

THE SENATE
TWELFTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 2000

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Monday, January 10, 2000

(Introduction by Master of Ceremonies, Mike Evangelista)

(Singing of the Commonwealth National Anthem)

The Senate of the Twelfth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, First Day, First Regular Session, 2000, was called to order at 10:15 a.m. in the Senate Chamber on Capitol Hill, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Senator-elect Paul A. Manglona, President Pro Tempore, presided.

President Pro Tem Manglona: The Senate of the Twelfth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature is hereby called to order. I preside as President Pro Tem of the Senate pursuant to the request of the Senators and Senators-elect present today. Before I do that, I would like to call on Bishop Tomas Camacho, of the Catholic Diocese of Chalan Kanoa, to give the invocations.

INVOCATION

Bishop Tomas Camacho: Gina'an I Tata yan I Lahiña yan I Espiritu Santo Amen. Loving God, we come to you today, the first month of the New Year, the first year of the New Century, and the first Century of the New Millennium, to beg of you forgiveness for our past offenses and to seek your guidance and your blessings. Almighty and Eternal God, you have revealed your Glory to all nations. God of power and might, wisdom and justice, through you, authority is rightly administered, laws are enacted, and judgment is decreed. Let the light of your divine wisdom direct the deliberation of the Senate of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and shine forward in all the proceedings and laws framed for our rules and government. May they seek to preserve peace, promote happiness for the people of the islands and continue to bring us the blessing of liberty and equality. We likewise commend that to your unbounded mercy that all citizens of the United States and all of those who make the Commonwealth their home that we may be blessed in the knowledge and sanctified in the observance of your Holy law. May we be preserved in union and that peace which the world cannot give and after enjoying the blessings of this life be admitted to those which are Eternal. We pray to you, who are Lord and God, forever, and ever. Gi na'an I Tata, yan I Lahiña yan I Espiritu Santo. Amen.

President Pro Tem Manglona: Si Yu'us ma'ase, Señor Obispo Camacho. Before we proceed, I would like to recognize and appoint the following Senate staff positions within the Legislative Bureau: Mrs. Nikki Borja as Senate Clerk; Mr. Steve Woodruff as Senate Legal Counsel; and Mr. Ray Sablan as Sergeant-at-Arms. Senate Clerk, will you please call the roll?

The Senate Clerk called the roll by Senatorial District and reported to the Chair that eight members were present. (The Second Senatorial District of Tinian had one vacant position.)

President Pro Tem Manglona: With eight (8) members present today, we have the necessary quorum to conduct today's session. The first order of business is to appoint the Credentials Committee to review the credentials of the members-elect. For this purposes, the following are hereby appointed: Senator Maratita, Chairman; Senator

Adriano and Senator Villagomez, members. At this point, I declare that the Senate is in recess until the Credentials Committee is ready to report to the Senate.

The Senate recessed at 10:25 a.m.

R E C E S S

The Senate reconvened at 10:40 a.m.

President Pro tem Manglona: The Senate is back in session. The Chair recognizes Senator Maratita, the Chairman of the Credentials Committee.

Senator Maratita: Thank you, Mr. President. Mr. President Pro Tem, your Credentials Committee begs leave to report as follows: Your Committee reviewed the credentials of each and every member-elect including copies of their Certificate of Election and found that each was in technical compliance with the law and entitled to be seated. Specifically, each was duly elected and has met the requirement of Sections 2(c) and (d) of Article II of the Commonwealth Constitution. In addition, each has filed the Statement of Financial Interests required by 1 CMC §8511(c)(1). In conclusion, Mr. President Pro Tem, your Committee having found all the members-elect to have been duly elected and qualified, recommends that Senators-elect David M. Cing, Ramon S. Guerrero (Kumoi) and Paul A. Manglona be sworn in as members of the Senate. Respectfully submitted by your Committee, Senator Maratita, Senator Adriano and Senator Villagomez.

President Pro Tem Manglona: We will make this committee report part of our record this morning. Can I hear a motion for its adoption? Senator Reyes.

Senator Reyes: Thank you, Mr. President. I move to adopt the committee report that was just passed out to the members.

Several members voiced "second".

President Pro Tem Manglona: Any discussion?

Several members voiced "ready".

The motion to adopt the committee report carried by voice vote.

SWEARING IN OF MEMBERS

President Pro Tem Manglona: We have the privilege of having with us today Honorable Miguel S. Demapan, Chief Justice of the Commonwealth Supreme Court, who will administer the oath of office. Chief Justice Demapan, would you please now administer the Oath of Office to the Senators?

The Oath of Office was thus administered as follows:

"I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America, the applicable provisions of the constitution, laws and treaties of the United States of America and that I will faithfully discharge my duties as senators of the Twelfth Northern Mariana Islands Commonwealth Legislature to the best of my ability, so help me God."

(Applause)

ADOPTION OF RULES

President Pro Tem Manglona: I recognize Senator Reyes.

Senator Reyes: Thank you, Mr. President Pro Tem. I move for the adoption of the Senate Rules for the Twelfth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature. I believe copies have been passed out to the members.

Several members voiced “second”.

President Pro Tem Manglona: It has been moved and seconded. Any discussion on the Twelfth Senate rules? Senator Maratita.

Senator Maratita: Is this our temporary rules for now, Mr. President?

The Chair recognized Senator Reyes.

Senator Reyes: Mr. President, this is the Senate Official Rules. It’s not an Interim Senate Rules.

President Pro Tem Manglona: There being no further discussion, we are back to the previous question. Senate Clerk, roll call, please.

The Senate Clerk called the roll with the following result:

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Senator Joaquin G. Adriano | Yes |
| Senator Ricardo S. Atalig | Yes |
| Senator David M. Cing | Yes |
| Senator Ramon S. Guerrero | Yes |
| President Paul A. Manglona | Yes |
| Senator Edward U. Maratita | Yes |
| Senator Pete P. Reyes | Yes |
| Senator Thomas P. Villagomez | Yes |

Eight (8) members voted yes.

President Pro Tem Manglona: By a vote of eight (8) yes, the new Senate Rules is hereby passed by the Senate. With the Rules now passed, we’re now at the election of officers. First up is the election of the Senate President and I open the floor for the nomination of the President of the Senate. I recognize Senator Villagomez.

ELECTION OF THE PRESIDENT

Senator Villagomez: Thank you, Mr. President Pro Tem. On behalf of the entire people of the Commonwealth, I am proud to nominate yourself, Senator Paul A. Manglona, as President of the Twelfth CNMI Senate.

Several members seconded.

President Pro Tem Manglona: Any other nomination? They’re being no other nomination, and no discussion, we’re ready to vote. Senate Clerk, roll call, please.

The Senate Clerk called the roll with the following result:

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Senator Joaquin G. Adriano | Yes |
| Senator Ricardo S. Atalig | Yes |
| Senator David M. Cing | Yes |
| Senator Ramon S. Guerrero | Yes |
| President Paul A. Manglona | Yes |
| Senator Edward U. Maratita | Yes |
| Senator Pete P. Reyes | Yes |
| Senator Thomas P. Villagomez | Yes |

Eight (8) members voted yes.

