

REFERRED TO: WJM + JKW
(HOUSE)
5/17/2024

TWENTY-THIRD NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH
LEGISLATURE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

May 10, 2024

Sec. Spc Session, 2024

H. B. 23- 110

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To authorize the Carolinian Affairs Office (CAO) to promulgate fees; and for other purposes.

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

1 **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that the Carolinian
2 Affairs Office (CAO) was created by Article III, Section 18 of the NMI
3 Constitution. Pursuant to the aforementioned constitutional mandate, the CAO was
4 created to advise the Governor on matters affecting persons of Carolinian descent
5 within the Commonwealth; review the application of government policies and the
6 availability and quality of government services for persons of Carolinian descent;
7 investigate complaints and conduct hearings regarding matters affecting persons of
8 Carolinian descent; and so forth. The Legislature finds that in order to carryout such
9 duties and responsibilities, the CAO must rely heavily on funds allocated to them
10 in the fiscal year budget appropriations to cover their personnel and daily
11 operations. In order to alleviate some financial strain on the annual budget
12 appropriations, the Legislature finds that it is highly appropriate to grant the CAO

1 with the authority to promulgate fees that they find necessary to fund such costs. In
2 granting such authority, the CAO will become considerably more financially
3 independent without having to rely heavily on the annual budget appropriations.

4 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to authorize the Carolinian Affairs
5 Office (CAO) to promulgate fees and for other purposes.

6 **Section 2. Enactment.** Notwithstanding any laws or regulations to the
7 contrary and subject to codification by the CNMI Law Revision Commission, the
8 following provisions shall hereby be enacted:

9 “§101. Executive Assistant of the Carolinian Affairs Office (CAO) Fee
10 Promulgation.

11 (a) The Executive Assistant of the Carolinian Affairs Office (CAO), as
12 established by Article III, Section 18 of the NMI Constitution, is hereby
13 authorized to promulgate appropriate fees that are deemed necessary for
14 the program.

15 (b) There is hereby established within the Commonwealth Treasury a
16 Carolinian Affairs Office (CAO) Revolving Fund Account which shall
17 be accounted for separately from the General Fund. All funds collected
18 pursuant to §101 of this Act shall be deposited into the account shall be
19 non-lapsing and exclusively used to pay the personnel salaries,
20 operations and services provided by the Carolinian Affairs Office
21 (CAO). The expenditure authority of the funds deposited into this

1 revolving fund shall be the Executive Assistant of the Carolinian Affairs
2 Office (CAO).”

3 **Section 3. Severability.** If any provisions of this Act or the application of
4 any such provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court
5 of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its
6 provisions to persons or circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid
7 shall not be affected thereby.

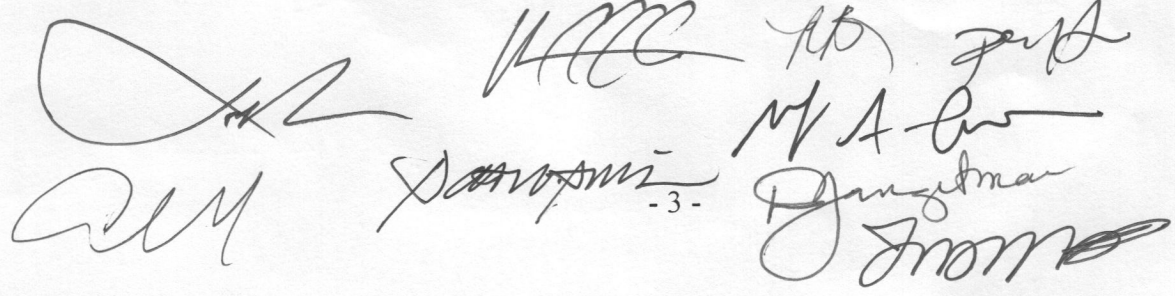
8 **Section 4. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein
9 shall not be construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or
10 acquired under statutes repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted
11 under the statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall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

15 **Section 5. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by
16 the Governor, or its becoming law without such approval.

~~Intro~~
-Prefiled: 5/10/2024

Date: 5/10/24

Introduced by: _____
Rep. Manny Gregory T. Castro



Reviewed for Legal Sufficiency by:

Joseph D. Day
House Legal Counsel