

David M. Apatang
Governor



Gov. Msg. No. 24-59

Dennis James C. Mendiola
Lieutenant Governor

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

July 24, 2025



GOV2025-001

The Honorable Karl R. King-Nabors
Acting President
The Senate; Twenty-Fourth Northern
Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

The Honorable Edmund S. Villagomez
Speaker
House of Representatives
Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. Acting President and Mr. Speaker:

This is to inform you that I have signed into law **Senate Bill No. 24-16, SD1**, entitled, "To promote trade and investment economic development and diversification in the CNMI; to encourage foreign and domestic investment through incentives and streamlined processes, as well as to promote the CNMI as a trade and investment hub; and for other purposes.", which was passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

This bill becomes **Public Law No. 24-06**. Copies bearing my signature are forwarded for your reference.

Sincerely,


DAVID M. APATANG
Governor

cc: Lieutenant Governor; Attorney General; Commonwealth Law Revision;
Public Auditor; Acting Special Assistant for Administration;
Secretary, Department of Commerce; Programs and Legislative Review Office

OFFICE OF THE
SENATE CLERK

Juan A. Sablan Memorial Building • 12296 Pagan Loop. • Capitol Hill, Saipan
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Signed By: 
Date: 7/25 Time: 1:48 pm



**THE SENATE
TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH
LEGISLATURE**

SENATE BILL NO. 24-16, SD1

AN ACT

To promote trade and investment economic development and diversification in the CNMI; to encourage foreign and domestic investments through incentives and streamlined processes, as well as to promote the CNMI as a trade and investment hub; and for other purposes.

SENATE ACTION

Offered by Senator(s): Corina L. Magofna

Date: February 10, 2025

Referred to: None

Standing Committee Report No.: None

Final Reading: February 28, 2025

HOUSE ACTION

Referred to: Committee on Commerce

Standing Committee Report No.: 24-9 adopted 06/20/25

Final Reading: June 20, 2025



**Senator Francisco Q. Cruz
SENATE LEGISLATIVE SECRETARY**



THE SENATE
TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 2025 **S.B. NO. 24-16, SD1**

AN ACT

To promote trade and investment economic development and diversification in the CNMI; to encourage foreign and domestic investments through incentives and streamlined processes, as well as to promote the CNMI as a trade and investment hub; and for other purposes.

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

1 **Section 1. Short Title.** This Act may be cited as the “CNMI Foreign Corporation
2 Promotion Act of 2025.”

3 **Section 2. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that the Commonwealth of
4 the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) has the potential to authorize foreign corporations to do
5 business and pay taxes in the Commonwealth and, in so doing, to become a trade and
6 investment hub in the Western Pacific region. Although Public Law 14-67 established the
7 Office of Foreign Investment Assistance within the Department of Commerce in May of
8 2005, the transition from the CNMI permit system to US immigration laws, completed in
9 2014, has rendered the office irrelevant. With the COVID-19 pandemic changing the world
10 order and economies, it is necessary to revamp the purpose and mandate of the Office of
11 Foreign Investment Assistance, which shall be renamed as the “Office of Foreign Corporation
12 Liaison”.

13 Accordingly, it is the purpose of this Act to promote economic development and
14 diversification in the CNMI by providing incentives, streamlining business formation,

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1 registration, and licensing processes, and enhancing the CNMI's attractiveness as a destination
2 for trade and investment.

3 **Section 3. Repealer and Reenactment.** Title 1, Division 2, Part 1, Chapter 9, Article
4 4 of the Commonwealth Code is hereby repealed and reenacted to read as follows:

5 **“Article 4. Foreign Corporation Liaison.**

6 **§ 2494. Office of Foreign Corporation Liaison.**

7 There is hereby established within the Department of Commerce an Office of Foreign
8 Corporation Liaison, which shall be headed by a director appointed by the Secretary of the
9 Department of Commerce. The director shall hire staff and personnel as reasonably necessary
10 to carry out the functions of the office as provided under this article.

11 **§ 2495. Office of Foreign Corporation Liaison; Duties and Responsibilities.**

12 (a) Primary Responsibility. The Office of Foreign Corporation Liaison through the
13 director shall be principally responsible for assisting any foreign or domestic investor in
14 obtaining all the requisite permitting and licensing requirements of the various government
15 departments and agencies in an expedient manner.

