



Hse. Comm. No. 19-11 *House of Representatives*

19th NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
P.O. BOX 500586
SAIPAN, MP 96950

April 15, 2015

The Honorable Victor B. Hocog
President
The Senate
Nineteenth Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Capitol Hill
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Senate President Hocog:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith for Senate action H. B. No. 19-2, HD1, entitled: **"To create the Second Marianas Political Status Commission; to examine whether the people desire continuing in a "Political Union with the United States of America" pursuant to the Covenant; to determine if that continuation is in their best interest, or whether some other political status would better enable them to fulfill their aspirations of full and meaningful self-government; and for other purposes."**, which was passed by the House of Representatives on First and Final Reading , by the majority vote of the members present, a quorum being present, during its 1st Day, First Special Session on April 9, 2015.

Sincerely yours,


Linda B. Muña
House Clerk

Attachment

Transmittal to the SENATE

Received by: 

Date: 4/15/15

Time: 11:44am

Nineteenth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 6, 2015

First Regular Session, 2015

H. B. 19-2, HD1

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To create the Second Marianas Political Status Commission; to examine whether the people desire continuing in a "Political Union with the United States of America" pursuant to the Covenant; to determine if that continuation is in their best interest, or whether some other political status would better enable them to fulfill their aspirations of full and meaningful self-government; and for other purposes.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE NINETEENTH NORTHERN MARIANAS
COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:**

1 **Section 1. Short Title.** This Act may be cited as the "Second Marianas
2 Political Status Commission Act of 2015".

3 **Section 2. Findings.** The Legislature finds:

4 (a) That United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1541 permits free
5 association with a, or full and equal integration into another political state, but that
6 these options are subject to strict limitations to prohibit unlawful colonialism.

7 (b) That where a former Trust Territory is not a sovereign independent
8 state, and is not fully and equally integrated into another state, Principle VII of
9 Resolution 1541 requires:

10 (1) That the people of the former Trust Territory have full self-
11 government in internal matters.

1 (2) That those people have the right at all times to modify the
2 political status of the former territory through democratic means.

3 (3) That the terms of the political association be set down in an
4 agreement binding on both parties.

5 (c) That the indigenous people of the Northern Marianas Islands
6 negotiated the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana
7 Islands in Political Union with the United States of America (referred to in this
8 Act as "the Covenant"), and in the exercise of their right to self-determination as
9 guaranteed by the United Nations, through a plebiscite, approved the Covenant.

10 (d) That on December 22, 1990, the United Nations Security Council
11 terminated the Trusteeship Agreement for the Northern Mariana Islands in United
12 Nations Security Council Resolution 683, thereby giving the Northern Mariana
13 Islands the status of a former trust territory and activating Principle VII of
14 Resolution 1541.

15 (e) That the people desire to reexamine whether continuing in a "Political
16 Union with the United States of America" under the Covenant is in their best
17 interest, or whether some other political status will better enable them to fulfill
18 their hope and aspirations in attaining full and meaningful self-government, as
19 stated by the late U.S. Senator Jacob Javits of the State of New York in the
20 deliberations of the Covenant and as amended.

21 **Section 3. Purpose.** The purpose of this Act is to create the Second
22 Marianas Political Status Commission (Commission), which will have broad

1 authority to review, study, examine, conduct public political education and
2 awareness and all others that may assist the Commission in accomplishing its
3 responsibilities under this Act, which shall include but not limited to:

4 (a) Examining the present political relationship between the Northern
5 Marianas and the United States; and

6 (b) Determine whether the people of the Northern Mariana Islands are still
7 in favor of continuing in "Political Union with the United States of America"
8 pursuant to the Covenant, and/or preferred some other political status options that
9 would better enable them to fulfill their hope and aspirations of full, meaningful
10 and a well-define self-government status.

