

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

SIXTEENTH DAY

March 04, 2000

The House of Representatives of the Twelfth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature convened in its Sixteenth Day, First Regular Session, on Saturday, March 04, 2000, at 10:00 a.m. in the House Chamber, Capitol Hill, Saipan, 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), seventeen members were present and Representative Maria “Malua” T. Peter was excused.

Speaker Fitial: A quorum is duly constituted for the Sixteenth Day of our First Regular Session. Representative Peter is excused.

ADOPTION OF JOURNALS

None

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

H. B. NO. 12-126: A Bill for an Act to give eligible current or former CNMI Government employee entitled to a salary adjustment pursuant to Public Law 7-31 the option to elect to convert their entitlement to vesting service in the Northern Marianas Retirement Program; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Antonio M. Camacho and five others
Referred to: Committee on Judicial and Governmental Operations

H. B. NO. 12-127: A Bill for an Act to amend Public Law 10-57 regarding extensions of public land leases and Lessee’s compliance with lease terms and conditions; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Rosiky F. Camacho and five others
Referred to: Committee on Natural Resources

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

H. R. NO. 12-29: A House Resolution applauding Japan Airlines for aggressively promoting the Japan-CNMI route by reducing its fares up to 76 percent from April through September, 2000; and for other purposes.

Offered by: Rep. Florencio T. DLGuerrero and seven others
Referred to: Committee on Commerce and Tourism

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR

None

SENATE COMMUNICATIONS

None

HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

None

OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

None

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, thank you. Mr. Speaker, I move to adopt Standing Committee Report No. 12-32, House Resolution No. 12-22; Standing Committee Report No. 12-33, House Bill No. 12-83; and Standing Committee Report No. 12-34, regarding House Resolution No. 12-15.

The motion was seconded.

S. C. R. NO. 12-32: Reporting on House Resolution No. 12-22, entitled, “A House Resolution requesting the Secretary of the Department of Commerce to study the feasibility of establishing an aqua culture program to raise giant clams, groupers, sea snails and other potential marine life in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.” *Your Committee on Commerce and Tourism recommends its adoption.*

S. C. R. NO. 12-33: Reporting on House Bill No. 12-83, entitled, “A Bill for an Act to amend Public Law 11-119 to reflect new CIP priorities in the First Senatorial District; and for other purposes.” *Your Committee on Ways and Means recommends that the bill be passed in the form of H. B. No. 12-83, H. D. 1.*

S. C. R. NO. 12-34: Reporting on House Resolution No. 12-15, entitled, “A House Resolution to request the Department of Public Safety to seek additional funding from the federal Office of Highway Safety in order for the Department to complete the construction of new crosswalks identified in their survey.” *Your Committee on Judicial and Governmental Operations recommends its adoption.*

There was no discussion raised. The motion to adopt Standing Committee Report Nos. 12-32, 12-33, and 12-34 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: The motion carries.

REPORTS OF SPECIAL AND CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

RESOLUTION CALENDAR

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I now move for the adoption of House Resolution No. 12-22.

The motion was seconded.

H. R. NO. 12-22: A HOUSE RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AN AQUA CULTURE PROGRAM TO RAISE GIANT CLAMS, GROUPERS, SEA SNAILS AND OTHER POTENTIAL MARINE LIFE IN THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS.

There was no discussion raised. The motion to adopt House Resolution No. 12-22 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: House Resolution No. 12-22 is adopted. Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I now move for the adoption of House Resolution No. 12-15.

The motion was seconded.

H. R. NO. 12-15: A HOUSE RESOLUTION TO REQUEST THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY TO SEEK ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM THE FEDERAL OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY IN ORDER FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO COMPLETE THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW CROSSWALKS IDENTIFIED IN THEIR SURVEY.

Speaker Fitial: Discussion? Representative Apatang?

Rep. Apatang: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The attachment there on the Resolution, there is a company there by the name of RTC Manufacturing, Inc., that is only for informational purposes, not endorsing the company. Thank you.

Speaker Fitial: Could you be more specific as to which page of the attachment are you referring to?

Rep. Apatang: The last two pages.

Speaker Fitial: I see. RTC Manufacturing, Inc. Further discussion? We are now voting on the motion to adopt House Resolution No. 12-15.

The motion to adopt House Resolution No. 12-15 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: House Resolution No. 12-15 is adopted.

BILL CALENDAR

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I move for the suspension of Rule IX, Sections 9 and 10, for the passage of House Bill No. 12-83, House Draft 1, on First and Final Reading.

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: The motion carries. Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I now move for the passage of House Bill No. 12-83, H. D. 1, on First and Final Reading.

The motion was seconded.

