

TWENTY-THIRD NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH

LEGISLATURE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Session, 2024

H. B. 23-107

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To repeal the salaries of the Commissioners of the Commonwealth Casino Commission and the CNMI Cannabis Commission and to require that these Commissioners receive compensation in accordance with 1 CMC § 8247.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE 23RD NORTHERN MARIANAS
COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:

1 **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.** This legislation repeals the salaries of
2 the Commissioners of the Commonwealth Casino Commission and the CNMI
3 Cannabis Commission and requires that these Commissioners receive
4 compensation in accordance with 1 CMC § 8247.

5 The Legislature finds that pursuant to 4 CMC § 2313(g), the Commissioners
6 of the Commonwealth Casino Commission were compensated at the rate of
7 \$40,000.00 for the first year of the Commission's existence and \$65,000.00 per
8 annum for each year thereafter. The Legislature also finds that pursuant to 4 CMC
9 § 53007(g), the Commissioners of the CNMI Cannabis Commission are

1 compensated at a rate of \$55,000.00 per annum.

2 A comparison of these salaries against compensation received by other
3 commissioners and board members of entities within the Commonwealth of the
4 Northern Mariana Islands Government reveals a significant disparity. For instance,
5 the Commissioners of the Public Utilities Commission and the Members of the
6 Commonwealth Economic Development Authority Board of Directors are
7 compensated in accordance with 1 CMC § 8247, which states “the rate of
8 compensation for meetings attended for members of all government corporations,
9 councils, commissions, [and] agencies . . . shall be no more than \$60 for a full day
10 meeting and no more than \$30 for a half day or less meeting; provided that the
11 compensation shall not exceed a maximum of \$6,000 per year”

12 In light of this disparity and the dire economic situation currently faced by
13 the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the
14 Legislature finds that the compensation received by the Commissioners of the
15 Commonwealth Casino Commission and the Commissioners of the CNMI
16 Cannabis Commission are disproportionately high. This legislation rectifies the
17 disparity in compensation between the Commissioners of the CNMI Casino
18 Commission, the Commissioners of the CNMI Cannabis Commission, and other
19 similarly-situated positions within the CNMI Government.

20 Further, this adjustment ensures that the Commissioners of the
21 Commonwealth Casino Commission and the Commissioners of the CNMI

1 Cannabis Commission are fairly compensated for their contributions, brings the
2 Commissioners' compensation in line with compensation for comparable roles, and
3 lessens the financial burden on the CNMI Government.

4 Thus, the purpose of this legislation is to repeal the salaries of the
5 Commissioners of the Commonwealth Casino Commission and the CNMI
6 Cannabis Commission and require that these Commissioners, like other similarly-
7 situated CNMI Government officials, receive compensation pursuant to 1 CMC
8 § 8247.

9 **Section 2. Amendment.** 1 CMC § 8247(k) is hereby amended to read as
10 follows:

11 “(k) This section shall ~~not~~ apply to members of the Commonwealth Casino
12 Commission and members of the CNMI Cannabis Commission.”

13 **Section 3. Amendment.** 4 CMC § 2313(g) is hereby amended to read as
14 follows:

15 “(g) Compensation. Members of the Commission shall ~~each~~ be
16 compensated in accordance with 1 CMC § 8247 ~~at the rate of \$ 40,000.00~~
17 ~~for the first year of the Commission's existence. After the first year of the~~
18 ~~Commission's existence, Commissioners shall be compensated at the rate~~
19 ~~of \$ 65,000.00 per annum; provided that each Commissioner must attend~~
20 ~~all scheduled meetings unless excused by the Chairperson of the~~

1 ~~Commission. All travel will be subject to 1 CMC § 7407.~~

2 **Section 4. Amendment.** 4 CMC § 53007(g) is hereby amended to read as
3 follows:

4 “(g) Compensation. ~~The Commission shall be a working Commission and~~
5 ~~the m~~Members of the Commission shall ~~each~~ be compensated in accordance with
6 1 CMC § 8247 ~~at the rate of \$ 55,000 per annum; provided that each Commissioner~~
7 ~~must attend all scheduled meetings unless excused by the Chairperson of the~~
8 ~~Commission; provided further that if a Commissioner fails to attend three scheduled~~
9 ~~meetings without excuse, his or her salary shall be reduced and prorated~~
10 ~~accordingly. All travel will be subject to 1 CMC § 7407.~~”

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

16 **Section 6. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein
17 shall not be construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or
18 acquired under statutes repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted
19 under the statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding
20 instituted under or pursuant to prior law. The enactment of the Act shall not have

1 the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal,
2 which shall already be in existence on the date this Act becomes effective.

3 **Section 7. Effective Date.** This Act shall become effective on the first day
4 of the fiscal year immediately following the fiscal year in which it was approved
5 by the Governor or became law without his approval.

Prefiled: 5/9/2024

Date: _____

Introduced by: _____

Rep. Marissa R. Flores

Reviewed for Legal Sufficiency by:

[Signature] 5/8/24
House Legal Counsel

[Handwritten signatures and initials]