimited or indefinite
8 period, and to which that person has the intention of returning whenever absent,
9 even for an extended period (as codified under 1 CMC § 6003(i), the Northern
10 Mariana Islands Election Law).

11 (i) “Executive Director” means the Executive Director of the Rota Casino
12 Gaming Commission;

13 (j) “Financial Year” means the period of 12 months ending on 30
14 September in any year or, where the Rota Casino Gaming Commission approves
15 some other date as the terminating date of a financial year, in a particular case, the
16 period of 12 months ending on a date so approved.

17 (k) “Game” means any activity that includes elements of prize,
18 consideration, and chance;

19 (l) “Gaming” means the playing of any game;

20 (m) “Mayor” means the Mayor of Rota;

21 (n) “Municipality” means the Municipality of Rota in the First Senatorial
22 District, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas;

23 (o) “Operator” means a person that actually provides the overall
24 management of the operations of a casino, whether by ownership, lease, contract,
25 agreement, or otherwise; and

26 (p) “Person” includes a natural person, as well as a partnership,
27 corporation, association, joint venture, or other business entity;

28 (q) “Rota Casino Gaming Commission” or “Commission” means the
29 regulatory agency of local government established by this Act;

1 (r) "Technical Amendment" means changes in the Rota Casino Act
2 necessary to bring the Act into conformance with constitutional principles,
3 Commonwealth-wide law, or as necessary to remove ambiguities.

4 (s) "Treasurer" means the Rota Municipal Treasurer.

5 **Section 3. Establishment of Commission.**

6 (a) The Rota Casino Gaming Commission is hereby established and shall
7 consist of five members appointed by the Mayor of Rota with the advice and
8 consent of the Rota Municipal Council. Each member shall serve a term of four
9 years, except that of the members first appointed, one shall serve a term of two
10 years, two shall serve a term of three years, and two shall serve a term of four
11 years, as determined by lottery. Each member shall be a citizen or national of the
12 United States and shall be a bona fide resident of and eligible to vote on Rota.
13 The terms of all the members first appointed shall be on from the first day of
14 confirmation by the confirming authority. Any vacancy shall be filled in the same
15 manner as the original appointment and for the un-expired term thereof. A
16 member may be reappointed to the Commission.

17 (b) No member of the Commission shall otherwise be an employee or
18 official of the Commonwealth, or of a municipality, agency, corporation, or other
19 instrumentality or branch of the Commonwealth, or of any agency of local
20 government of the Commonwealth, except that a member may serve without
21 additional compensation on a task force or other temporary body the work of
22 which is related to the work of the Commission. No individual may serve as a
23 member of the Commission, if such individual, or a parent or child of such
24 individual, holds or is an applicant for any license under this Act or holds any
25 direct or indirect financial interest in any person that holds or is an applicant for
26 any license under this Act.

27 (c) A Commission member may be removed from office by the Mayor for
28 cause, subject to appeal to the confirming authority, which may overrule the
29 Mayor, provided, that, pending any such appeal, the Mayor may suspend the

1 member, if the Mayor finds that the public health and welfare otherwise would be
2 compromised significantly. Membership on the Commission shall automatically
3 be forfeit upon violation of subsection (b) of this section, upon conviction of a
4 felony, or upon conviction of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude.

5 (d) The Mayor may remove for cause a Commission member. Such
6 removal shall be effective 30 days after the Mayor notifies the Chairman of the
7 Commission of the need for such removal, subject to a request by the Mayor.
8 Removal of a commission member before the expiration of his/her term shall
9 occur only by majority vote of the Council, sitting as a group, and on grounds of
10 gross neglect or dereliction of duty, conviction of a misdemeanor or felony,
11 mental or physical incapacity.

12 (e) The Commission, as established herein and as subject to the
13 provisions of subsection (d) of this Section, shall not be considered an agency of
14 local government for purposes of Article VI, Section 8, of the Constitution of the
15 Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

16 (f) Eligibility for appointment of a Commission member:

17 (a) A registered voter in the Municipality of Rota, First Senatorial
18 District and a domiciliary in Rota not less than five years preceding
19 appointment.