11 In accomplishing such mission the Commission shall:

12 (a) Examine what positions and actions taken by the United States
13 toward the Northern Mariana Islands that may contradict and violates the
14 provisions and spirit of the Covenant, which may upset, or upsetting the
15 people of the Northern Mariana Islands, and

16 (1) Whether such positions and actions taken by the United
17 States are based on their "own" interpretation on how they should
18 implement and enforce the provisions of the Covenant, regardless;
19 and

20 (2) Whether such positions and actions taken by the United
21 States warrant the people of the Northern Mariana Islands to

1 carefully review, and to reconsider their Political Union with the
2 United States of America as established by the Covenant; and

3 (b) Explore and study any and all other alternative political status
4 options that offers a full, meaningful and a well-define self-government
5 status that is favorable and acceptable to the people of the Northern
6 Mariana Islands; and

7 (c) Submit its Final Report on such findings and
8 recommendation(s), out-lining and describing the political status options
9 to the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature for their review and
10 approval.

11 (1) After such review and approval, the Legislature shall
12 present such political status option(s) to the Commonwealth
13 Election Commission (CEC). The CEC shall present such political
14 status option(s) to the people of Northern Marianas Islands who are
15 qualified to vote for their approval or disapproval in a plebiscite as
16 set forth below.

17 (2) The Legislature, in a Joint Legislative Session of the
18 House and Senate, shall, by law or through a Joint Resolution, call
19 for a plebiscite on such political status option(s) and schedule a
20 special election to be conducted ninety (90) working days from the
21 receipt of such recommendations by the Commonwealth Board of
22 Election.

1 **Section 4.** The following is hereby enacted:

2 "Section 101. Second Marianas Political Status Commission.

3 (a) There is hereby created the Second Marianas Political Status
4 Commission, referred to in this Act as "the Commission."

5 (b) The Commission shall consist of nine voting members and two
6 non-voting ex-officio members selected as follows:

7 (1) The Governor, in consultation with the Mayor of Rota,
8 the First Senatorial District, shall appoint two persons who shall be
9 residents and domiciled on the island of Rota; and

10 (2) The Governor, in consultation with the Mayor of Tinian
11 and Aguiguan, the Second Senatorial District, shall appoint two
12 persons who shall be residents and domiciled on the islands of
13 Tinian and Aguiguan; and

14 (3) The Governor, in consultation with the Mayors of
15 Saipan and, the islands North of Saipan, shall appoint five persons
16 who shall be domiciled on the island of Saipan and the islands
17 North of Saipan; and

18 (c) No person shall be appointed to or serve on the Commission
19 unless he or she is over twenty-five years of age, has never been convicted
20 of a felony, or if convicted, has been fully pardoned, and who is a United
21 States Citizen and has been domiciled in the Northern Mariana Islands for
22 at least five consecutive years at the time of appointment. Such person

1 shall have at least good knowledge of the Northern Mariana's political
2 history, the people's desire to attain full, meaningful and a well-defined
3 self-government, the Covenant that Established the Commonwealth of the
4 Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of
5 America, the status of the U. S. Territories, and other political status
6 attained by former Trust Territory District in Micronesia.

7 (1) The appointment of the members of the Commission
8 shall be made no later than sixty calendar days from the effective
9 date of this Act.

10 (2) The Speaker of the House and the President of the
11 Senate shall be ex-officio-non-voting members of the Commission
12 and shall serve on the Commission until the work of the
13 Commission is completed.

14 (3) The term of each person appointed by the Governor to
15 serve on the Commission shall commence upon his/her
16 appointment and shall serve the Commission until the work of the
17 Commission is completed.

18 (d) A vacancy on the Commission shall be filled in the same
19 manner as the original appointment, no later than thirty calendar days
20 following the creation of such vacancy.

21 (e) The members of the Commission shall be compensated at the
22 rate established in 1 CMC § 8247 (a), as may be amended. All members of

1 the Commission shall be entitled to reimbursement for reasonable,
2 necessary and actual expenses incurred by them in the course and scope of
3 their work for the Commission, in accordance with the rate then in effect
4 of employees of the executive branch of the Commonwealth Government.
5 The Chairperson of the Commission shall certify to the Secretary of
6 Finance all claims for payment of such reimbursement.

