

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TWELFTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 2000

ELEVENTH DAY

February 28, 2000

The House of Representatives of the Twelfth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature convened in its Eleventh Day, First Regular Session, on Monday, February 28, 2000, at 1:34 p.m. at the Rota Resort Pacifica Restaurant, Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Honorable Benigno R. Fitial, Speaker of the House, presided.

A moment of silence was observed.

In accordance with Rule XIII, § 2(a), fifteen members were present; Representatives Jesus T. Attao, Heinz S. Hofschneider and Stanley T. Torres were excused.

Speaker Fitial: A quorum is duly constituted for the Eleventh Day of our First Regular Session.

ADOPTION OF JOURNALS

None

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

None

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

H. R. NO. 12-19: A House Resolution congratulating the Mayor of Rota and the people of Rota for their initiative, commitment and hard work to promote the concept of eco-tourism on the island of Rota by hosting the Heritage Eco-Tourism Conference 2000; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Maria "Malua" T. Peter and two others

H. R. NO. 12-20: A House Resolution relative to petitioning the United States Congress to amend Internal Revenue Code Section 877 (c) on the ten-year residency requirements on special sourcing rules for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. William S. Torres and nine others

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR

None

SENATE COMMUNICATIONS

None

HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVES

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

None

OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

None

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I move for the adoption of Standing Committee Report Nos. 12-20, 12-21 and 12-22.

The motion was seconded.

Speaker Fitial: Discussion? Representative Ada?

Rep. Ada: Mr. Speaker, there is a typo error on S. C. R. NO. 12-19, if I'm not mistaken, on the third line, the word "as" should be "has".

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, if I may?

Speaker Fitial: Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: Because the three Committee Reports that I moved for their adoption deals with House Resolutions while S. C. R. NO. 12-19 deals with House Bill, so, if there is no objection from the members, I would definitely amend my motion to include S. C. R. NO. 12-19. So move, Mr. Speaker.

The motion was seconded.

S. C. R. NO. 12-19: Reporting on House Bill No. 12-003, entitled, “To require landowners to grant a right-of-way or provide for any other reasonable access to a public road for any real property which as been subdivided and is offered for sale, or lease; and for other purposes.” *Your Committee on Natural Resources recommends passage of the bill without amendment.*

S. C. R. NO. 12-20: Reporting on House Joint Resolution No. 12-3, entitled, “To express our support for keeping local control over labor and immigration, and to request the United States Congress not to pass S.1052.” *Your Committee on Federal and Foreign Relations recommends adoption of the resolution without amendment.*

S. C. R. NO. 12-21: Reporting on House Joint Resolution No. 12-4, entitled, “To officially endorse and activate the formation of the Japan/Northern Mariana Islands Parliamentary League of Friendship, a league to promote the long-standing goodwill, friendship, social, economic, and cultural bonds between the people of Japan and the People of the Northern Mariana Islands.” *Your Committee on Federal and Foreign Relations recommends adoption of the resolution without amendment.*

S. C. R. NO. 12-22: Reporting on House Resolution No. 12-17, entitled, “Requesting assistance of the United States Department of Transportation to urge the appropriate authorities of the Government of Japan to permit international flights to and from Haneda Airport in Tokyo; and for other purposes.” *Your Committee on Federal and Foreign Relations recommends adoption of the resolution without amendment.*

There was no discussion raised. The motion to adopt Standing Committee Report Nos. 12-19, 12-20, 12-21, and 12-22 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: The motion carries. We are down to Resolution Calendar.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL AND CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

RESOLUTION CALENDAR

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, if there is no objection from the members, can we have a minute recess so that the resolution introduced by Representative Peter can be adopted in today's session, to congratulate the Mayor on this Conference that is happening this week so that the Clerk can number the resolution and I will report it out?

Speaker Fitial: Under the Resolution Calendar?

Floor Leader Babauta: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Fitial: Representative Lee Torres would you raise also your resolution to be considered likewise?

Floor Leader Babauta: If there is no objection from the members, Mr. Speaker. Short recess, Mr. Speaker.

The House recessed at 1:54 p.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 1:59 p.m.

Speaker Fitial: The House shall reconvene. We are under Resolution Calendar. Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: I move for the adoption of House Resolution No. 12-17, House Joint Resolution No. 12-3, and House Joint Resolution No. 12-4.

The motion was seconded.

H. R. NO. 12-17: REQUESTING ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO URGE THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN TO PERMIT INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS TO AND FROM HANEDA AIRPORT IN TOKYO; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

H. J. R. NO. 12-3: TO EXPRESS OUR SUPPORT FOR KEEPING LOCAL CONTROL OVER LABOR AND IMMIGRATION, AND TO REQUEST THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS NOT TO PASS S.1052.

H. J. R. NO. 12-4: TO OFFICIALLY ENDORSE AND ACTIVATE THE FORMATION OF THE JAPAN/NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS PARLIAMENTARY LEAGUE OF FRIENDSHIP, A LEAGUE TO PROMOTE THE LONG-STANDING GOODWILL, FRIENDSHIP, SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL BONDS BETWEEN THE PEOPLE OF JAPAN AND THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS.

Speaker Fitial: Representative Benavente?

Rep. Benavente: Mr. Speaker, on House Resolution No. 12-3, I realize that a copy of the Resolution is to be transmitted to the Speaker of the House of Representatives. I just wonder also if it be better if we transmit a copy to Chairman Don Young, Committee on Resources, since this committee will be proceeding with the S.1052. I am not sure at this time, if we need to. I ask the members on whether we should just list in sending this copy to the Speaker, I am sure it will get to all the members. I think it is the urgency of this resolution that members of the U. S. Congress would like to have a copy too. I would like to offer an oral floor amendment -- since the Rules does not allow us to offer an oral floor amendment -- we need to suspend the Rules.

Speaker Fitial: I would like to point out also on the second page of the resolution, the name of the House Speaker is misspelled. I believe the Speaker of the House is, "Hastert". The last name of the Speaker is "Hastert". But going back to the request of Representative Benavente, I believe if he is the Chair of the Committee on Resources, why not.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker?

Speaker Fitial: Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, if there is no objection from the members, I would like to move to suspend Rule IX, Section 11 of our Rules so that Representative Benavente can offer an oral floor amendment. I so move, Mr. Speaker.

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: The motion carries. Representative Benavente?

Rep. Benavente: Thank you. I would like to offer an oral Floor Amendment on page 2, line 7, of House Resolution No. 12-3. After "U. S. House of Representatives" change the "(.)" to "(,)" and write in "and Honorable Don Young, Chairman, Committee on Resources."

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: The motion carries. We are still on the main motion and we haven't dispose of the main motion. The main motion is to adopt House Joint Resolution No. 12-3. Representative Pangelinan, recognized.

Rep. Pangelinan: I guess there are many trips to Washington, D. C. testified to maintain our own rightful control to our own affairs. I feel that the word down there "to request" is -- I don't know -- but my colleague, "to request the United States Congress not to pass..." to request after something all diplomatic approach into this, you are requesting, consider "we're demanding United States not to pass". I don't know. This is where we are at the edge of Banzai Cliff on this issue. I guess your request is more diplomatic than what I have.

Rep. Benavente: Point of information, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Fitial: State your point, Representative Benavente.

Rep. Benavente: I realize that it is the frustration from all us probably warrants that attitude at this time, but I would like to remind the members that we are still sending this resolution to the far islands, our friends in the House of Representatives. I think that while we review at this time, we have their support. I think what is important of this resolution is that, we remind them that the elected officials here in the CNMI still asking for their continued support. I just think that at this time, since this will be going to the far islands, our friends in the House of Representatives, that maybe we put a word here in this case of proper procedure and necessarily requesting the Chairman. I think that is something we should consider at this time. It has yet to meet in the House of Representatives. Thank you.