President Pro Tem Manglona: By a vote of eight (8) yes, Senator Paul A. Manglona is hereby elected as Senate President. Baihu na' kadada' ha'. Si Yu'us ma'ase para i man ga'chong-ho todos pot esti na honro i entrega yo' ta'lo para este i Twelfth Senate.

(Applause)

ELECTION OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

President Manglona: I now open the floor for nomination of the Vice President of the Twelfth Senate. The Chair recognizes Senator Maratita.

Senator Maratita: Thank you, Mr. President. I am proud to nominate Senator Thomas P. Villagomez as Vice President of the Senate of the Twelfth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Several members voiced "second".

President Manglona: Any other nomination? There being no other nomination, is there any discussion? If none, Senate Clerk, roll call, please.

The Senate Clerk called the roll with the following result:

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Senator Joaquin G. Adriano | Yes |
| Senator Ricardo S. Atalig | Yes |
| Senator David M. Cing | Yes |
| Senator Ramon S. Guerrero | Yes |
| President Paul A. Manglona | Yes |
| Senator Edward U. Maratita | Yes |
| Senator Pete P. Reyes | Yes |
| Senator Thomas P. Villagomez | Yes |

Eight (8) members voted yes.

President Manglona: By a vote of eight (8) yes, Senator Thomas P. Villagomez is hereby elected Vice President of the Senate for the Twelfth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

(Applause)

ELECTION OF THE FLOOR LEADER

President Manglona: We are down to the election of the Floor Leader. I recognize Senator Adriano.

Senator Adriano: Mr. President, I am honored to nominate Senator Pete P. Reyes as Floor Leader of the Senate of the Twelfth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Several members voiced "second".

President Manglona: It has been moved and seconded. Any discussion? Senate Clerk, roll call, please.

The Senate Clerk called the roll with the following result:

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| Senator Joaquin G. Adriano | Yes |
| Senator Ricardo S. Atalig | Yes |
| Senator David M. Cing | Yes |
| Senator Ramon S. Guerrero | Yes |

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| President Paul A. Manglona | Yes |
| Senator Edward U. Maratita | Yes |
| Senator Pete P. Reyes | Abstained |
| Senator Thomas P. Villagomez | Yes |

Seven (7) members voted yes and one (1) abstention.

President Manglona: With a vote of seven (7) yes and one (1) abstention, Senator Pete P. Reyes is hereby elected Senate Floor Leader.

(Applause)

ELECTION OF THE SENATE LEGISLATIVE SECRETARY

President Manglona: We are down to the Election of the Senate Legislative Secretary. Senator Atalig.

Senator Atalig: Mr. President, I am also honored to nominate Senator Joaquin G. Adriano as Legislative Secretary of the Senate of the Twelfth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Senator Maratita seconded the nomination.

President Manglona: Any discussion? There being none, Senate Clerk, roll call, please.

The Senate Clerk called the roll with the following result:

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Senator Joaquin G. Adriano | Yes |
| Senator Ricardo S. Atalig | Yes |
| Senator David M. Cing | Yes |
| Senator Ramon S. Guerrero | Yes |
| President Paul A. Manglona | Yes |
| Senator Edward U. Maratita | Yes |
| Senator Pete P. Reyes | Yes |
| Senator Thomas P. Villagomez | Yes |

Eight (8) members voted yes.

President Manglona: With a vote of eight (8) yes, Senator Joaquin G. Adriano is hereby elected Legislative Secretary.

NOTIFICATION OF HOUSE AND GOVERNOR

President Manglona: I believe that we have two Congressmen here from the House. We have Congressman Guerrero and Congressman Palacios who are here to report to the Governor. We also have also two lovely ladies from the House to make a report to the Senate. Can we recognize them?

Vice President Villagomez: Can you call a short recess so that we can recognize the House members to make their notification to the Governor who is present here and to accept the members from the House who are here to report to the Senate of the organization of the House.

The President declared the Senate in recessed at 10:48 a.m.

RECESS

The Senate reconvened at 10:51 a.m.

President Manglona: We're back to our session. Before we proceed, I would like to recognize additional individuals. I believe we missed some names earlier. We have with us the Mayor of Tinian, Francisco Borja; Justice Ramon Villagomez; and the Youth Congress Speaker, Mr. Angel Demapan. We welcome you to our Chamber this morning. I recognize Floor Leader Reyes.

Floor Leader Reyes: Thank you, Mr. President. I would like to ask that you appoint some Senate members to relay a message to the Speaker of the House and his leadership and to the Governor. The Governor is here so we can just inform him here that the Senate is duly organized and ready to transact business. Upon your appointment, we ask that we go in recess until we receive communication that they have delivered the notification of our organization this morning.

President Manglona: Thank you, Floor Leader. To notify the Speaker and his leadership, I am pleased to appoint Senator Cing and Senator Guerrero. To notify the Governor, I appoint Senator Atalig and Senator Adriano. I hereby declare the Senate in recess until they are back to report to us.

The Senate recessed at 10:55 a.m.

RECESS

The Senate reconvened at 11:10 a.m.

President Manglona: We're back to our regular session. The Chair recognizes the delegation to advise the House. Senator Adriano.

Senator Adriano: I and Senator Atalig from Rota had notified the Governor. We met him at the House and we informed him that we are ready to transact business.

Senator Cing: Mr. President, likewise, I and Senator Guerrero, "Kumoi", did inform Speaker Fitial that we are duly organized and ready to transact business. Thank you.

President Manglona: Thank you Senators for the report. Also, during the recess, there were members of the House who came to inform us that they are duly organized. So with that, we are down to Communication.

COMMUNICATION

President Manglona: I would like to announce the following Committee Chairs:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. Committee on Rules & Procedure | Sen. Pete P. Reyes |
| 2. Committee on Resources, Development And Programs | Sen. Pete P. Reyes |
| 3. Committee on Executive Appointments And Governmental Investigation | Sen. Joaquin G. Adriano |
| 4. Committee on Federal Relations and Independent Agencies | Sen. David M. Cing |
| 5. Committee on Fiscal Affairs | Sen. Edward U. Maratita |
| 6. Committee on Health, Education, Welfare and Programs | Sen. Ricardo S. Atalig |
| 7. Committee on Judiciary, Government and Law | Sen. Ricardo S. Atalig |

8. Committee on Public Utilities,
Transportation & Communication

Sen. Thomas P. Villagomez

I congratulate you all and I am confident that you will carry out the responsibilities of your respective committees. Congratulations.

(Applause)

STATEMENT OF MEMBERS

President Manglona: I would like to recognize Senator Reyes.