7 (f) The Commission shall be deemed to be operational upon the
8 appointment of all its members, and shall continue in existence until the
9 Commission submits its findings and recommendation(s) to and accepted
10 by Legislature; and, by a joint resolution, certifies that the work of the
11 Commission has been fully completed; thereby, dissolving the
12 Commission officially.

13 Section 102. Organization of the Commission.

14 (a) The Commission shall hold its first meeting, no later than thirty
15 calendar days after all its members are appointed. The Speaker of the
16 House of Representatives shall convene the first meeting and shall preside
17 until such time a Chairperson is elected. The members of the Commission
18 shall elect from among themselves a Chairperson, a Vice Chairperson and
19 such other officers as the Commission may require.

20 (b) The members of Commission may adopt such rules of
21 procedure as it deems necessary and appropriate to exercise its powers and
22 duties under this Act.

1 (c) The Commission shall meet at least once month, or more
2 frequently as may be necessary to discharge its responsibilities under this
3 Act. Either the Chairperson or any three members may call a meeting. A
4 majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. All issues before the
5 Commission shall be decided by a simple majority of those present at a
6 duly noticed meeting at which a quorum is present.

7 (d) The Commission shall have the right to meet in non-public
8 executive sessions or to hold public meetings, as it deems appropriate
9 from time to time, to carry out its powers and duties under this Act. A
10 written record of all meetings shall be kept. All public meetings shall be
11 preceded by notice in at least one radio station and one newspaper of local
12 circulation for at least one week prior to the meeting. The public shall be
13 given a meaningful and adequate opportunity to participate in all public
14 educations hearings and meetings.

15 (e) Within thirty (30) working days from the date upon which the
16 Commission becomes operational, it shall submit to the House of
17 Representatives a proposed budget for its operations and activities.

18 Section 103. Powers and Duties of the Commission. The
19 Commission shall have the following powers and duties:

20 (a) To carry out the purpose of this Act as fully described in
21 Section 3; and

1 (b) To review and examine carefully whether the people of the
2 Northern Mariana Islands, under the present political status as a
3 "Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with
4 the United States of America," pursuant to the Covenant, meets their hope
5 and aspiration to govern themselves; and

6 (c) To determine whether such political status established by the
7 Covenant complies with the mandate of the United Nations General
8 Assembly Resolution 1541, Principal VII; and

9 (d) To examine matters that negatively impact the political
10 relationship with the United States pursuant to the Covenant; and

11 (e) To examine the present political status of the former Trust
12 Territory Districts in Micronesia of what is now: The Republic of Palau,
13 the Republic of the Marshalls, and the Federated States of Micronesia
14 (Pohnpei, Kosrae, Chuuk and Yap) for possible political status option for
15 the Northern Mariana Islands; and

16 (f) To review the current status of the U. S. Territories; such as
17 Guam, American Samoa and the Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth
18 of Puerto Rico, in a such way that will help the Commission to evaluate
19 the practices of the United States in their administration and control over
20 these territories and how such practices relates to the Northern Mariana
21 Islands; and

1 (g) To conduct political education on Saipan, Tinian and Rota as
2 regard to the Northern Mariana Islands political relationship with the
3 United States; and

4 (h) To present what other political status options available for
5 consideration such as Independence or Free Association; and

6 (i) To re-negotiate the Covenant to attain a meaningful and well
7 defined "full self-government in internal matters" respected by the United
8 States of America; and

9 (j) To submit periodic reports to the Legislature concerning its
10 activities pursuant to this Act, no less frequently than every three months
11 once it becomes operational, and to submit the Final Report on its findings
12 and recommendation(s) on such political status option to the Legislature
13 eighteen (18) calendar months but not later than twenty one (21) calendar
14 months from the date upon the Commission becomes operational.

