

A SENATE RESOLUTION

Respectfully petitioning the United States Congress and the President of the United States to restore and expand federal compensation and health programs for individuals exposed to radiation resulting from United States nuclear weapons testing in the Pacific, including the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

- 1 **WHEREAS**, as part of its mandate to protect and defend the United States of
- 2 America, the United States Armed Forces conducted testing of atomic nuclear weapons on
- 3 Enewetak and Bikini Atolls in the Marshall Islands from 1946 to 1958. A total of sixty-
- 4 seven (67) atomic and thermonuclear bombs were detonated which resulted in radioactive
- 5 fallout across a wide area of the Pacific beyond the immediate test sites; and
- 6 **WHEREAS**, due to the deleterious effects of the nuclear radiation, on October 5,
- 7 1990, the United States Congress passed the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act
- 8 ("RECA"), which establishes new programs for persons physically present in areas near
- 9 the Nevada Nuclear Test Site during atomic testing at the site. Atmospheric testing of
- 10 atomic devices – important to national security during the darkest days of the "cold war" –
- 11 ended in 1963 when, under President Kennedy, the United States signed and ratified the
- 12 Limited Test Ban Treaty. Prior to the Treaty, the United States detonated over 200 atomic
- 13 devices in the open air, in both the South Pacific and in Nevada. The bill provides
- 14 compassionate payments to persons with specified diseases who fear that their health was
- 15 harmed because of fallout from atmospheric atomic testing at the Nevada test site,
- 16 regardless of whether causation can be scientifically established; and
- 17 **WHEREAS**, on July 10, 2000, Pub. L. 106-245, the Radiation Exposure
- 18 Compensation Act Amendments of 2000 was passed, adding two new claimant categories,
- 19 providing for, among other things, additional compensable illnesses, removing certain

lifestyle restrictions, and adding additional geographic areas to the “downwinder” claimant category; and

WHEREAS, residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and other Pacific jurisdictions have long asserted that they were exposed to radioactive fallout generated by such testing; and

WHEREAS, although RECA coverage has been expanded, it still does not provide relief to all Americans affected by fallout, particularly residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and the Territory of Guam; and

WHEREAS, there is no doubt that the Territory of Guam has received radioactive debris from fallout during the nuclear weapons testing in the Pacific Ocean to such an extent that, in March of 2004, Congresswoman Madeleine Z. Bordallo spoke before the Committee to Assess the Scientific Information for the Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program to request that they include an assessment of Guam for “downwinders” and ship decontamination as part of their congressionally mandated study; and

WHEREAS, because the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are close in proximity to the Territory of Guam, separated by a scant 56 miles, and both are affected by the same wind, weather and ocean current patterns, it logically follows that radiation which affects the Territory of Guam necessarily affects the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; and

WHEREAS, as a result, the Nuclear and Radiation Studies Board published in 2005 its report entitled “Assessment of the Scientific Information for the Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program” that because radiation fallout may have been higher for people outside RECA-designated areas, the NRSB recommends that all residents of the continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii, and overseas U.S. territories who have been diagnosed with specific RECA-compensable diseases and who may have been exposed, even in utero, to radiation from U.S. nuclear-weapons testing fallout be compensated; and

WHEREAS, the United States Congress has the authority to amend RECA to include residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands affected by radiation as eligible “downwinder” claimants, and its failure to do so resulted in the

1 continued exclusion of similarly situated CNMI residents from federal compensation
2 benefits, leaving their claims unrecognized under existing law; and

3 **WHEREAS**, pursuant to the RECA Extension Act of 2022 (P.L. 117-139);
4 authorization for the RECA program expired on June 07, 2024, with the Department of
5 Justice only processing claims postmarked by June 10, 2024 leaving many affected
6 individuals and their families without access to compensation or medical assistance
7 programs; and

8 **WHEREAS**, RECA was reinstated through P.L. 119-21 otherwise known as the
9 “One Big Beautiful Bill Act”, specifically in Sections 100201-100205, enacted on July 04,
10 2025. This reinstatement sets funding to expire on December 31, 2028, with the allowance
11 of the latest claim to be filed by December 31, 2027; and

12 **WHEREAS**, residents of the Commonwealth continue to experience concerns
13 regarding cancer, thyroid disease, and other illnesses that may be associated with radiation
14 exposure and deserve the same consideration afforded to other United States citizens and
15 nationals impacted by federal nuclear testing programs; and

16 **WHEREAS**, the people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, a
17 territory of the United States of America, request for the restoration of RECA benefits,
18 expansion of eligibility to include affected Pacific populations, and to provide funding for
19 scientific research, health monitoring, cancer screening, and medical treatment programs
20 in the Pacific territories and freely associated states;

21 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Senate of the Twenty-Fourth
22 Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature hereby joins the people of the
23 Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in respectfully petitioning the United
24 States Congress to declare that all Americans shall be given the same consideration when
25 it comes to compensation for exposure to radiation from U.S. nuclear testing, including the
26 people of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; and

27 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the United States Congress is hereby
28 respectfully petitioned to amend the “Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990,”

1 Public Law 101-426, as amended to include the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana
2 Islands in the jurisdiction “Downwinders” covered by the Act; and

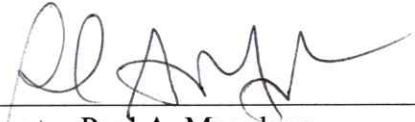
3 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the United States Congress is hereby
4 respectfully requested to study whether the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana
5 Islands should be granted RECA “on site” status; and

6 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the affected population previously and
7 currently in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (those residing who have
8 been exposed to radiation resulting from the Atomic Energy Commission tests in the
9 Marshall Islands) be recognized as being “downwinders” of such tests; and

10 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the President of the Senate shall certify and
11 the Senate Legislative Secretary shall attest to the adoption of this Resolution, and
12 thereafter the Senate Clerk shall transmit certified copies to the Honorable Mike Johnson,
13 Speaker of the House of Representatives, 119th United States Congress; the Honorable J.D.
14 Vance, President of the Senate, United States Senate; the Honorable Senator Chuck
15 Grassley, Chairperson, Committee on Judiciary, United States Senate; the Honorable
16 Senator Dick Durbin, Ranking Member, Committee on Judiciary, United States Senate; the
17 Honorable Senator Bill Cassidy, Chairperson, Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and
18 Pensions, United States Senate; the Honorable Senator Bernie Sanders, Ranking Member,
19 Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, United States Senate; the
20 Honorable Congressman Jim Jordan, Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, United States
21 House of Representatives; the Honorable Congressman Jamie Raskin, Ranking Member,
22 Committee on the Judiciary, United States House of Representatives; the Honorable
23 Congressman Brett Guthrie, Chairman, Committee on Energy and Commerce, United
24 States House of Representatives; the Honorable Congressman Frank Pallone, Ranking
25 Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce, United States House of Representatives;
26 the Honorable Kimberlyn King-Hinds, CNMI Delegate to the House of Representatives
27 Washington, 119th United States Congress the Honorable David M. Apatang, Governor of
28 the CNMI; the Honorable Lou Leon Guerrero, Governor of the Territory of Guam; the
29 Honorable Edmund S. Villagomez, Speaker of the House of Representatives; and Mr.

- 1 Robert N. Celestial, Atomic Veteran from Guam and President of the Pacific Association
- 2 for Radiation Survivors.

Date: 6-26-26

Introduced By: 
Senator Paul A. Manglona