Senator Reyes: Thank you, Mr. President. Governor Pete Tenorio; Chief Justice Demapan; Most Reverend Bishop Tomas Camacho, Reverend John Kinsella; Lt. Governor Jesus R. Sablan; Washington Representative Juan N. Babauta; Mayor of Rota, Benjamin T. Manglona; Associate Judge Tim Bellas; Associate Judge John A. Manglona; Former Governor Carlos S. Camacho; Former Governor Froilan C. Tenorio; Rota Municipal Council member, Kelvin Atalig; Rota Municipal Council member, Abraham Ogo; Rota Municipal Council member Joe Rosario; former Congresswoman Felicidad Ogomuro; former Lt. Governor and a very good friend of mine, Pete A. Tenorio; former Mayor Prudencio Manglona and his lovely wife; Justice Pete Atalig; Justice Ramon Villagomez; Mayor Francisco M. Borja of Tinian; future legislator and current Youth Congress Speaker, Angel Demapan; and former Mayor Joe Rios. Also Mr. President, I will be remiss if I don't mention the presence of my mother and father, who are right behind me; my lovely wife Lucy and my children who are in the gallery; my grandchildren; distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen: First, let me extend my most humble appreciation to all my distinguished colleagues for their confidence in electing me, again, for the position of Floor Leader of the Twelfth CNMI Senate. Mr. President and members, I would have voted "yes" when they did the roll call for my nomination, but only if there's a tie to break that in my favor. Similarly, I am honored by the appointment by our President for me to Chair the Standing Committee on Rules and Procedure and also the Standing Committee on Resources, Economic, Development and Programs. It is truly a distinguished honor for the confidence you have given me. Today's celebration marks a brand new Chapter in the CNMI history as we approach our twenty-second year of self-governing. It is with great pride that I am here before this body not only to witness, but also to be a part of the inaugural ceremony of the Twelfth Legislature. Mr. President, in the past couple of years, we faced many challenges. Through hard work, our government has been able to handle the worst of this crisis. Although, we have accomplished a lot, I believe there's much more work to do. Perhaps the most important of these struggles lie in the protection of our precious environment. On this tiny island, we are not immune to the challenges that the rest of the world faces in the conservation of our natural resources, the fight to keep chemicals far from our homes and families, and the need to provide safe and healthy communities for our parents, ourselves, and our children. This must be the year that we take the initiative to close down Puerto Rico Dump, once and for all. I know that with combined efforts and the cooperation of the Legislature and the Executive Branch, we can make the opening of the sanitary land field a reality not only to eliminate the unsightly, eyesore, from our island but to insure that the health and well being of our people comes first. We must not and cannot forget the families in Tanapag and Tinian who are struggling to keep PCB and other toxic materials out of their villages. The scholarship is another issue that we must continue to support wholeheartedly. Mr. President and my fellow colleagues, I am proud to report to this body that many of our children have returned home after pursuing their dreams of higher education. Some have decided to teach while others have gone into accounting, nursing, medicine, law, and other equally responsible professions. They are the pride of their parents and asset to our work force and the reality that it does indeed take a village to raise a child. And if we believe that, then we must believe that it takes a community to raise responsible contributing members of our society. It is imperative that we continue to support the scholarship program so that our children will continue to pursue higher education, return home and, hopefully, contribute to reducing, if not eliminating all together, the Commonwealth's need for guest workers. We must keep in mind, that our children are truly the future of tomorrow. It is they who would make the most difference in our lives. And it is they who will be guiding us into the 21st Century. We need to commit ourselves one hundred percent in making the scholarship program a reality for our children today and tomorrow for as a great man once wrote, "We do not inherit the land from our forefathers, we borrow it from our children". It is in this spirit that I offer the administration of Governor Pete Tenorio, my commitment to work harmoniously. The people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands deserve to have their administration and legislature work in unity to deliver the best services due to them. As we enter the 21st Century, let us stand together and travel the same journey, hand in hand, to deliver the essential

services that our people, our children, and our Commonwealth need. Before I yield the floor, I would like to take this time to congratulate all of you, my colleagues, on your election and re-election victories as well as being part of the Twelfth Senate Inauguration. To my colleague, and I am told my uncle Ray Guerrero, I welcome you and I offer you my utmost cooperation to work harmoniously for the betterment of our people. I would also like to offer a challenge to each one of us. I challenge everyone to be the best that we can be in fulfilling the dreams of our people and that is to improve their livelihood through the realizations of programs and infrastructures that we have yet to accomplish. Let us mark the history book of the CNMI one more time. Only this time, mark it so that it would be the talk of the century. Si Yu'us Ma'ase, Ghilisow, Thank You and Maraming Salamat Po.

(Applause)

The Chair recognized Senator Atalig.

Senator Atalig: Thank you, Mr. President. Governor Tenorio, Lt. Governor Sablan, Bishop Camacho, Washington Rep. John Babauta, Chief Justice Demapan, Mayor of Rota Benjamin Manglona, Associate Judge Tim Bellas, Reverend Kinsella, Associate Judge John Manglona, former Governor Carlos Camacho, former Governor Froilan Tenorio and also the three Municipal Councils from Rota, Kelvin Atalig, Abraham Ogo and Joe Rosario, former Congresswoman Felicidad Ogomuro, former Lt. Governor Pete Tenorio, former Mayor Prudencio Manglona, and former Justice Pete Atalig, Mayor Francisco Borja from Tinian, Justice Ramon Villagomez, Youth Congress Speaker Angel Demapan, my lovely wife, Rosita, and our daughter, Rosita, ladies and gentlemen who are present here today: First of all, I would like also to personally congratulate and recognize Senate President Paul A. Manglona and Senator Cing for making it back to the Senate again. Likewise, our new member in the Senate, Senator Ray Guerrero, welcome to the upper chamber. It is indeed a great pleasure and honor to have the opportunity to serve the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in the Twelfth Senate Legislature. As all of you gathered here today, we have weathered some pretty rough storms over the past two years. We have seen economic hardships especially our fragile tourism industry and I commended the Marianas Visitors Authority for their efforts and hard work for campaigning and promoting our industry in different parts of the Asian market. The Legislature likewise, for their part, should work together within their jurisdiction to help this industry to grow and recover so that we can realize more revenue to our government. The garment industry which contributed the largest revenue into the CNMI coffer must be protected and supported or otherwise it will gradually phase out in the next few years or so. Casino industry in Tinian needs help and support in terms of Airport expansion so that bigger airlines can land to increase the influx of visitors. More direct flights are needed to have this industry grow and realize its contribution to CNMI government. Eco-tourism and natural paradise on Rota as we have seen in different places can also contribute to our economy if this concept becomes a reality. These are just a few examples that need our attention towards CNMI economic recovery for our small Commonwealth. They are many other industries that we can attract investors to come and invest here in the Commonwealth, which are environmentally friendly. But the first thing that we need to do is to revisit our laws and policies so that they stand firm and stable. Anti business laws and policies need to be fixed and improve before we can see interested investors come into the Commonwealth. Another aspect that is equally important to address in the Twelfth Legislature is the federal immigration take over. Mr. President and fellow colleagues, as we continue to find ways to improve our economic recovery we must not forget to also continue to fight the control of our immigration issue in the U. S. Congress. Our economy is heavily dependent on our local immigration control here in the CNMI. Without our immigration control, our economy will eventually collapse if and only if the Federal Immigration and Minimum Wage apply in the Commonwealth. Therefore, we must unite, stand firm, work together, fight together on these issues to end the threats from the Federal government. If we perform our duties by uniting together on these two very important issues that the Commonwealth is facing today, I guarantee that local economy would eventually improve and there will be no federal take over. If these two fundamental issues are well established and put into rest, then CNMI can realize the real issue of scholarship for our students increase on the issue of local appropriation, capitol improvement projects local matching and many others that our CNMI government desperately needs. Mr. President and fellow colleagues, we can not afford to be fighting in this economic trying time. We must hold hands together and help our government to generate revenues. Thank you, Mr. President.