Speaker Fitial: Representative Pangelinan, you still have the floor.

Rep. Pangelinan: We have been to gentle many times regarding S.1052 and still there is no success. Maybe next time, Mr. Speaker, we will go ahead and be strongly recommending – for all, we are kindly requesting the best is to pray.

Speaker Fitial: Okay. Do you prefer voice vote or roll call?

Floor Leader Babauta: Voice vote, Mr. Speaker.

The motion to adopt House Joint Resolution No. 12-3, as amended, was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: The motion carries.

Floor Leader Babauta: Clarification, Mr. Speaker. My motion is to move for the adoption of the three Resolutions that appears on today's Calendar.

Speaker Fitial: Okay, so one is down two more to go. Any further discussion on the other two Resolutions?

The motion to adopt House Joint Resolution No. 12-4 and House Resolution No. 12-17 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: House Joint Resolution No. 12-4 and House Resolution No. 12-17 are hereby adopted. Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, if there is no objection from the members, I would like to include House Resolution Nos. 12-19 and 12-20 on today's Calendar for adoption.

There was no objection raised.

Speaker Fitial: House Resolution Nos. 12-19 and 12-20 are hereby placed on today's Resolution Calendar. Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, do we have the Resolutions copied already?

Speaker Fitial: They're being copied.

Floor Leader Babauta: If there's no objection, Mr. Speaker, we move down to Bill Calendar and then as soon as the copies arrive, we will go back to Item Number 15.

There was no objection raised.

BILL CALENDAR

The Chair recognized Floor Leader Babauta.

Floor Leader Babauta: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move for the suspension of Rule VII, Section 9 to place House Bill No. 12-3 on today's Calendar for action on First and Final Reading.

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: The motion carries. Floor Leader?

Floor Leader: Mr. Speaker, I move for the suspension of Rule IX, Sections 9 and 10 for the passage of House Bill No. 12-3 on First and Final Reading.

The motion was seconded.

Speaker Fitial: We did the –

Floor Leader Babauta: Placement, Mr. Speaker. Clarification, it is for placement and the second motion is for passage.

Speaker Fitial: Okay, you are recognized.

Floor Leader Babauta: So move, Mr. Speaker.

The motion was seconded.

Speaker Fitial: Discussion on the motion? Roll call.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, clarification. My motion was for the suspension of Rules for passage on First and Final Reading then I will be making another motion for passage.

Speaker Fitial: There was a motion that we just disposed of, it is Rule VII, Section 9.

Floor Leader Babauta: That is the placement of House Bill No. 12-3 on the Calendar.

Speaker Fitial: We don't need to suspend the motion for the Bill on the Calendar. It is already on the Calendar.

Floor Leader Babauta: If that is the decision of this body, Mr. Speaker, I have no objection.

Rep. Benavente: Point of clarification.

Speaker Fitial: Under point of clarification.

Rep. Benavente: Because the Bill came with a Committee Report and with the adoption of the Committee Report the Bill automatically appears on the Bill Calendar. I think what the Floor Leader needs at this point, is to suspend the Rules that requires First and Final Reading, and I think we did that.

Speaker Fitial: So, now, the motion is in order for the passage of House Bill No. 12-3 on First and Final Reading, and that motion is open for discussion. Roll call.

The Clerk called the roll on the motion to pass House Bill No. 12-3 as follows:

Rep. Martin B. Ada	yes
Rep. David M. Apatang	yes
Rep. Jesus T. Attao	excused
Rep. Oscar M. Babauta	yes
Rep. Diego T. Benavente	yes
Rep. Antonio M. Camacho	yes
Rep. Rosiky F. Camacho	yes
Rep. Florencio T. Deleon Guerrero	yes
Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider	excused
Rep. Brigade DLG. Ichihara	yes
Rep. Dino M. Jones	yes
Rep. Alejo M. Mendiola, Jr.	yes
Rep. Norman S. Palacios	yes
Rep. Thomas B. Pangelinan	yes
Rep. Maria “Malua” T. Peter	yes
Rep. Stanley T. Torres	excused
Rep. William S. Torres	yes
Speaker Benigno R. Fitial	yes

Speaker Fitial: House Bill No. 12-3 hereby passed.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker?

Speaker Fitial: Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: Can we have a short recess, Mr. Speaker, while we wait for the two Resolutions?

The House recessed at 2:15 p.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 2:25 p.m.

Speaker Fitial: The House shall reconvene. Let us go back to Item 12 we have a Committee Report to consider.

REPORTS ON STANDING COMMITTEES

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I move for the adoption of Standing Committee Report No. 12-23 reference to House Resolution No. 12-10.

The motion was seconded.

S. C. R. NO. 12-23: Reporting on House Resolution No. 12-10, entitled, “Relative to petitioning the United States Congress to include Natives of Northern Marianas Descent as defined in the “Covenant” under  184 of the Housing and Urban Development to guarantee certain mortgage loans made to eligible native American families.” *Your Committee on Health and Welfare recommends adoption of the resolutions.*

There was no discussion raised.

The motion to adopt Standing Committee Report No. 12-23 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: Standing Committee Report No. 12-3 is hereby adopted. We are down to Resolution Calendar under Item 15.

RESOLUTION CALENDAR

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I move for the adoption of House Resolution No. 12-10, reference to Standing Committee Report No. 12-23.

H. R. NO. 12-10: RELATIVE TO PETITIONING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO INCLUDE NATIVES OF NORTHERN MARIANAS DESCENT AS DEFINED IN THE “COVENANT” UNDER  184 OF THE HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT TO GUARANTEE CERTAIN MORTGAGE LOANS MADE TO ELIGIBLE NATIVE AMERICAN FAMILIES.

Speaker Fitial: Discussion?

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker?

Speaker Fitial: Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: Just to clarify from the Committee Chair or the members of the Committee, I noticed the Resolution got scratched out on page 2.

Speaker Fitial: Representative Peter?

Rep. Peter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was going to ask for the suspension of the Rules so that we can amend the Resolution, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Fitial: It looks to me that it is already been written.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, so that we be in order, I would like to withdraw my motion and offer a pertinent motion to allow Representative Peter to offer officially the amendment.

Speaker Fitial: So ordered.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend Rule IX, Section 11 so that Representative Malua Peter can offer an amendment to House Resolution No. 12-10.

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: The motion carries. Representative Peter, you may effectuate your amendment.

Rep. Peter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On page 2, line 4, after the word “the” add “House of Representatives of the...” and line 6, strike out the whole phrase after the word “request” up to line 7, down to line 8. So, that paragraph should read, “RESOLVED, that the House of Representatives of the Twelfth CNMI Legislature does hereby, on behalf of the people of the CNMI and especially the village homesteaders, respectfully request the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development...” and the whole “RESOLVED” paragraph from line 12 to line 17 is deleted. And on line 20, “thereafter transmit “a copy”. Than all the way down to line 25, after the “(;)” include “Northern Marianas Housing Executive Director, Marylou S. Ada”.

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

The motion to adopt House Resolution No. 12-10, as amended, was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: House Resolution No. 12-10, as amended, is hereby adopted. Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I move for the adoption of House Resolution Nos. 12-19 and 12-20.

The motion was seconded.

H. R. NO. 12-19: A HOUSE RESOLUTION CONGRATULATING THE MAYOR OF ROTA AND THE PEOPLE OF ROTA FOR THEIR INITIATIVE, COMMITMENT AND HARD WORK TO PROMOTE THE CONCEPT OF ECO-TOURISM ON THE ISLAND OF ROTA BY HOSTING THE HERITAGE ECO-TOURISM CONFERENCE 2000; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

H. R. NO. 12-20: A HOUSE RESOLUTION RELATIVE TO PETITIONING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO AMEND INTERNAL REVENUE CODE SECTION 877 (C) ON THE TEN-YEAR RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS ON SPECIAL SOURCING RULES FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Speaker Fitial: Discussion? Representative Jones?