H. B. NO. 12-83, H.D.1: A BILL FOR AN ACT TO AMEND PUBLIC LAW 11-119 TO REFLECT NEW CIP PRIORITIES IN THE FIRST SENATORIAL DISTRICT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

There was no discussion raised.

The Clerk called the roll on the motion to pass House Bill No. 12-83, House Draft 1, as follows:

Rep. Martin B. Ada	yes
Rep. David M. Apatang	yes
Rep. Jesus T. Attao	yes
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	yes
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	excused
Rep. Stanley T. Torres	yes
Rep. William S. Torres	yes
Speaker Benigno R. Fitial	yes

Speaker Fitial: House Bill No. 12-83, House Draft 1, passes the House on First and Final Reading. Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, can I request for a five minute recess, please?

Speaker Fitial: So ordered, five minutes recess.

The House recessed at 10:10 a.m.

RECESS

The House reconvened at 10:35 a.m.

Speaker Fitial: We are back to the plenary session. Floor Leader.

Floor Leader: No objection. Mr. Speaker. Can we move back to Item 12.

There was no objection raised.

Speaker Fitial: So ordered.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

The chair recognized the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, earlier I mentioned to the members to include Standing Committee Report No. 12-35 on Item 12, regarding House Bill No. 12-39, Committee Substitute 1. And, with that, Mr. Speaker, I move for the adoption of Standing Committee Report No. 12-35, reference to House Bill No. 12-39, C. S. 1.

The motion was seconded.

S. C. R. NO. 12-35: Reporting on House Bill No. 12-39, entitled, "To reform the labor and business laws of the Commonwealth; and for other purposes." *Your Committee on Commerce and Tourism recommends passage in the form of H. B. No. 12-39, C. S. 1.*

There was no discussion raised. The motion to adopt Standing Committee Report No. 12-35 was carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: The motion carries.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker?

Speaker Fitial: Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: We are down to Item 16, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Fitial: We are down to Bill Calendar.

BILL CALENDAR

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend pertinent Rules, pertinently Rule VII, Section 9, for the placement of House Bill No. 12-39, Committee Substitute 1, under Standing Committee Report No. 12-35, on the Bill Calendar for First Reading only.

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: The motion carries. Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I move for the passage of House Bill No. 12-39, C. S. 1, on First Reading only.

The motion was seconded.

H. B. NO. 12-39, C. S. 1: TO REFORM THE LABOR AND BUSINESS LAWS OF THE COMMONWEALTH; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Speaker Fitial: Discussion? Representative Benavente?

Rep. Benavente: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, we appreciate the opportunity to review House Bill No. 12-39, as substantially amended by the most recent copy that we have now receive and I ask that you further allow us not to vote even on First Reading on this matter so that we can understand the substantial changes that was made under the Committee Substitute. And, therefore, I would like at this time, Mr. Speaker, to move that we defer action on House Bill No. 12-39, Committee Substitute 1.

The motion was seconded.

Speaker Fitial: It has been moved and seconded that we defer action on the passage of House Bill No. 12-39 on First Reading. Discussion?

Floor Leader Babauta: Point of clarification, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Fitial: State your point of clarification.

Floor Leader Babauta: Just to clarify that subsidiary motion, that would leave the Bill on the Calendar for First Reading discussions.

Speaker Fitial: I understand. Roll call.

The Clerk called the roll on the motion to defer First Reading of House Bill No. 12-39, C. S. 1, as follows:

Rep. Martin B. Ada	yes
Rep. David M. Apatang	yes
Rep. Jesus T. Attao	yes
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	yes
Rep. Brigida 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	excused
Rep. Stanley T. Torres	absent during voting
Rep. William S. Torres	yes
Speaker Benigno R. Fitial	yes

Speaker Fitial: The motion to defer action on the motion to pass House Bill No. 12-39, C. S. 1, on First Reading, is hereby adopted. Miscellaneous?

Floor Leader: Mr. Speaker?

Speaker Fitial: Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: An item on the Bill Calendar for Second Reading.

Speaker Fitial: Yes, let us dispose of House Bill No. 12-73. Floor Leader?

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I move for the passage of House Bill No. 12-73, on Final Reading.

The motion was seconded.

H. B. NO. 12-73: A BILL FOR AN ACT TO MAKE TECHNICAL AMENDMENTS IN SECTIONS 1, 2, AND 3, OF P.L. 1088, AND 1 CMC 8341 (D) AND 1 CMC 8344(F); AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Speaker Fitial: Discussion?

Rep. Hofschneider: I thought we agreed to refer to Committee.

Speaker Fitial: What is the motion -- for passage?

Floor Leader Babauta: Yes, for passage.

Speaker Fitial: I thought we agreed to defer this to the Committee.