(Applause)

President Manglona: I understand that our Governor will be leaving us very shortly to administer the Oath of Office to our Municipal Council members on Saipan, Tinian and Rota. So I respectfully request that the Floor Leader

initiate a motion to resolve into a Committee of the Whole so that we can receive the Governor's Message. Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Reyes: Mr. President, I move to resolve into the Committee of the Whole.

Several members voiced "second" and the motion carried by voice vote.

The Senate resolved into the Committee of the Whole at 11:30 a.m.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The Chair recognized Governor Pete P. Tenorio.

Governor Tenorio: Good morning. Your excellency Bishop Camacho, Reverend Kinsella, Chief Justice Demapan, Lt. Governor Sablan, Washington Representative Babauta, former Governor Tenorio, other former elected officials, honored guests, and families of the newly elected members of the Twelfth Commonwealth Legislature, Mr. President and members of the Senate, thank you for inviting me to be here this morning. I am indeed very pleased to join you, to share this very special occasion. The Lt. Governor joins me in congratulating all the members of the Senate. Today, I pledge to you the full support and cooperation of the Administration. My office and members of my staff are available to work with you to achieve our common goals. Let us begin the New Millennium and put together all our efforts to continue to provide vital public services to our people. Our Administration looks forward to working closely with the Senate to do our best for all the islands of the Commonwealth. Again, the people of the Commonwealth join me in wishing each and every one of you good luck and best wishes as you begin your work in this challenging time. Again, thank you, for inviting me to be a part of this occasion. Let us all work together to improve the livelihood of our people. Si Yu'us ma'ase to all of you.

(Applause)

President Manglona: Thank you, Governor.

Governor Tenorio: If I may, I would like to be excused. I have other things to do. It is public service. Thank you.

The Chair recognized Senator Reyes.

Floor Leader Reyes: Mr. President, I move that we return to our plenary session.

The Committee of the Whole dissolved at 11:35 a.m.

President Manglona: We're back to our plenary session. We're still under Statement of Members. I recognize Senator Adriano.

Senator Adriano: Thank you, Mr. President. Members, Justice Demapan, Governor, visitors, families of the members, good morning. To our newest member, Senator Ray Guerrero "Kumoi", welcomed to the Legislature. Let me begin by reflecting on this past year 1999. Last year was another year of trying as the year prior. We in the Legislature worked very hard to address issues that we believed were issues of substance and with foundations to guide us not only through tough economic times, but also into the New Millennium and beyond. Mr. President, the economy becomes more often than not, a catchword or almost a household word in our daily life. I believe that this word will linger, unless we, the members of this chamber and our colleagues in the House, collectively refine and focus our attention to try and reverse our economic situation. It may not be a drastic one, but sure one. But more especially, I called upon the members of the Senate to work with me and revisit the issue on the Foreign Investment Act. This law, I am sure, on this outset has addressed the concerns of all parties affected. Lastly, Mr. President, I would like to reach out to all my colleagues, Senator Cing from Tinian and Senators from Rota and Saipan, to work together in the spirit of cooperation and dedication to move forward and make this year 2000 a productive year for our Commonwealth. Thank you yan si Yu'us ma'ase. (Applause)

The Chair recognized Senator Guerrero.

Senator Guerrero: Thank you, Mr. President. Governor P. Tenorio, Lt. Governor Sablan, Washington Rep. Babauta, Bishop Camacho, Reverend Kinsella, and I would like to also recognize Father Mathew Blockley for blessing my office yesterday and si Yu'us ma'ase for bringing the San Jose statue to the office, to Chief Justice Demapan, and his associates, Justices from the Superior Court, former Governor Camacho, former Governor Froilan Tenorio who was the Chairman of the Reform Party and to our Leadership members who are here today, most especially, to my Chairman to elect Kumoi, John Reyes, I would like to recognize him, Mr. President, my family, all the members of the Municipal Council, former Lt. Governor Pete Tenorio, former Congresswoman Felicidad Ogomuro, Justice Pedro Atalig and Justice Ramon Villagoniez, the Mayors of Saipan, Tinian, Rota and the islands North of Saipan: Good morning, buenas dias yan saludu. I also want to thanked all my supporters and constituents for the trust and belief in me. Without your vote of confidence, I will not be standing here before you as your voice, ear, eye and gate-keeper in the Twelfth CNMI Legislature. This is a solemn opportunity which I will carry-on the torch in representing your interests in the Legislative halls of the Senate. I will be guided by your concerns that all of you expressed to me in the many encounters that we had during the campaign. The Reform Party's platform represents the key challenges of what we promised to accomplish notwithstanding the odds and I will work hard to turning those concerns to reality because the Reform Party presented to you what it would focus on as the basis of our campaign. I would like to work for legislation of laws that can make our island a gentler and kinder community for all to benefit. We will establish the formal communication links as soon as I get sworn into office. And, today, I have taken the Oath of Office as your Senator, so beginning this day on, I officially assumed the duty of being your public servant in the Senate. I invite all of you to share that office so you too will be a part of the law-making process. Many of you know who I am. But, for those that do not know who Ramon "Kumoi" is, I would like to set the tone beginning today, so that by the end of my four year term I can convinced you that I have fulfilled my duty as your Senator and that with the guidance and blessing of our Lord I can be able to satisfy your expectations. I do not believe that I should prove who I am, because it is the outcome of what I said I will pursue during the campaign that will mark the portrait of what I did or failed to do. I want to make a future for the CNMI community and particularly for my constituents in the island of Saipan. If I do a good job, it would be good if you know me for that. This is the only thing that matters. President Abraham Lincoln once said, "I do the best I know how the very best I can; and I mean to keep on doing it to the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me will not amount to anything. If the end brings me out all wrong, ten angels swearing I was right would make no difference." The Twelfth Legislature agenda is full. The economy is sagging and lagging behind the demands for public moneys to sustain government services. We are emptying our tax revenues just as fast as we are collecting them. Government bureaucrats must know to take fiscal control of expenditures according to the amount of moneys being collected. Both the Legislature and the Administration should practice fiscal restrains and stretch the buying power of the limited moneys that we have. We must set the stage to continue the level of government services that we have today with lesser resources. This will require that the Legislative and Executive Branches of Government should all collaborate on setting the priorities of this government. Once the priorities are known without political fanfare and grandstanding, we can set the paces for the allocation of resources. There are no magical solutions to all of our internal government problems. I know fully well that in the course of my four-year term, I will come across situations where I will be participating on debates of difficult and controversial decisions affecting the entire CNMI community. Several months ago, the Marianas High School Close-up Clubs students invited me to their scheduled event. These students invited other guests as well to discuss on the topic of what makes good laws and bad laws. In that discussion, I said to these students that history usually repeats itself in that as electorate we can pretty much classify the laws enacted by our legislators. One category of laws represents bad laws, but very popular with public opinion. On the other hand, we find good laws, but are not popular with public opinion. In these situations, I will pay special attention on the power of open and participatory public discussions. I will seek for full public participation's so that we can articulate the concerns and opinions of the community. Our governmental setting is one that consists of a three-legged stool. On the other hand, the CNMI government must deal with the Federal Government because we are part of the political landscape premised on the covenant establishing our relationship with the Federal government. We are also part of a very complicated global community affect by the Asian Regional economies. In times of stability of these economic systems, the CNMI enjoys great abundance of opportunities in tourism and other economic developments. In times of instability such as the current economic problems in the region, the CNMI suffers because of our heavy and sole dependence for business activities within the region. We cannot control how these regional governments and economies evolve because we have a very weak economic base to make any impact. We are more reactive to the instabilities happening in these economic systems. Our internal governmental system and instrumentalities must be positioned to effectively deal with the federal government as well as our dependence for business activities within the Asian economic landscapes. We do not

