

21ST NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

_____ Session, 2019

H. B. 21- 60

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To establish the CNMI Cultural Masters Award; and for other purposes.

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

1 **Section 1. Short Title.** This Act shall be cited as the “CNMI Cultural
2 Masters Award Act of 2019”.

3 **Section 2. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that the indigenous
4 cultures of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands consists of their
5 own respective traditions, healing and artistic practices, music, storytelling, and so
6 forth. Through the efforts of certain individuals within our great Commonwealth,
7 these respective components of our local cultures have withstood the gruesome test
8 of time and have continued to be perpetuated despite the constant globalization and
9 technological advancements that is presently occurring. Throughout the centuries,
10 these vital aspects of our cultures have remained resilient and have adapted
11 accordingly pursuant to the events occurring for each respective time period due in
12 large part to the individuals who have made it possible. Moreover, the Legislature
13 finds that it is imperative to honor these respective individuals who continue to

1 prolong the lifetime of our cultural traditions and pay tribute to the contributions
2 that they make to our communities. Furthermore, the preservation of our indigenous
3 cultures is of utmost importance in providing a sense of identity for future
4 generations to come.

5 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to establish the CNMI Cultural Masters
6 Award and for other purposes.

7 **Section 3. Enactment.** Notwithstanding any laws or regulations to the
8 contrary and subject to proper codification by the CNMI Law Revision
9 Commission, the following new provisions are hereby enacted:

10 § 101. Short Title.

11 This Act shall be known and cited as the “CNMI Cultural Masters
12 Award Act.”

13 § 102. Creation.

14 There is created within the Commonwealth Council on Arts and
15 Cultures the CNMI Cultural Masters Award, to be given to accomplished
16 practitioners of CNMI’s folk and traditional arts who have contributed to the
17 preservation, advancement, and appreciation of their art.

18 § 103. Award Frequency and Limitations.

19 The Commonwealth Council on Arts and Cultures shall accept
20 nominations for the CNMI Cultural Masters Award during the month of April
21 2010 and every four (4) years thereafter. No more than four (4) awards may

1 be given during each award year. Nominations for the CNMI Cultural
2 Masters Award may be accepted from any party other than The
3 Commonwealth Council on Arts and Cultures, members of its staff,
4 management, and Board, or from a prospective award candidate.

5 § 104. Selection Criteria.

6 Nominees for the CNMI Cultural Masters Award shall be judged
7 based on the following criteria:

8 (a) Exemplary and active practice of a traditional art form.

9 (b) Expertise, consummate skill, and longevity in the promotion and
10 perpetuation of a traditional art form.

11 (c) Contributions to the traditional art form in areas of appreciation,
12 knowledge, teaching, advocacy, and advancement.

13 (d) Evidence of high artistic quality of work and mastery of traditional
14 art form via support materials.

15 (e) Continuing artistic accomplishment.

16 (f) Participation in one's art form via practicing or teaching.

17 (g) Artistic excellence.

18 (h) Benefit to artistic tradition through contributions such as teaching,
19 advocacy, organizing, and preserving important repertoires.

20 (i) Contribution to living cultural heritage.

21 (j) Active engagement in preserving the folk and traditional arts.

1 (k) Increase in opportunities for and public visibility of traditional arts
2 and artists through the nominee's efforts.

3 § 105. Selection Procedures.

4 (a) The Commonwealth Council on Arts and Cultures' staff shall
5 review nomination packets to ensure that the criteria and guidelines have been
6 met.

7 (b) A panel of experts and/or judges, which shall consists of the
8 Resident Executive of the Indigenous Affairs Office; the Executive Assistant
9 of the Carolinian Affairs Office; the Executive Director of the
10 Commonwealth Council on Arts and Cultures; the Chairperson of the
11 Humanities Council; Executive Director of the Chamorro – Carolinian
12 Language Commission; and the Program Manager of the Chamorro –
13 Carolinian Language Heritage Studies Program, shall convene to:

14 (i) verify authenticity and merit, and to narrow the pool of
15 nominees.

16 (ii) determine final recipients of the CNMI Cultural Masters
17 Award based on the Selection Criteria listed herein.

18 **Section 4. Severability.** If any provisions of this Act or the application of
19 any such provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court
20 of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its

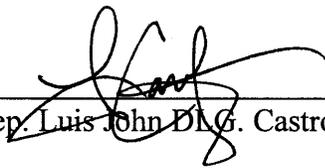
1 provisions to persons or circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid
2 shall not be affected thereby.

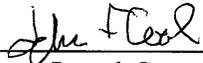
3 **Section 5. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein
4 shall not be construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or
5 acquired under statutes repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted
6 under the statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding
7 instituted under or pursuant to prior law. The enactment of the Act shall not have
8 the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal,
9 which shall already be in existence on the date this Act becomes effective.

10 **Section 6. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by
11 the Governor, or its becoming law without such approval.

Prefiled: 6/7/19

Date: 6/7/19

Introduced by: 
Rep. Luis John D.G. Castro

Reviewed for Legal Sufficiency by:

House Legal Counsel