15 (k) To conduct its last public education and hearings on each of the
16 islands of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, and shall allow the public the
17 opportunity within a reasonable time to comment upon such findings and
18 recommendations on such political status option(s) three months before
19 the Commission's Final Report is submitted to the Legislature

20 Section 104. Adoption of the Commission's Final Report.

21 (a) Upon the receipt by the Legislature of the Commission's Final
22 Report on its findings and recommendations on such political status and

1 option(s), the Legislature shall have 60 working days to review such
2 findings and recommendations in a Joint Meetings of the House and the
3 Senate, called by its presiding officers and may meet with the Commission
4 for clarification of its findings and recommendations on such political
5 status option(s). The Legislature, if they find it necessary, may make such
6 changes or amendments that are appropriate to meet the purpose and intent
7 of the Act. Thereafter, the Legislature, in a Joint Legislative Session, by a
8 Joint Resolution, certify that it has accepted or approved the Commission's
9 Final Report on its findings and recommendation on such political status
10 option(s), and as amended by the Legislature - if any. If the Legislature
11 fails to act within the 60 working days, then the Commission's Final
12 Report will be deemed approved by the Legislature, and shall be certified
13 by the Legislative clerks of the House and the Senate and shall transmit
14 copy of such Final Report immediately to the CEC showing the
15 recommended political status option(s) that will be placed on the ballot
16 pursuant to this Act.

17 (1) The CEC shall present the certified political status option(s) to
18 qualify voters in the Northern Mariana Islands for their approval or
19 disapproval in a plebiscite scheduled pursuant to this Section and shall
20 certify the results of the plebiscite to the presiding officers of the
21 Legislature.

1 (2) If more than one recommended political status option is on the
2 ballot, and if no one political status option receives a majority of the votes
3 cast in the plebiscite, a run-off election for such plebiscite shall be held
4 forty-five calendar days from the date upon which the result of the first
5 plebiscite was certified to the Legislature between the two status options
6 which received the highest number of votes. If the forty-five calendar days
7 falls within a working day (Monday through Friday), then the plebiscite
8 shall be held on Saturday of that same week.

9 Section 105. Employment. The Commission may employ
10 secretaries, legal counsel and other consultants or staff as the Commission
11 may require, and upon request by the Chairperson of the Commission, the
12 Governor and the Legislature and the Public Auditor shall make available
13 to the Commission such professional persons and technical assistance
14 needed to fulfill its responsibilities.

15 Section 106. Contracts. The Commission may enter into such
16 contracts, leases, or other agreements or transactions as may be necessary
17 and proper to fulfill its duties and responsibilities under this Act and
18 execute all instruments that are necessary and appropriate in the exercise
19 of any of its functions permitted under this Act.

20 Section 107. None applicability of and Hiring of: The laws of the
21 Commonwealth pertaining to procurement, personnel and employment
22 shall not apply to the Commission. The hiring of consultants, and

1 professional staff, and employees shall be made on the basis of education,
2 experience, merit, skill and knowledge without any political interference,
3 interest or affiliations.

4 Section 108. Repositories for Commission Documents. The
5 Northern Marianas Archives at the Northern Marianas College shall be the
6 repository for all un-classified records and material pertaining to the work
7 of the Commission, which shall include but not limited to: Minutes of all
8 meetings of the Commission and Committees, Recorded Public
9 Educations and Hearings, All Research and Studies of all political status
10 options, and all other materials pertaining to the works of the
11 Commissions.

12 (a) The Commission shall identify and mark all record that shall be
13 kept classified, and transfer such records to the Commonwealth Recorder's
14 Office for secured retention. Such classified records may be made
15 available only upon an official request to the Commonwealth Recorder's
16 Office pursuant to the CNMI Open Government Act.

17 (b) Un-classified records of all public meetings can be made
18 available for review by the public and copy of such records may be made
19 available upon request.

20 (c) Payment for a reasonable cost for preparing and producing copy
21 of such un-classified or classified documents or materials shall be made
22 before such copy or copies are released.