have an abundance of natural resources to sustain an on-going economic developments within our own shores and boundaries. We must continue to open and perpetuate the proliferation of the Tourism and Garment Production industries because these are the only two industries that have sustained the CNMI government's coffer in the last decade. Technically, these are the only two major industries that we have. Just this year, one or two of the garment manufacturing companies here in Saipan are closing their shops. What have we done? Are our laws and business incentives so bad that these companies are closing shops? I will invite my colleagues in the Senate to sit down and crystal-ball the problems that resulted in our failure to support the business communities. We must join our attention and collaborate with the partners in the business sector so we can find the best blend in public policies and business incentives. It is expected for your representatives in the Legislature including myself to ask questions of what we do with the public funds. This is a basic tenet of the legislative processes and it is to be expected. As your representative in the Senate, it is my obligation to ensure that we account for every penny of public moneys that we used to fund the delivery of public goods and services. The articulation of the use of public funds can only be ascertained by the completeness of the information provided by the Administration and key government officials who are responsible for accountability measures. I certainly would ask questions because I do not know all the answers. I will listen and pay attention to your comments and discussions. Earlier I mentioned about the priorities of this government. So in the area of Education, I will certainly expect that the Commissioner of Education can provide all the information about what is happening in the Public School System. We must listen and permit the Commissioner of Education to lead us to the path of our children's education. This process is one that will follow every key instrumentality in this government including health, public safety, economic development, public works, housing, transportation, utilities and others. When you visit my office across the hall of this building, you will see on the wall just in front of my desk a picture frame displaying the Platform that I publicly stated as my focus during the term of office. I will stay focus in these issues, but at the same time I will be making every effort to keep pace with my constituents and colleagues in the Senate even if this means changing of paradigms. I have stated many times that the first Order of Business for the Twelfth Legislature is the economic recovery and revitalization of the business environment in the CNMI. Whether one is pro-business or not, no one will argue with me that this government cannot survive without the success of the business sector. I want to say here and repeat myself in the hall of the Senate Chamber that laws inhibiting the growth for business should be examined and revisited. Laws that are currently blocking the influx of businesses to the CNMI should be examined and revisited. Again, I will open the door and participate in advocating the concerns of the business community. I want to help in this area, so with your comments and discussions I will see that I carry those issues and offer solutions that will be a win-win for all citizens in the CNMI. Lastly, the CNMI government should be able to disclose to the world that we have a system of government that is fair, consistent and proactive. We must showcase our internal government set-up and our ability to practice positive examples in government affairs. In this respect, I will urge my colleagues to revisit with the Governor on the appointment of a permanent Attorney General. We are beginning the second half of the Governor's term of office, certainly, it will be advisable that we as a government move forward on this issue for the interest of the people the Commonwealth. In closing, I would like to use the quote of O.W Holmes, he said, "The greatest thing in this world is not so much where we are, but in what direction we are moving". I will be guided by the articulation of the public issues that are brought to our attention in the Senate Chamber, but without your help and participation in the deliberation of public policies affecting the CNMI community will be one that leaves out an important element of law making. I will knock on doors for answers and certainly I will gladly listen to your answers. I need your help! I know that by working together we can accomplish many things. The power of collaboration often results in magnificent achievements. I will fall to the guidance of our Creator because it is he that we should beg for direction. I will leave this podium today, but let me also say that we can draw many instructions from the church's teaching. In Romans Chapter 13:3, it says: "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same." To my colleagues, I thank you for being very cooperative before I take the Senate seat this morning for assisting me and to the President, for giving me a good size office, sa' Minority. I thank you for that. Thank you to all and may God bless us all. Thank you.

(Applause)

The Chair recognized Senator Cing.

Senator Cing: Mr. President, Chief Justice Demapan, Bishop Camacho, and Reverend Kinsella, Lt. Governor Jesus R. Sablan, Washington Rep. John Babauta, Mayor Benjamin Manglona, Mayor Frank Borja, Associate Judge Tim Bellas, Associate Judge John Manglona, former Governor Carlos Camacho, former Governor Froilan Tenorio,

Council members from both Rota and Tinian, former Lt. Governor Pete A. Tenorio, former Mayor Prudencio Manglona, Justice Pedro Atalig. First of all, let me greet you a happy New Millennium. Let me also take this opportunity to thank the people of Tinian who voted for me all those who kept their trust and faith in my work and those who gave their contributions whether in-kind or monetary. I will always remember your undying support and we'll always be grateful that you elected me as your Senator and believe in me to serve as your voice here in the Senate. Today marks another page in the history of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands as a new set of lawmakers gathered here for one purpose--to enact laws for the betterment of our society, our economy and most especially our people. For the past eight years that I have served the Commonwealth, I am proud to tell you that we achieved a lot. Although, we have our differences, we were able to set them aside and work for a common goal. And I am proud that we achieved our status today because of this unified stand. And today, I am calling upon all the elected officials to set aside their differences, stop the bickering and cooperate with one another to achieve our goal. Let us not feel divided, but work together as one team. As Chairman of Federal Relation and Independent Agencies, I am making this vow that I will exert all efforts in order to work with the Federal Government and its people so that we can get more funding to improve our infrastructures, more funding to build new schools for our children, more funding to build state-of-the-art port facilities to attract more tourist, and more funding to improve our economy. As part of the plan, I will do my best to get funding for the CNMI's water breaks. I think its about time that we concentrate on repairing if not rebuilding it. The water breaks which served us during World War II and pave the way for our people to gain liberty and freedom. I will not just meet with officials who only listen to our needs but I will meet with concern Federal officials who can act fast and will help us preserve our islands and its beauty. I will reiterate to them that we are all citizens of the United States of America, part of the US who must enjoy the same benefits and rights that they have. As Chairman of the Committee, I would like to call upon those who are involved in federal programs or federal assistants. I want you to tell me what your primary needs are so I can tell it to the Federal Government. Part of my plans is to conduct a survey of how much the federal assistance each territory is receiving. I promise you that if we are getting less, we will get the equal amount or much more for our people's need. As your elected leader, I would like to extend my full cooperation to the members of the House of Representatives as well as the Executive Branch to make this year and the coming years more productive for our government and our people. Finally, I would like to extend sincerest appreciation to Senator Juan Tenorio "Morgen". I might lose a good friend, but I am not sad because I am gaining a new one and that is Senator Ramon "Kumoi" Guerrero. Thank you very much. Si Yu'us ma'ase.