Rep. Jones: On House Resolution No. 12-20, I would like to ask the author to just share with us what would this do or how could this be an impact to those who invested in the CNMI for being here three years, particularly ten years? It is not so clear, not only three years taking into consideration the length of time, ten years, that an investor invest in paying taxes, in employment opportunities for our people, and that is why I am asking, if there is taxes to prevent the business license for ten-year investors and had invested within the three years? The reason why I am sharing this is because, I recalled in the Tenth or the Eleventh Legislature, we are trying to accommodate the local construction companies in the opportunity to engage in the construction industries by providing a stricter years for those who are new to the CNMI. And, in this Resolution, it takes away for this opportunity for those who will be coming in to pledge for ten years, particularly for only three years. I am not too sure if it would be encouraging people to remain in the CNMI for a longer period of time, and I hope, so the investment seems to vary that they had extended to the CNMI.

Rep. W. Torres: What was the question?

Rep. Jones: First of all, it is not a question. It is a concern that I would like to share -- that if you have invested and you have been investing for a period of ten years and an investor who invested for only three years, the investment of that ten years investor in the CNMI has contributed so much because of the number of years that that investor has been here in the CNMI, must appear to an investor who only invested three years.

Speaker Fitial: Go ahead.

Rep. W. Torres: This special source in groups has to do with certain types of incomes that you can declare the main source in the CNMI. It will have no effect whatsoever on those that are there for ten years and those that are here for three years. What this will do is basically attract big investors from the U. S. Mainland, especially from the U. S. to relocate to the CNMI so that their capital gains will be sourced in the CNMI for tax purposes. If any investor for example – this will really benefit only those primarily from the U. S., but those that have been here for ten years will likewise benefit from this special sourcing rule if they file their tax within the U. S. jurisdiction. So, it will not make any impact on those that have been there already. In fact, it will simply give them more benefit. So, this has no negative benefit on those that have been here for the last ten years or thirty years. The important thing on this is really to encourage U. S. investors to relocate to the CNMI. The report on the economic studies that was recently conducted, I think back in March of 1999, have strongly indicated that this is an impediment to the versification of the economy, this in addition to an existing Public Law 9-22. But that report clearly stated that we have to do both, amend our own law at the same time seek amendments in the Internal Revenue Code. I have consulted pretty widely with the CPA's (accountants) on this

particular issue. So, that is the reason behind this Resolution. It is just a Resolution, but the Congress may look at it and entertain it or may not entertain it -- at least we are responding to the recently conducted economy study of the Commonwealth. And also, this is in response to the concern issued out in the February 2000 Report from the General Accounting Office. So, it is really a timely Resolution, it is responding to those two major studies, the GAO and the economic study of the Commonwealth.

Speaker Fitial: Representative Jones, you still have the floor.

Rep. Jones: You know they are reducing the ten years residency in farming, this is a source in business from ten years to three years. I am looking particularly at the economy that our local construction industry, for example, particularly those who assists at homes and they're trying to do their best as they can, and if this is honored by the U.S. Government, how could we see back our own local construction companies?

Rep. Benavente: Point of clarification, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Fitial: State your point.

Rep. Benavente: The Resolution is requesting the Congress to amend the IRS Code on residency requirement to ten years proposal reducing it to three years. I think the benefit here is when you are reporting on your IRS tax and not necessarily our local tax. And it will not have any impact on local businesses here, but it would have impact on those businesses who wants to move here for the purpose of benefiting in the IRS system, not here in the CNMI. So, we will not have any effect on our local system, if we report to the IRS. Thank you.