20 (g) Members of the Commission shall each be compensated at the rate of
21 \$60,000 per year and shall be reimbursed for their actual, necessary, and
22 reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

23 (h) The members of the Commission shall select one of their members to
24 be chairman for terms of two years each reckoned successively from the effective
25 date of appointments of the first members. A chairman may serve successive or
26 other subsequent terms as established under its rules of procedures, provided,
27 however, that all official meetings of the commission and any of its committee
28 shall take place in Rota following CNMI open public meeting laws as codified
29 under 1 CMC § 9901 et. seq.

1 (i) A majority decision of the five Commissioners shall determine any
2 action of the Rota Casino Gaming Commission, except that no casino or interim
3 casino authorization may be issued without the approval of four members.

4 (j) In the event that a vacancy has existed in the Commission for more
5 than 30 days, a majority of the full Commission, which consists of not less than 4
6 members, may act with respect to any matter, including the issuance of a casino
7 license or interim casino authorization.

8 **Section 4. Powers and Duties.**

9 (a) The Commission shall have all rightful powers necessary to carry out
10 the purposes of this Act.

11 (b) The Commission may, among its other powers--

12 (1) issue rules and regulations as provided in Section 5 of this Act;

13 (2) issue licenses as provided in Section 6 of this Act;

14 (3) conduct hearings, compel the attendance of witnesses, and
15 administer oaths and affirmations;

16 (4) impose license and other fees pursuant to this Act; and

17 (5) issue and enforce administrative orders pertaining to one or
18 more licensees under this Act.

19 (c)(1) The Commission shall hire an Executive Director, who shall
20 serve at the pleasure of the Commission and who may also be removed by
21 the Mayor for cause. The Commission shall fix the compensation of the
22 Executive Director in accordance with the provisions of 1 CMC § 8246.
23 The Executive Director shall have such duties as may be assigned or
24 delegated by the Commission.

25 (2) The Commission may hire and employ such other staff as may
26 be necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act, and such staff shall
27 serve at the pleasure of the Commission or as the Commission may
28 provide by regulation or contract. The positions of such other staff shall
29 be exempt from the Civil Service, provided that such other staff shall be

1 compensated at levels roughly comparable to equivalent positions in the
2 classified Civil Service, taking into consideration their conditions of
3 employment.

4 **Section 5. Rules and Regulations.**

5 (a) The Commission shall promulgate rules and regulations to carry out
6 the purposes of this Act. The Commission may, in addition to any other purpose,
7 use such rules and regulations to interpret, enlarge upon, define, further define, or
8 refine any provision of this title. Such rules and regulations shall take into
9 consideration the need for companies generally to be able to participate in the
10 gaming industry in the Municipality without jeopardizing their ability to maintain
11 or receive gaming licenses from other United States or foreign jurisdictions.

12 (b) Subject to the other provisions of this Act, the rules and regulations
13 shall, at a minimum, provide for the following:

14 (1) A code of ethics for the members of the Commission and its
15 officers and employees.

16 (2) Investigation or other means to ensure the suitability of
17 owners, operators, and employees of casinos and other persons licensed
18 under this Act;

19 (3) Means to ensure insofar as possible the continuing fiscal
20 capability of casino owners and operators and to protect the public in the
21 event that such capability is significantly diminished.

22 (4) Means to exclude from the gaming areas of a casino
23 individuals under 18 years of age.

24 (5) The exclusion and removal of undesirable persons from
25 casinos.

26 (6) Civil penalties for the violation of provisions of this title or of
27 regulations issued pursuant to this Act.

1 **Section 6. Licenses.**

2 (a) Casino Licenses.

3 (1)(A) The Commission shall, by regulation, set forth
4 licensing criteria for the ownership and operation of casinos on
5 Rota, provided that such licensing criteria shall not be designed to
6 give any casino a competitive advantage over any other casino.