(Applause)

The Chair recognized Senator Maratita.

Senator Maratita: Si Yu'us ma'ase, Mr. President. Antes de baihu tutuhon, yahu na baihu rekognisa si Bishop Tomas Camacho, Reverend John Kinsella, tumaigue esta Mr. President i Governor lao hu rekogninisa si Governor, i Lt. Governor as Jesus R. Sablan, i yotta Washington Rep. as Juan N. Babauta, i Mayot Luta as Mayót Benjamin Manglona, i Mayot Tinian as Francisco M. Borja, I iyotta Chief Justice as Mike Demapan, Associate Justice Timothy Bellas, Associate Justice John A. Manglona, former Governor Carlos S. Camacho, former Governor Froilan Tenorio, the three Municipal Council members ginen Luta si Kelvin Atalig, Abraham Ogo yan si Joe Rosario, former Congresswoman Felicidad Ogomuro yanggen gaige hao guine, former Lt. Tenorio Pete. A. Tenorio, former Mayor Prudencio Manglona yan i asagua-ña as Bernadita, former Justice Pedro Atalig, former Senate President Julian Calvo, former Congressman Antonio Guerrero, and former Congressman Juan Tenorio, former Justice Pedro Atalig yan para todos i asaguan i man ga'chung-ho siha, Buenas yan saludus para todos hamyo yan espisiatmente i man distingiyon ni man gaige guine pa'go ni ma atetiende este i inauguración i Dose na Lehislatura. Buenas tatdes para todos hamyo. Mr. President, i iyokko statement pa'go, malago'-yo na hu part este gi Journal gi pa'go na session. Ti bai hu na anako fino'ho. Man kontrata ham yan i man ga'chong-ho guine gi Sabalu na tres minutus ha' pues baihu chage muna' kadada' i fino'ho pa'go na dia. Finénéna, yaho na baihu ekstende un kongratulasion para I ñuebo na ma ilihi, Si Senadot Ramon S. Guerrero. Kongratulation para hago yan i familia-mo yan i iyommo supporters. Hu a'atan mo'na na tafan ayuda guine gi tinituhon i Dose na Kongresista. I kontribusión-mo yan i idea-mo para este na Senate ma agradesi gi para todo i taotao i Commonwealth. Talo' ha' hu kongratulate hao yan lokue i para i hagas ga'chong-ho as Senator David Cing yan si Senator Paul A. Manglona. I commitment miyo yan i dedikación miyo uma'anok ya kumuekentos gi anai ma ilihi ta'lo giya Tinian, mahili'e si Senator Paul Manglona giya Luta. Ma kontinunua ha mana'i nu etyo na botun konfiansa pot i abilidad ñiha yan i Leadership ñiha gi kada islan ñiha. Lokue hu a'atan mo'na na todo pa'go i man gaige guine na Leadership i Senate yan i House yan i Eksikatibu ufan macho'cho' para i taotao-ta guine gi Commonwealth. Pa'go na dia ha represesen-ta i ñuebo na

sakan ya debi ta silebra sa pot man halom hit guine gi dos mit na siklos. Buenti-uno na siklos este ni man gaige hit pa'go. Hamyo ni man ga'chonggo-ho na Senadot, tafan ma cho'cho' para minaulek i taotao-ta, ti para Saipan ha', ti para Tinian ha', ti para Luta ha, lao para tododo i Commonwealth. Man mana'i hit inaŋgoko, i konfiansa nu i publiku, yan i responsabilidat anai para ta bira este na timon anai para u guaha fresco, sano, yan maulek na hinagong para i taotao-ta guine gi Commonwealth. Duranten i Onse na Lehislatura, guaha siha tiempo man ma gasta anai para tafan man pasa siha akto ni para ufan ma arekla i problema tat komo este i bandan i Labor yan i Immigration ni atutuka hit kontra i Federat. Pues guaha obligasion-ta pa'go anai para tana' maulek mas i Commonwealth. Megai checho'-ta gi Eleventh Legislature, lao megai lokue ma nisisita man ma improve gi kondision i ch'echo siha ni para i taotao-ta ni mañasaga guine gi Commonwealth. Komo membro i Twelfth Legislature, megai siha tafafana mo'na anai debi tana' mas mauleg i bandan business sa i business munana'i i Gobietno salape ni para hu opera gue yan lokue para hu apasi siha i taotao-ta ni man macho'cho'cho' gi gobietno. Huhoŋge na i responsabilidat i Senate i para hu facho'cho' yan i House of Representative i san papa na guma' anai para hu na guaha mas mauleg na hinemlo, mauleg na hinagoŋ anai para uguaha mas salape ni para hu opera gue i Gobietno ya lokue debi etyi i ilelek-na tana tunuk i yotta deficit ya ta balansia i ekonimia-ta o-sino i salape-ta ya muŋga i famagu'on-ta, i famagu'on-famagu'on-ta na para hu fan gai dibi gi man mamaila' na tiempo sa pot ta diskuida hit sa tita cho'gue i checho-ta gi pa'go. Este nisisario na tafan ma cho'cho' tododo parehu ni para ta chuli' este na koperasion yan i Eksikatibu. Pues hu fafaisen hamyo todos ni man ga'chonggo-ho guine na tafan ma cho'cho' parehu, i Senate, i san papa na guma' i House yan i Executive Branch, i Gobietno. Hu nana'i hamyo daŋgkulo na si Yu'us ma'ase yan lokue, Mr. President, congratulation ni mana'i hao talo' nu i Presidente, Vice President Kiyu ni mu Vice President, i Floor Leader si Pete Reyes yan i Legislative Secretary as Senator Adriano. Este ha, buenas tades para todos hamyo yan si Yu'us ma'ase pot i finatton miyo para in attiene este na Inaugurasion i Senate. Si yu'us ma'ase.

(The following is the written statement submitted by Senator Maratita to be part of the Journal.)