1 Section 109. Financial and Audit Services. The Public Auditor
2 shall provide financial audit services to the Commission while it is in
3 existence, and shall commence an audit of the financial records of *the*
4 Commission immediately upon the completion of its work and dissolution.
5 The audit report shall be completed within ninety calendar days of the
6 dissolution of the Commission, and shall thereupon promptly be submitted
7 to the presiding officers of the Legislature.

8 Section 110. Appropriation and Authorization for Appropriation.

9 (a) Without further legislative appropriation, the Governor shall
10 reprogram the sum of not less than \$100,000.00 to the Commission, to
11 support the operations of the Commission.

12 (b) The Commission shall make quarterly reports to the presiding
13 officers of each house of the Legislature regarding the actual expenditure
14 of all funds advanced or appropriated for its operations.

15 (c) The Secretary of Finance shall create a special account for the
16 Commission, into which all funds advanced or appropriated to it shall be
17 deposited. The Secretary of Finance shall release funds from this account
18 upon a justified request for advance or payment by the Chairperson of the
19 Commission, who, pursuant to this Act, is the sole expenditure authority
20 of all such funds.

21 (d) Funds appropriated to the Commission may be spent without
22 regard to fiscal year limitation.”

1 **Section 5. Severability.** If any provisions of this Act or the application
2 of any such provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a
3 court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its
4 provisions to persons or circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid
5 shall not be affected thereby.

6 **Section 6. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein
7 shall not be construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or
8 acquired under statutes repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted
9 under the statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding
10 instituted under or pursuant to prior law. The enactment of the Act shall not have
11 the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal,
12 which shall already be in existence on the date this Act becomes effective.

13 **Section 7. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by
14 the Governor, or its becoming law without such approval.

Prefiled: 1/14/15

Date: 1/14/15

Introduced By: /s/ Rep. Felicidad T. Ogumoro

Reviewed for Legal Sufficiency by:

/s/ John F. Cool
House Legal Counsel



REPRESENTATIVE ANGEL ALDAN DEMAPAN
 19TH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
 Honorable Jesus P. Mafnas Memorial Building



CHAIRMAN
 Federal & Foreign Affairs

FLOOR LEADER
 Saipan & Northern Islands
 Legislative Delegation

Adopted - 4/9/15

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 19-1

DATE: March 10, 2015

RE: H.B. NO. 19-02

The Honorable Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero
 Speaker of the House of Representatives
 Nineteenth Northern Marianas
 Commonwealth Legislature
 Capitol Hill
 Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Federal and Foreign Affairs, to which House Bill No. 19-02 was referred, entitled:

"To create the Second Marianas Political Status Commission; to examine whether the people desire continuing in a "Political Union with the United States of America" pursuant to the Covenant; to determine if that continuation is in their best interest, or whether some other political status would better enable them to fulfill their aspirations of full and meaningful self-government; and for other purposes."

begs leave to report as follows:

I. RECOMMENDATION:

After reasonable discussion and deliberation on the bill, the Committee recommends that the House pass House Bill No. 19-02 in the form of House Draft 1.

HOUSE CLERK'S OFFICE

RECEIVED BY *Shu*

DATE *3/10/15* TIME *1:36 pm*

II. ANALYSIS:

A. Purpose:

The purpose of House Bill No. 19-02 is to create the Second Marianas Political Status Commission, which will have broad authority to review, study, examine, and conduct public political education and awareness to assist the Commission in accomplishing its responsibilities under this Act, which shall include but not limited to:

(a) Examining the present political relationship between the Northern Mariana Islands and the United States; and

(b) Determining whether the people of the Northern Mariana Islands are still in favor of continuing in "Political Union with the United States of America" pursuant to the Covenant, and/or prefer some other political status options that would better enable them to fulfill their hope and aspirations of a full, meaningful, and well-defined self-government status.

In accomplishing such mission, the Commission shall:

(a) Examine what positions and actions taken by the United States toward the Northern Mariana Islands that may contradict and violates the provisions and spirit of the Covenant, which may upset, or is upsetting the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, and

(1) Whether such positions and actions taken by the United States are based on their "own" interpretation on how they should implement and enforce the provisions of the Covenant, regardless; and

(2) Whether such positions and actions taken by the United States warrant the people of the Northern Mariana Islands to carefully review, and to reconsider their political union with the United States of America as established by the Covenant.

(b) Explore and study any and all other alternative political status options that offers a full, meaningful, and well-defined self-government status that is favorable and acceptable to the people of the Northern Mariana Islands; and

(c) Submit its Final Report on such findings and recommendation(s), out-lining and describing the political status options to the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature for their review and approval.

(1) After such review and approval, the Legislature shall present such political status option(s) to the Commonwealth Election Commission (CEC). The CEC shall present such political status option(s) to the people of Northern

Marianas Islands who are qualified to vote for their approval or disapproval in a plebiscite as set forth below.

(2) The Legislature, in a Joint Legislative Session of the House and Senate, shall, by law or through a Joint Resolution, call for a plebiscite on such political status option(s) and schedule a special election to be conducted ninety (90) working days from the receipt of such recommendations by the Commonwealth Board of Election.

B. Committee Findings:

Your Committee finds:

(a) That United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1541 permits free association with a, or full and equal integration into another political state, but that these options are subject to strict limitations to prohibit unlawful colonialism.

(b) That where a former Trust Territory is not a sovereign independent state, and is not fully and equally integrated into another state, Principle VII of Resolution 1541 requires: (1) That the people of the former Trust Territory have full self-government in internal matters; (2) That those people have the right at all times to modify the political status of the former territory through democratic means; and (3) That the terms of the political association be set down in an agreement binding on both parties.

(c) That the indigenous people of the Northern Marianas Islands negotiated the Covenant to establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America (referred to in this Act as "the Covenant"), and in the exercise of their right to self-determination as guaranteed by the United Nations, through a plebiscite, approved the Covenant.

(d) That on December 22, 1990, the United Nations Security Council terminated the Trusteeship Agreement for the Northern Mariana Islands in United Nations Security Council Resolution 683, thereby giving the Northern Mariana Islands the status of a former trust territory and activating Principle VII of Resolution 1541.

(e) That the people desire to reexamine whether continuing in a "Political Union with the United States of America" under the Covenant is in their best interest, or whether some other political status will better enable them to fulfill their hope and aspirations in attaining a full and meaningful self-government, as stated by the late U.S. Senator Jacob Javits of the State of New York in the deliberations of the Covenant and as amended.

Your Committee further finds that the United States government has made unilateral decisions that the Commonwealth has declared opposing views, e.g., the submerged lands issue, the Northern Islands Monument, and etc. Furthermore, in the attached documents from the White

House circa 1963, there are several condescending comments and discussions about the inability of "Micronesians" to properly govern themselves because of their lack of education and other issues.

Your Committee feels that the creation of the Second Marianas Political Status Commission will afford the Commonwealth the opportunity to review, study, examine, and conduct public political education and awareness in the present political relationship between the Northern Mariana Islands and the United States: self-government and political status.

To include, the House Standing Committee on Federal & Foreign Affairs also recognizes that House Bill 19-02 is a product of the author's collaborative effort that incorporates several amendments which addresses past concerns in regards to the legislation's legislative history. Therefore, your Committee agrees with the intent and purpose of House Bill 19-02 and recommends its passage in the form of House Draft 1.

C. Amendments:

The Committee made the following amendments to strengthen the intent of House Bill No. 19-02.

- Page 14
 - line 9 after subsection (a) insert the following language "Without further legislative appropriation, the Governor shall".
 - line 10: inserted "reprogram the", "not less", and ".00".
deleted "The" and "up to".
 - line 11: deleted "shall be reprogrammed by the Governor".

D. Legislative History:

House Bill No. 19-02 was formally introduced to the full body of the House on February 06, 2015 by Rep. Felicidad T. Ogumoro and was subsequently referred to your House Standing Committee on Federal and Foreign Affairs for disposition.