7 (B) There shall be no restrictions on the total number of
8 casino licenses. However, the Commission may establish a cap in
9 the number of licenses should it become necessary.

10 (C) There shall be no general restrictions on the number of
11 casinos that may be owned or operated by a single person or group
12 of persons, provided that such restrictions may be imposed on a
13 specific person or group if, as a result of an investigation or other
14 circumstance, the Commission determines that such restrictions are
15 warranted.

16 (b) Casino Service Providers. The Commission shall, by regulation,
17 determine which types of casino service providers shall require licensing under
18 this Act and shall, subject to Section 6 of this Act, provide for such licensing.

19 (c) Individual Licenses.

20 (1) The Commission may, consistent with and in addition to other
21 applicable Commonwealth laws and regulations, license or otherwise
22 regulate the employment of individuals by or in casinos.

23 (2) The Commission may provide for the licensing of such types
24 of employees of casino service providers as the Commission determines
25 should be licensed, and of other types of individuals (other than patrons)
26 who the Commission determines should be licensed because of their
27 association with or presence in a casino.

1 (d) Term of Licenses.

2 (1) Once granted, a license shall remain in force until it is revoked
3 or surrendered under conditions specified in regulations promulgated
4 pursuant to this Act, except during any period during which it is
5 suspended as provided in such regulations.

6 (2) No property right shall accrue to any person in or by virtue of
7 any license issued under this Act.

8 (3) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (d)(2), in order
9 to induce investment in the Municipality, the Commission may enter into
10 contracts with applicants for casinos to be located within large new
11 development projects or large expansions of existing development
12 pursuant to which the applicant, if it is granted a casino license, is
13 guaranteed a minimum term of years during which any law to terminate
14 the operation of casinos, or any law or regulation that would work to limit
15 significantly the operation of that casino, shall not apply to that casino.
16 The Commission shall determine the minimum level of new investment
17 required to qualify for such a contract, which shall not be less than \$25
18 million, and may provide longer guaranteed terms for larger investments,
19 except that no guarantee shall be for a term longer than 40 years.

20 (e) Inspection and Monitoring. The Commission shall provide by
21 regulation, as a condition of a casino or casino service provider license, that the
22 Commission or its authorized representatives may inspect and monitor at any time
23 and with or without notice, any part of a licensed casino, its gaming operations,
24 equipment, records, and related activities and any similar area or activity of a
25 licensed casino service provider, and that a law enforcement officer may enter any
26 such area as provided in Section 12 of this Act.

27 (f) Change of Licensee. No license may be sold, assigned, pledged,
28 transferred, or otherwise alienated or encumbered without the express written
29 permission of the Commission or as the Commission may by regulation provide.

1 A change in the ownership or control of a licensee shall be considered a transfer
2 of a license under this subsection. No sale or lease of a casino (or of a larger
3 establishment of which the casino is a part) or contract for its operation or
4 management may be entered into, except--

5 (1) before a license is granted, if such sale, lease or contract was
6 considered by the Commission in its decision whether to grant the license;
7 or

8 (2) after a license is granted and after any necessary investigation,
9 with the express written permission of the Commission, which shall not be
10 withheld unreasonably.

11 **Section 7. Fees and Taxes.**

12 (a) Casino License Fees.

13 (1) The Commission may impose a casino license application fee
14 not to exceed \$100,000. Such fee shall not be refundable, except under
15 circumstances which the Commission may set forth by regulation, and
16 shall be charged only once in connection with any casino license.

17 (2) The Commission may impose annual license fees in
18 connection with casino licenses issued under this title. The first such fee
19 shall be paid upon approval of the license application and the license shall
20 be issued as of the date such fee is paid, except that, if a casino is not then
21 ready to open for gaming, the first fee for that casino shall be deposited
22 with the Commission within a period, after such approval, to be
23 determined in regulations issued by the Commission. Such deposit shall
24 be held in escrow on behalf of the licensee until the casino opens for
25 gaming or until three years have elapsed from the date the license was
26 issued, whichever first occurs, at which time the fee shall be released from
27 escrow and applied as the first annual license fee. Any escrow interest
28 shall be paid to the licensee, and the license shall be issued as of that date.
29 The license year for a casino shall be reckoned from the date the license is

1 issued, and the total license fee for any casino shall not exceed \$200,000
 2 for any one license year, except that the Commission may, by regulation,
 3 increase such maximum fee not sooner than one year after the first license
 4 is issued or one year after the last such increase, if it finds that the demand
 5 for licenses so warrants and that the increase will not have a significantly
 6 adverse affect on investment in casinos on Rota, provided, that the fee in
 7 effect on the date a casino license becomes effective shall not be increased
 8 for that casino during the first three years of that license. If any increase
 9 under this paragraph would cause a license fee to exceed \$200,000, such
 10 increase shall not be for more than 10 percent of the fee then in effect.

11 (b) Other License Fees. The Commission may establish annual fees for
 12 licenses issued under subsection (b) or (c) of Section 6 of this Act.

13 (c) Rota Gaming Tax. There is hereby imposed a Rota Gaming Tax equal
 14 to five percent of the gross gaming revenue of any casino subject to license under
 15 this Act. For purposes of this subsection, the term “gross gaming revenue” shall
 16 have the meaning given such term in 4 CMC § 1304(a) and 1304(b).

17 (d) Rota Municipal Treasurer. There is hereby established a Rota
 18 Municipal Treasurer within the office of the Mayor whose primary responsibility
 19 is to collect and hold all license and registration fees imposed by this Act and the
 20 regulations issued pursuant hereto.

21 **Section 8. Investigations.**

22 (a) Prior to issuing any license under this title, the Commission shall
 23 investigate the applicant for such license and any related person, as the
 24 Commission determines, either by regulation or in an individual case, as
 25 necessary to protect the public interest. If such person holds a similar license
 26 from any other United States jurisdiction, the investigation shall be limited to
 27 determining the validity of that license and inquiring of the issuer of such license
 28 regarding any negative information relating to such person. The Commission

1 may request the assistance of the United States Federal Government for
 2 investigation, examination or other related questions for any casino applicant.

3 (b) The Commission shall, at the request of the holder of any license
 4 under this Act, investigate any person involved in the potential sale, lease,
 5 transfer, change in ownership, or other change related to the license as necessary
 6 to protect the public interest of future activities under such license.

7 (c) The Commission may require that the applicant reimburse the
 8 Commission for its outside expenses incurred in the conduct of an investigation
 9 under subsection (a) or (b) of this Section, provided that no expense for any
 10 member or staff of the Commission, including any travel or transportation
 11 expense of such a member or staff, shall be reimbursed. The Commission may
 12 require the applicant to deposit the estimated amount of such expenses with the
 13 Commission before the investigation begins and shall return any unused balance
 14 to the applicant when the investigation is completed or otherwise terminated. The
 15 Commission may require additional deposits, if previous deposits are insufficient
 16 to cover the actual cost of the investigation. Any amount reimbursed under this
 17 subsection shall be deposited as a credit against the applicable appropriation
 18 account and shall once again be available for obligation without further
 19 appropriation.

20 (d) The Commission may at any time investigate the holder of any license
 21 under this Act or any related person, with or without notice to such holder or
 22 person, when it determines that such investigation is warranted, but the expenses
 23 of such an investigation shall not be subject to reimbursement.

24 **Section 9. Detention of Violators.** The operator of a casino, any employee or
 25 agent of such operator, or any person inspecting or monitoring a gaming establishment on
 26 behalf of the Commission, may, upon reasonable suspicion, detain in a suitable place in
 27 such gaming establishment (or elsewhere in a resort complex or other facility of which
 28 the gaming establishment is a part) any person who, on the premises of such gaming
 29 establishment, is or may be violating this Act or any regulation promulgated pursuant to

1 this Act, or who is or may be committing a related crime (such as a crime against
 2 property under 1 CMC § 1101 et. seq.), using such force as is reasonably necessary for
 3 that purpose, until the arrival of a law enforcement officer. The detaining person shall
 4 take such steps as are necessary to ensure that a law enforcement officer is summoned
 5 and arrives with as little delay as possible.