Please allow me to take just a few moments to make a brief statement and thank of you for joining us here in the Senate Chambers on this historic inauguration of our Twelfth Commonwealth Legislature, this New Millennium. First, I would like to extend my congratulations to our newly elected colleague, Ramon S. Guerrero. Congratulations to you, your family and to your supporters. I look forward to working with you as we begin the Twelfth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature and I know that you will contribute a great deal to the Senate as well as to the general welfare of the people of the Commonwealth. And once again, or perhaps I should say for the third or fourth time, I would like to again congratulate my good friends and long time colleagues Senator David M. Cing and Senate President Paul A. Manglona on their successful re-election. Their commitment and dedication to their respective islands and the Commonwealth as a whole speak for itself as well as the people who continue to cast their vote of confidence in their leadership abilities. I also look forward to working with my respected colleagues and incumbent members of our leadership, and all members of the House and Senate of the Twelfth Northern Mariana Islands Commonwealth Legislature. Today represents a new beginning, and a time of celebration. But we must also remember that some very serious problems face our government. My fellow Senators, as you know, the good people of the CNMI have placed their trust in us by electing us to take responsibility for the prosperity and well-being of all who live in our beloved islands. As members of the Eleventh Legislature, we spent a great deal of time and took specific and concrete legislative actions to address labor and immigration issues in the Commonwealth. We have indeed made real and substantial progress in our reform efforts. We have made tremendous progress and we must ensure that we maintain lasting improvements in the living and working conditions of all who's reside in the Commonwealth. Now we must continue working hard to diversify our economy and provide prosperity for our people without reliance on federal handouts. For example, we enacted Public Law 11-60 to grant long-term residency to alien retirees who invest \$150,000 or more in a single residence in the Commonwealth. A bill to establish Free Trade Zones to stimulate the economy, and bring in new forms of business and investment has been put in place. As members of the Twelfth Legislature we can and have to do more to continue improving the business environment on all of our islands. I believe it is the responsibility of this Senate, working closely with the House of Representatives, to restore a healthy and stable atmosphere that will improve revenue generation in the CNMI while continuing to reduce government spending and the deficit. Without this balance, our government cannot serve its purpose, which is to provide improved education, health, infrastructure, water, and all the common needs for all our people, in all our communities. This can best be achieved by "working for the common cause, for all the people of this great Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands." This will take much teamwork and cooperation—cooperation within both houses of the Twelfth Legislature, and continued cooperation with the Executive Branch. In all of our work, I pledge my utmost cooperation, cooperation with my

constituents to listen to what they need, cooperation with my colleagues, and cooperation with the Executive Branch to meet those needs. We must joint hands and work together to restore confidence in our government. We must do everything within our God-given powers to improve the way our government works, and to make it more effective in serving our people. We, in the Twelfth Legislature, have a lot of work to do. I look forward to working with each of you to meet the challenges before us and make our goals a reality for the betterment of all our people. God blessed you all and God blessed the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Dañgkulo na si Yu'us ma'ase and thank you very much.

(Applause)

The Chair recognized Vice President Villagomez.

Vice President Villagomez: Si Yu'us ma'ase, Mr. President. Kon respetu malago' yo' finénana na baihu rekognisa I asagua-ho as Vicky ni gaige guine gi fi'on ho, I familia, familian I asagua-ho, yan para hamyo todos taotao Marianas, para I Gobietno as Governor Tenorio and Lt. Governor Jesus Sablan, i iyot-ta Chief Justice as Miguel Demapan, yan I membro gi Guma Hustisia, para I iyotta Washington Representative as Juan N. Babauta, si Bishop Tomas Camacho, Reverend John Kinsella, i Mayót siha ni man gaige guine para hu adan-ña hit pa'go na ha'ane yan i man ma ilihí'e siha gi man ma'pos gi bandan i Gobietno, parehu ha yan i segundo Gobietno, i iyota siha kongresso, membron Legislatura, gaige lokue guine iyota former Congressman as Mr. Tony Guerrero yan i pumalo siha, I pumalo ni malofan siha na hues, yan talo' para todos ni man gaige guine pa'go na ha'ane. Hu diside na para baihu na kadada' ha' i palabra-ho. I iyoko statement ni hu prepara baihu po'lo halom para I record sa hu hungok esta I gurupo mañ kuentos pot I problema ni ta fafa'na guine gi islas Marianas. Parehu ha I man malofan yan etyi I presente siha. Ilekko na yañgin tisiña hit man a-ekuñgok ni taimano para ta satba, ilekko na mumatkat enao na cho'cho'. Magof yo na bai hu rekognisa si Senator Ray Guerrero "Kumoi" ya hana' magof yo anai hafatachonge-yo ya kumentos hame lokue na dos ya ilek-ña na listo gue para hu ayuda i Commonwealth parehu ha isla-ta Saipan, Tinian yan Luta. I ma mensiona ni Delegasion ginen Senadot Tinian yan Luta hana magof yo lokue anai ma ekstetende na para ta kontinua etyi na kinemprende i para ta fachocho'i i Commonwealth. Este i Eleventh Legislature, ha preba na siña ha man macho'cho delegadu ginen Saipan, Tinian yan Luta gi patten salape. Gof hasu na este I patten salape gi kada hafa na diñaña enao gue finénana yumeyefiyoñg i gima san hilo. Lao, este na gurupo man listo man ekuñgok anai para tafan machocho mo'na parehu para i Commonwealth. Lao, hutuñgo ha kinemprende-ko yan i infotmasion iyotta Senator Guerrero, parehu ha na siniente ni enao ni para tafan macho'cho' para islas i Commonwealth. Pues uno ha baihu dagao mo'na talo' ya ofresimento este ya baihu komite yo' na para baihu fachocho'i hamyo ya bai hu ekuñgok lokue taimano ni siña ta arekla este siha i problema pat I akto ni chumachanda i develomenton Marianas. Pues ginen enao, malago' yo' ta'lo na baihu ekstende un dangkulo na congratulation para iyotta Senate President as Paul Manglona. I botun konfiansa gi membro ni in na' segundo hit guine komo iyon miyo Vice President, iyotta Floor Leader as Reyes yan iyotta Legislative Secretary as Senator Adriano. Yan talo', i ñuebo na ma ilihí, I Senadót-ta ginen Saipan as Senator Kumoi. Si Yu'us ma'ase.

(Applause)

President Manglona: Pa'go, baihu gagao I pinasensian miyo ya baihu na' kadada' ha i iyokko statement. Bishop Camacho, Reverend Kinsella, Father Mathew, Governor Tenorio, Lt. Governor Jesus Sablan, Honorable Chief Justice Demapan, Judge Bellas and Judge Manglona, Washington Representative Juan Babauta, i Mayor's siha ginen Luta, Tinian yan Saipan, para i Municipal Council members siha, todos I familia, distinguished guests yan fellow members of the Senate. It is indeed an honor and a privilege to welcome our many friends and guests to the Inaugural Session of the Twelfth Senate. Thank you all for joining us this morning. Today, January 10th the year 2000, is a very exciting time. It is not only time to celebrate a new beginning, a new year, and of course, a new Legislature--it is also a time for renewed hopes and high aspirations for the Commonwealth's entry into the new millennium. First and foremost, I would like to offer my "congratulations". Congratulations to our newly elected colleague, Ramon S. Guerrero. We look forward to working closely with you over the course of the next four years. I know that the Senator is prepared and eager to get involve in the issues which confront our Commonwealth as well as bringing in new ideas and enthusiasm to the Legislature. Congratulations para hago Senator yan I familia siha. And of course, congratulations to my dear friend and long time colleague, Senator David M. Cing, who I have a great deal of respect for and who I have a distinct privilege of working together with over the past fifteen years, beginning with our participation in the Second Constitutional Convention in 1985. We certainly look forward to sharing in your wisdom, humor and dedication to our Commonwealth for another four years. As the new Chairman

of the Committee on Federal Relations, we look forward to your close connections in Washington D.C--that is, if your son Benny Boy agrees to use his personal influence to get us access to President Clinton. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation to my wife Lydia, my parents Prudencio and Bernadita, and my friends and family and supporters in Rota and throughout the Marianas who worked so hard and committed so much of their time and energy. To my Senate colleagues, allow me to express my sincere, si Yu'us ma'ase for your kind votes of confidence in once again choosing me to lead this body of the Legislature. Your contributions and support in the Eleventh Legislature were instrumental in the establishment of lasting legislative reforms that will benefit our people and the Commonwealth for years to come. I look forward to a continued harmonious working relationship. Sen dañgkulo na si Yu'us ma'ase para todos hamyo pot este i sen tagkilo na honro ya hu sen agradesi todo i supottasion miyo. Now with the turn of the millennium behind us, our computers unaffected by the Y2K bug, and with the elections over and all the political signs Y2K--"Yes to Kiyu", I mean "Yes to Kumoi"--with all the signs taken down, it is my hope that now we can transform the meaning of Y2K from that of a political connotation or computer glitch to that of renewed spirit here in the Senate. From this day on, let us envision Y2K as the guiding spirit of the Twelfth Commonwealth Legislature. Let Y2K stand for Yes to Ko'operasion, Yes to Kinemprende gi entalo'-ta siha ni membron i Senate, yan Yes to Kumunidat-ta siha gi tano-ta Marianas. Este na klasen espiritu ta gof nesisita gi entalo'-ta anai man ma entrega hit nu i konfiansa ni taotao, i publikon Marianas. Todos hit ha' kumonprende na makat i ekonomia-ta, ya ta hungok ha esta ginen kada uno giya hita pa'go. Lao i taotao-ta siha ma ekspekpekta na guaha planu-ta ya man ma añañoñgoko hit na tatuño-ha' hafa tacho'cho'gue. Pues taya' ekskuso ma ekspekpekta ginen i membro yan ginen i Senate. Huhoñgge na taya' tisiña pumusible gi hilo' ko'operasion yan inakomprende para i kominidad-ta, taotao-ta Marianas. In the interest of time, I will give the Senate Clerk the rest of my statement to be included in the record because I believe there is lunch waiting for all of us. With that, si Yu'us ma'ase para todos hamyo pa'go na oga'an.

(Applause)

(The following is the continuation of the President's written statement that he submitted to be part of the journal.)

There is no greater challenge to our Commonwealth than our ability to foster economic growth; growth that creates quality jobs for our citizens, jobs that pay good wages and provide decent benefits, jobs that our people can be proud to be a part of. Jobs are what it's all about. We must begin to work together to address many factors which have made the cost of doing business in the CNMI an impediment to economic development and job growth, yet we can never jeopardize the natural beauty or resources of our islands for short term economic growth. As the Asian economies begin to slowly recover, our level of preparedness to attract and receive investments will determine how much benefit we gain from the next upswing in the economic cycle. Therefore, we have to carefully assess what we want to see happen on each of our islands. We must commit ourselves to creating lasting, more attractive, and more stable legislation that will provide established business and new investors with the real confidence necessary to promote economic growth throughout the CNMI. It will be counterproductive for us to continue talking about how bad our economy is, about the lack of revenues coming into the Commonwealth coffers and about how large our deficit is. Instead, we have to learn from our past mistakes and really begin to make the necessary corrections that will allow us to grow again by working with our colleagues in the House of Representatives and with our Governor, Governor Pedro P. Tenorio, to take concrete steps that will get our economy back on track. So we have a tremendous opportunity ahead of us. And whenever the opportunities are great, so are the responsibilities....in this case, the responsibility to step up our competitiveness....to be truly world class in our products, our stability, our over all business climate, and our responsiveness to ever-changing world economy. As we have seen first hand, many companies are having trouble staying afloat in the tidal wave of regional and global competition. Yet, I believe former President John F. Kennedy was right when he said, "a rising tide raises all boats." It can if we are not too firmly anchored in the pessimism and difficulties of the past. A raising tide can raise all boats if we are truly willing to rise up with new solutions. The times and technology are changing faster than ever before. As leaders, it is incumbent that we look further ahead, because the world is getting smaller and our Commonwealth is getting bigger. The course we choose is ours. Our choices will map the future of economic success or failure in the Commonwealth. Ta'lo enkuenta di i manga'choñg-hu todos, si Yu'us ma'ase pot i finatton miyo todos pa'go na oga'an, parehu ha i bisita-ta, manatuño', yan i familia siha. Yahu na baihu nai lökkue rekognisasion si Jess Lizama, Walter Macaranas, Nikki Borja, yan i staff siha gi legislative Bureau yan i Senate pot i sumen bonito siha na preparasion para i seremoñias-ta pa'go, na oga'an.

ANNOUNCEMENT

President Manglona: I believe Mike Evangelista has other announcement at the conclusion of this session. I would like to recognize also other individuals that were not previously recognized. Former Senate President Julian Calvo is with us today as well as former Congressman Martin Taisakan, and former Congressman Mametto Maratita. For those that we failed to recognize, we ask you to forgive us because there are so many wonderful people, friends and former public officials that are here with us this morning. We appreciate your presence.

BENEDICTION

President Manglona: Now, I would like to ask Reverend John Kinsella to please lead the Benediction.

Reverend John Kinsella: Almighty and Holy Father, we come to the close of this Inaugural Ceremony of the Twelfth CNMI Senate. It begins the New Millennium and the New Century and we humbly beseech you for your blessings and favor on the existing members and the newly elected members of this legislative body. We approach your throne of grace with boldness and confidence not because of our goodness or righteousness, but only because of your grace. You have given us access to you through your son Jesus Christ whom you sent from Heaven to be our Savior, our Redeemer and Lord. And in your ordained time, he will come to rule and govern the world and his kingdom is everlasting. He is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. We acknowledge that you are almighty and above all. And you are in control over all things even the governing of a nation. Nothing escapes you even the hidden things of each man's heart. It is in your power that times and seasons changes. It is in the power, in your power, that leaders changes. Some appointed to rule and some removed and history has confirmed this. We thank you for those whom you have stirred the people to choose to lead us today. You have appointed them for such a time as this. They come into Leadership at a very exciting and yet critical troubled time. And our prayer is that by your grace, you bless them as they deliberate and they decided on policies and laws. We also recognize that you are _____ and that you know all things and that from you comes true wisdom, knowledge, understanding and discernment. And these qualities are desperately needed in every leader even here in the CNMI. Challenged and stir each leaders heart to yield to the spirit of truth, the spirit of unity, spirit of cooperation, the spirit of commitment and the spirit of peace. Let each one be a model of this to the whole CNMI community. Each one will be making decisions that will directly impact the CNMI as it relates to its citizens, its member islands, to other nations and to its Covenant part of the United States of America. Surround them with wise counselors and advisors. And Lord, we've recognize the anointing that you have placed upon them. We also acknowledge that you are a Holy and a just God and according to your word, righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a disgrace to any people. You also declared, "for my thoughts are not your thoughts neither are your ways are my ways". Declares the Lord, "As the Heavens are higher than the earth so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than yours...(end of tape)

ADJOURNMENT


The Chair recognized Senator Reyes.

Floor Leader Reyes: I move that the Senate adjourns subject to the call of the Chair.

Several members seconded.

There being no objection, President Manglona declared the Senate adjourned subject to the call of the Chair at 12:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Ramona I. Kapileo
Senate Journal Clerk

ADOPTED: February 3, 2000