Speaker Fitial: If I may offer some point of observation here, last week I introduced a Bill to establish the Tax Fairness and to form a commission. That Tax Fairness and to form Commission is suppose to have five members. All five members will be appointed by the Governor and all five members will be professionals, including one from Revenue and Taxation. The task with that commission will be to meet with the U. S. Treasury Department to first determined whether we should delete IRC because right now, our tax system mirrors the IRC. And as such, we are only subject to the one filing requirement. One filing requirement means we only file one tax return in the Commonwealth. If we are to delete, and we need to delete in order for us to come up with another new tax system and we are looking at enacting the flat tax system, which is a very simplified tax system. We cannot implement another new tax system such as the excise tax without having to delete ourselves from IRC. So, this Resolution should be addressed to the Department of Treasurer because that is where the IRC is. I don't know why the author decides – I mean it is up to him to address his Resolution to, but it should rightfully address to the U. S. Department of Treasurer. The linkage will have to be ruled by IRC in order for us to maintain the simple filing requirement because we don't want our taxpayers to be filing two tax returns every tax year. And this is the best thing that we have, it is an advantage if we are to mirror the IRC because we are subjected to only one single filing requirement. So, this is a good gesture on our part to address our tax concerns now with the environmental placement. That is all I want to share with you because we are moving along that direction. Anyway, eventually I would like to see a new flat tax developing and implemented in the Commonwealth. This will really simplify life for our people especially and further entice also businesses because the tax

system will be very much simplified. We don't need H & R Blocks or Delloite and Touche once we implemented income tax.

Rep. Jones: After reading the second "RESOLVED", I find it that it is appropriate in findings to take possibility in maximum days. And third, probably there's a serious in tax and there's a similar legislation facing out the intent of colleague Torres on his proposal.

Speaker Fitial: Representative Peter?

Rep. Peter: I would like to ask the Floor Leader to suspend the Rules to amend the Resolution. It is just a minor correction here just like the – we could treat it as a typo error. On page 2, the way it is right now, just like the Joint Resolution – page 2 line 1, we are missing the words "House of Representatives of the".

Speaker Fitial: Same as line 7, same page.

Rep. Peter: We just treat it as a typo error.

Floor Leader: No objection, Mr. Speaker. We can consider this as a typo error.

There was no objection raised.

Speaker Fitial: Let us consider the phrase as subscribed by Representative Peter, as always been there.

The motion to adopt House Resolution Nos. 12-19 and 12-20 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: The motion carries. House Resolution Nos. 12-19 and 12-20 are hereby adopted.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I received a note here from the Front Desk that Representative Attao is requesting to be excused because of the gout.

Speaker Fitial: How long would that gout last? So, let the record show that Representative Attao is excused from today's session. Miscellaneous?

Rep. Benavente: Mr. Speaker, I also would like -- since the beginning of the roll call -- to ask the members to also excused Representative Heinz Hofschneider and Representative Torres. They asked me personally to ask for their excuse, they did not provide any reason. Although, I feel that because we are having a session here in Rota, whatever reason, they can't make it to the session this afternoon. I would ask that they be excused too for today's session.

Speaker Fitial: They are absent but they are excused.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker?

Speaker Fitial: Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: Under Miscellaneous, those members that are returning back to Saipan this evening -- I have a Marianas High School close-up foundation ticket -- those that have talent after paying --

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair recognized Rep. A. Camacho.

Chairman A. Camacho: Informing the Ways and Means Committee, there will be a meeting tomorrow at 2:30 p.m.

The Chair recognized Rep. Ichihara.

Chairperson Ichihara: I would like to announce that Education Committee will meet tomorrow at 8:00 a.m.

The Chair recognized Rep. Peter.

Chairperson Peter: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Health and Welfare public hearing on certain Bills tomorrow at 1:30 p.m. in the House Chamber. Thank you.

Speaker Fitial: Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I move to recess until tomorrow morning at 11:00 in Saipan.

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

The House recessed at 2:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan P. Kaipat, Journal Clerk
House of Representatives