6 **Section 10. Exclusion or Removal.** A casino operator or any employee or agent
 7 of such operator may exclude or remove any undesirable person from a casino pursuant
 8 to regulations promulgated pursuant to Section 5 of this Act and may use reasonable
 9 force to carry out such exclusion or removal. A casino may establish and enforce a dress
 10 code for its patrons, and any person who fails to comply with such code on the premises
 11 of such gaming establishment may, at the discretion of the casino operator, be deemed an
 12 undesirable person for purposes of this section. Any action taken under this section shall
 13 comply with any applicable federal or Commonwealth law that prohibits discrimination
 14 against any protected class of individuals.

15 **Section 11. Immunity for Detention, Exclusion, or Removal.** No civil or
 16 criminal action shall lie against any person for action reasonably taken pursuant to
 17 Section 9 or 10 of this Act.

18 **Section 12. Entry by Law Enforcement Officers.** A law enforcement officer
 19 may, without warrant, notice, or explanation, enter any area of a casino to which a patron
 20 of the casino or the public has access and, for such purpose, such area is a public place in
 21 which the officer may exercise any power or discharge any duty which may be exercised
 22 or discharged in a public place under this Act or any other provision of law. A law
 23 enforcement officer may enter any other area of a casino or any area of a casino service
 24 provider at the request of any person inspecting or monitoring such area on behalf of the
 25 Commission under Section 6(e) of this Act or as otherwise authorized by law.

26 **Section 13. Gambling by Commission and Licensees Prohibited.**

27 (a) No member, officer, employee, or agent of the Commission shall play
 28 any game in--

- 29 (1) any casino under the jurisdiction of the Commission;

1 (2) any other gaming establishment reasonably associated with
2 any such gaming establishment; or

3 (3) any gaming establishment the owner, lessee, operator, or
4 manager of which is an applicant for a license from the Commission, or is
5 a potential applicant that has entered into discussions with the
6 Commission prior to such application and has not clearly abandoned its
7 interest in a license, or is reasonably associated with such an applicant or
8 potential applicant.

9 (b) No member, officer, employee, or agent of the Commission shall
10 knowingly be an employee of or have any business or financial association with
11 or interest in any casino or casino service provider licensee under this Act or any
12 business reasonably related to such licensee.

13 (c) No owner, lessee, operator, manager, officer, employee, agent, or
14 other person associated with a casino licensed under this Act shall play any game
15 in such casino.

16 **Section 14. Administrative Penalties.** The Commission may, by regulation,
17 provide civil penalties for the violation of this Act or of any regulation or order issued
18 pursuant to this Act. No penalty may exceed \$50,000, and a range of lesser penalties
19 shall be provided for minor or intermediate violations. Such regulations may provide that
20 each day that a violation continues constitutes a separate violation. Such regulations may
21 specify conditions under which a natural person who causes any other person to commit a
22 violation shall also be liable for such violation. The Commission may suspend, reduce,
23 or compromise any penalty imposed pursuant to this section.

24 **Section 15. Employee Benefits.**

25 (a) As a condition of any casino license issued under this Act, each
26 employee of any casino so licensed shall be granted personal and sick leave at a
27 rate equal to the grant of such leave to civil service employees of the
28 Commonwealth. Such employee shall be given reasonable opportunity to use
29 such leave or, at the option of the employee, shall be paid the then-current value

1 of such leave at the end of the employment of the employee in the
 2 Commonwealth by the casino.

3 (b) As a condition of any casino license issued under this Act, each
 4 employee of any casino so licensed shall be provided with adequate health
 5 insurance or similar coverage similar (as determined by the Commission) to the
 6 coverage provided to civil service employees of the Commonwealth. The casino
 7 shall pay the entire cost of such coverage, except that a casino may deduct from
 8 the wages of an employee not more than one-third of the actual cost of such
 9 coverage, if the employee is compensated at not less than the United States
 10 minimum wage, provided, that if the casino employs any nonresident worker
 11 subject to this provision and another law of the Commonwealth forbids such a
 12 deduction for nonresident workers or limits such deduction to less than one-third,
 13 such provisions shall apply to all employees of the casino (including resident
 14 workers) in the same job category as the nonresident worker. A casino shall
 15 submit a plan of coverage to the Commission, as the Commission shall by
 16 regulation provide, and obtain the approval of such plan by the Commission.

17 (c) The Commission may, by regulation, provide for the exemption of
 18 certain high-level employees from any other provision of this section, except as
 19 may otherwise be required by law, provided, that if such law provides for such
 20 provision to be applicable for high-level nonresident workers, any exemption
 21 provided pursuant to this subsection shall not apply to similar resident workers.

22 **Section 16. Local Appropriations.**

23 (a) Notwithstanding any provision of 1 CMC § 1408, the revenues
 24 derived under this Act shall be subject to appropriation only by the Rota
 25 Municipal Council with the approval of the Mayor (or without the approval of the
 26 Mayor, if the Council unanimously re-enacts the appropriation after disapproval
 27 by the Mayor).

28 (b) The revenues derived under this Act shall first be appropriated for the
 29 operations of the Commission and for repayment of any start-up appropriations.

1 (c) Of the revenues remaining after the appropriation of funds under
2 subsection (b) of this Section, the lesser of five percent or \$200,000 shall be
3 appropriated for health and welfare programs, including grants to one or more
4 nongovernmental organizations (including faith-based organizations and mental
5 health providers), to ameliorate any negative social effects of gambling or for
6 other health and welfare purposes.

7 (d) Of the revenues remaining after the appropriation of funds under
8 previous subsections of this Section, such sums, as may be necessary, are
9 authorized to be appropriated to reimburse bona fide residents of Rota for any tax
10 imposed by 4 CMC § 1709 with respect to the Earned Income Credit. If there are
11 insufficient revenues remaining for such purpose, such reimbursements shall be
12 prorated among such residents as provided by the Rota Municipal Council. The
13 Rota Municipal Treasurer shall provide information or otherwise cooperate as
14 necessary to determine the amount of and distribute such payments.

15 (e) Of revenues remaining after the appropriation of funds under previous
16 subsections of this Section, if any, not less than one-half shall be appropriated for
17 the benefit of the people of Rota only for the purposes of:

18 (1) medical health insurance coverage for all legal residents
19 domiciled in Rota as defined under Section 2(h) of this Act;

20 (2) scholarships;

21 (3) youth services and programs;

22 (4) housing or housing loans to be administered by the office of
23 the Rota Department of Commerce.

24 (5) small business loans administered by the office of the Rota
25 Department of Commerce;

26 (6) health and welfare programs in addition to those provided for
27 in subsection (c) of this Section.

1 (f) The remaining half of the revenues referred to in subsection (e) of this
2 Section may be appropriated for any public purpose that benefits the people of
3 Rota.

4 **Section 17. Severability.** If any provision of this Act or the application of any
5 such provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of
6 competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to
7 persons or circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected
8 thereby.

9 **Section 18. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein shall
10 not be construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under
11 statutes repealed or under any rule, regulation or order adopted under the statutes.
12 Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or
13 pursuant to prior law. The enactment of the Act shall not have the effect of terminating,
14 or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal, which shall already be in
15 existence on the date this Act becomes effective.

16 **Section 19. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the
17 Governor or becoming law without such approval.

Prefiled: 1/24/07

Date: January 25, 2007

Introduced By: /s/ Rep. Crispin M. Ogo

Reviewed for Legal Sufficiency by:

/s/ Jose A. Bermudes
House Legal Counsel