Floor Leader Babauta: Mr. Speaker, I recall my motion.

Speaker Fitial: Yes, you may.

Floor Leader Babauta: Clarification, Mr. Speaker. The consensus was to defer action for Second Reading. I recall my motion, Mr. Speaker, if there is no objection.

Speaker Fitial: Any second for the motion to defer.

The motion was seconded.

Rep. Attao: Defer and remove from the Calendar, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Fitial: Can you specify that to mean remove it from the Calendar.

Floor Leader Babauta: So, specified and move, Mr. Speaker.

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

Speaker Fitial: House Bill No. 12-73 is hereby removed from the Calendar.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Speaker Fitial: Any announcements from the respective Committee Chairs? We are only on the Sixteenth Day of our First Regular Session and we only have fourteen more days to go. If you know, what I mean.

Chairman Jones: Mr. Speaker?

Speaker Fitial: Recognized.

Chairman Jones: If there is no Committee meetings on Monday – is there any committee meeting?

Chairman Rosiky Camacho: Let me just be in line with that. Mr. Speaker, the PUTC Committee meeting on Monday, it is still on at 8:00 a.m. and the Agenda will be to discuss on the Telecommunication Bill.

Speaker Fitial: Just because PUTC is meeting on Monday, does not necessarily bar any Committee's from conducting also their meetings on Monday.

Chairman Jones: If no Committee is meeting in the afternoon of that Monday, then I would request that members of the JGO Committee will meet at 1:30 p.m. or following the session.

Speaker Fitial: Please review your status table because all the Bills assigned to each respective Committee's is clearly illustrated in the status table as to what is the status of each Bill is. Further Announcements?

Chairman Palacios: Mr. Speaker?

Speaker Fitial: Representative Palacios?

Chairman Palacios: I think you should announce that March 16 is the arrival of Japanese Diet. I think we should have the meeting today.

Speaker Fitial: Let me just say this, a member of the Japanese Parliament, Mr. Takahashi will be arriving on the 16th of this month. This is in response to the Resolution, which we adopted about a week or two weeks ago and we will be discussing business opportunities in the Commonwealth for Japanese business people. So, like I mentioned yesterday, we will be hosting a reception for these dignitaries when they arrive on the 16th. I would like to create an Ad Hoc Committee to

look into this particular visit by the dignitaries. Among the people arriving is the Chairman of the Japan Entrepreneurial and Presidents Association (JEPA) this is an association of more than 15,000 business people from Japan and the Chairman will be arriving with the Japanese Law Maker on the 16th. So, I would like to create an Ad Hoc Committee to be responsible for the preparation of our reception on the 16th when they arrive. So, I would like to appoint maybe three members only because too many not be comfort. So, Chairman Palacios, you will be Chairing the Ad Hoc Committee since you are the Chairman of Federal and Foreign Affairs and besides your Resolution was the subject of the visit. So, you select your own members to this Ad Hoc Committee please include also the other side of the Chamber. No further Announcement? Representative Ichihara?

Chairwoman Ichihara: I would like to announce that the Education Committee will be meeting on Tuesday at 8:00 a.m. and Health and Welfare at 1:30 p.m., Tuesday.

Speaker Fitial: Representative Apatang?

Rep. Apatang: Just for a clarification, are we working with the Administration with regards to the coordination of this Japanese Officials coming over?

Speaker Fitial: Yes, we are working with the Governor's Office, the MVA and HANMI.

Rep. Apatang: Thank you.

Speaker Fitial: Representative Attao?

Rep. Attao: Mr. Speaker, I know the Chairman of the respective Committee's are very busy now a days. However, Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask if at all possible to expedite solicitation on the Bills that I introduced, I think there were about ten Bills that are very, very in need of for the House to at least debate on the Bill so that we can act on it, if that is not a burden to each respective Committee, I ask for your cooperation on my Bills.

Speaker Fitial: I believe the Committees, as you have indicated, are working very, very hard. And I know that one Chairman is not too happy today because he's better have complaining why also Saturday you have to go through – and like you said, they are really very busy. They are working very hard and they will be producing a lot of Committee Reports from now on.

Rep. Attao: In line with that, Mr. Speaker, I will be more than happy to at least receive a cc copy on all solicitation for comments so that I will know what is the status of the Bills I introduced so that if somebody calls me up, I have all the information readily available.

Speaker Fitial: The best way to address your concern is to visit each Committee Chair because they have already sent out a lot of requests for public comments.

Rep. Attao: Thank you.

Speaker Fitial: No further Announcement? Floor Leader?

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

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote.

The House recessed at 10:50 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joan P. Kaipat, Journal Clerk
House of Representatives