House Bill No. 18-206 was formally introduced to the full body of the House on August 28, 2014 by Rep. Felicidad T. Ogumoro and was subsequently referred to the House Standing Committee on Federal and Foreign Affairs for disposition. No further action was taken by the Committee. House Bill No. 18-206 is the by product of House Bill No. 18-112 which was vetoed by the Honorable Eloy S. Inos on April 18, 2014. The author took into account the Governor's concerns and recommendations by making the necessary changes in the legislation to strengthen the intent of the Bill.

House Bill No. 18-112 was formally introduced to the full body of the House on August 27, 2013 by Rep. Felicidad T. Ogumoro and was subsequently referred to the House Standing Committee on Federal and Foreign Affairs for disposition. The House passed House Bill 18-112 on December 19, 2013 in the form of House Draft 1 and was transmitted to the Senate as House Communication 18-125 on December 30, 2014. The Senate passed House Bill 18-112, HD 1 without amendments on March 27, 2014. On April 02, 2014, the House transmitted House Bill 18-112, HD 1 to the Office of the Governor for final action. Governor Communication 18-184 informed the House that House Bill 18-02, HD 1 was vetoed by the Honorable Governor Eloy S. Inos on April 18, 2014.

House Bill No. 17-7 was formally introduced to the full body of the House on January 28, 2010 by Rep. Stanley T. McGinnis Torres. The House passed House Bill No. 17-7 on September 15, 2011 in the form of House Draft 1. No action was taken by the Senate of the Seventeenth Northern Mariana Islands Commonwealth Legislature as it remained in the Senate Standing Committee on Federal Relations and Independent Agencies.

House Bill No. 16-124 was formally introduced to the full body of the House on June 23, 2008 by Representatives Stanley T. McGinnis Torres. House Bill No. 16-124 was referred to the House Standing Committee on Judicial and Governmental Operations for disposition. No further action was taken by the House as House Bill No. 16-124.

House Bill No. 15-291 was formally introduced to the full body of the House on August 17, 2007 by Rep. Stanley T. McGinnis Torres. The House passed House Bill No. 15-291 on December 5, 2007 with no Committee Report. No action was taken by the Senate as it was not assigned to any Committee.

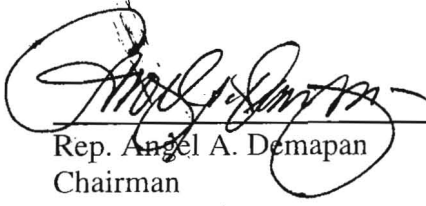
E. Cost Benefit:

The enactment of House Bill No. 19-02 will initially cost the Commonwealth \$100,000.00 for the operations of the Political Status Commission. However, the Commonwealth could create a more desirable socio-economic scenario within its boundaries through a more viable self-governing status. Subsequently, this should relate to a better fiscal system of life in our islands, which in turn will translate to a "healthier" island community.

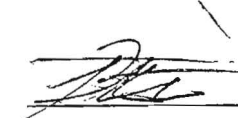
III. CONCLUSION:

The Committee is in accord with the provisions of House Bill No. 19-02 and recommends the passage of this legislation in the form of House Draft 1.

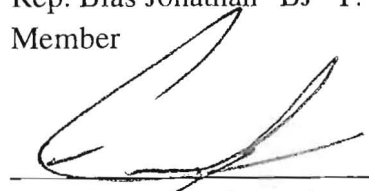
Respectfully submitted,


Rep. Angel A. Demapan
Chairman


Rep. Edwin P. Aldan
Vice Chairman


Rep. Blas Jonathan "BJ" T. Attao
Member

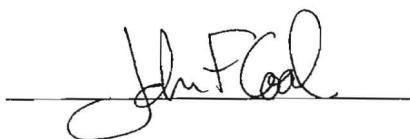
Rep. Anthony T. Benavente
Member


Rep. George N. Camacho
Member

Rep. Felicidad T. Ogumoro
Member


Rep. John Paul P. Sablan
Member

Reviewed By:


House Legal Counsel