16 (b) The services provided by the office shall include, but not be limited to, assistance
17 in obtaining information and documents from government departments and agencies,
18 assistance in filling out applications for government permits and licenses and other
19 government requirements, routing of applications through the government departments and
20 agencies on behalf of the foreign corporation, monitoring of the progress of applications for
21 permits and licenses on behalf of the businesses, and prompt coordination with departments,
22 agencies, and public corporations and other governmental entities, including, but not limited
23 to, permitting and licensing departments and agencies, on any additional documentary support
24 required of the business.

25 (c) Rulemaking authority. The Secretary of the Department of Commerce shall have
26 rulemaking authority to prescribe reasonably necessary rules and regulations to carry out the
27 mandate and intent of this Act.

28 **§ 2496. Investment Incentives.**

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1 (a) The Office of Foreign Corporation Liaison shall propose a comprehensive
2 package of financial and non-financial incentives to encourage foreign and domestic
3 investments in the CNMI. These incentives may include tax credits, exemptions or reductions,
4 grants, and other forms of financial assistance.

5 (b) The incentives shall be designed to promote investment in key sectors such as
6 tourism, manufacturing, agriculture, renewable energy, technology, and other industries that
7 can contribute to the economic development of the CNMI.

8 **§ 2497. Streamlined Investment Processes.**

9 (a) The Office of Foreign Corporation Liaison shall coordinate with other government
10 offices and agencies to streamline investment processes, including business registration,
11 permitting, and licensing, to make it easier and more efficient for investors to establish and
12 operate businesses in the CNMI.

13 (b) The office shall be the designated agency to serve as a one-stop shop for
14 investors, providing information, guidance, and assistance; throughout the investment process.

15 (c) Interdepartmental agreements. The Office of Foreign Corporation Liaison,
16 through the Secretary of the Department of Commerce, may enter into agreements with other
17 departments, agencies, public corporations, and other governmental entities to establish
18 procedures for expediting the dissemination of information for foreign and domestic
19 businesses and the processing of any application for permit or license or any other
20 governmental service.

21 (d) Private sector coordination. The Office of Foreign Corporation Liaison shall
22 coordinate with the private industry within the CNMI, including banking and financial
23 services, insurance, telecommunications, energy, and real estate industries to ensure that the
24 infrastructure, necessary for foreign corporations to domicile and source revenue in CNMI, is
25 robust and attractive to foreign corporations seeking to do business in CNMI.

26 **§ 2498. Promotion of the CNMI as a Trade and Investment Hub.**

27 (a) The Office of Foreign Corporation Liaison, in collaboration with relevant
28 agencies and organizations, shall develop and implement a comprehensive marketing and

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1 promotional strategy to position the CNMI as a trade and investment hub in the Western
2 Pacific region.

3 (b) Efforts shall include, but shall not be limited to participating in trade shows,
4 organizing investment forums and roadshows, and leveraging digital marketing and media to
5 showcase the CNMI's investment opportunities and business-friendly environment.

6 **§ 2499. Reporting and Evaluation.**

7 The Office of Foreign Corporation Liaison shall provide an annual report
8 commencing on December 31, 2025 to the CNMI Legislature on the implementation and
9 impact of the incentives, streamlined processes, and promotional activities, including an
10 assessment of their effectiveness in attracting investment and promoting economic growth."

11 **§ 2500. Director Hiring and Qualifications.**

12 Within 90 days of the effective date of this Act, the Secretary of the Department of
13 Commerce shall cause to be hired the director of the Office of Foreign Corporation Liaison
14 Director.

15 The Secretary of the Department of Commerce shall not cause to be hired, as director
16 of the Office of Foreign Corporation Liaison, any person who does not meet the following
17 minimum qualifications:

18 (1) A bachelor's or equivalent degree in business, marketing, economics or related
19 field and 5 years of related professional private-industry experience; or

20 (2) 10 years of professional private-industry experience in business, marketing,
21 economics, or related fields."

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

26 **Section 5. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be
27 construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes
28 repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers
29 contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior law.

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1 The enactment of the Act shall not have the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying,
2 any liability, civil or criminal, which shall already be in existence on the date this Act
3 becomes effective.

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

CERTIFIED BY:



DENNIS C. MENDIOLA
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ATTESTED BY:



FRANCISCO Q. CRUZ
SENATE LEGISLATIVE SECRETARY

Approved this 24th day of July, 2025



DAVID M. APATANG

Governor

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands