TWENTIETH COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS YOUTH CONGRESS

10TH REGULAR **Session, 2026** **Y.C.B. No. 20-**08

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To establish the CNMI Procurement Transparency Act by amending the duties of the Secretary of the Department of Finance under 1 CMC § § 2553 and establishing a new Article 8 to establish and maintain a centralized, public, and transparent online addition to the pre-existing website of the Department of Finance to grant the public easy access to government procurement contracts; to require the timely publication of procurement records; to promote fairness, and transparency; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE TWENTIETH COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS YOUTH CONGRESS:

Section 1. Short Title. This Act may be cited as the "CNMI Procurement Transparency Act."

Section 2. <u>Finding and Purpose.</u> The Youth Congress finds the following:

1. Procurement is the backbone of government expenditure for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

2. Access to procurement records is crucial for government transparency and business fairness.

3. Though procurement records are technically disclosable under current public law, members of the public must submit individual requests which are timely, costly, and burdensome on members of the public.

4. The addition of a timely, centralized, and easily sortable publication of procurement records to the pre-existing Department of Finance website will allow CNMI residents, business owners, journalists, government officials, and auditors to effectively monitor government expenditures while looking at economic or procurement trends.

The purpose of this legislation is establish the CNMI Procurement Transparency Act by amending the duties of the Secretary of the Department of Finance under 1 CMC § 2553 and establishing a new article to (1) establish and maintain a centralized, public, and transparent online addition to the pre-existing website of the Department of Finance to grant the public easy access to government procurement contracts, (2) require the timely publication of procurement records, and (3) promote fairness, and transparency.

Section 2. Amendment. 1 CMC § 2553 is hereby amended by adding a new subsection (n) to read as follows:

"(n) To enforce the CNMI Procurement Transparency Act."

Section 3. Amendment. Chapter 11, Part 1, Division 2, Title 1 of the Commonwealth Code is hereby amended by adding a new article 8 as follows:

"**Article 8. CNMI Procurement Transparency Act.**

§ 101. Definitions. For the purposes of this act:

(a) "Agency" refers to any government department, agency, office, board, commission, or any other instrumentality of the government established or funded by law by the CNMI government subject to this Act.

(b) "Contract" refers to any agreement, regardless of what they are called, for the procurement or purchase of goods, supplies, construction, and services.

(c) "Department of Finance" refers to the pre-existing CNMI Government's Department of Finance, under the Office of the Governor.

(d) "Procurement Record" refers to a copy of a procurement document, such as a contract.

§ 102. Establishment of a Financial Transparency Data-base.

(a) The Commonwealth shall, under the Department of Finance, establish and maintain an online, publicly accessible procurement website containing covered financial information.

(b) The website shall be accessible to members of the public without registration, payment, or submission of a public-records request.

(c) The website shall allow users to search and filter covered financial information by at minimum:

(1) Agency or department

(2) Contractor

(3) Contract number

(4) Contract value

(5) Date of execution

(6) Effective Date

(7) Expiration Date

(8) Procurement Method

(9) Governor's administration under which the contract was executed; and

(10) Keywords relating to the contract or procurement.

(d) To the extent that is practical, the Department of Finance should include or create more features that make the website more readily accessible, easy to read and understand, and to further the purposes of this Act.

§ 103. Mandatory Publication of Covered Financial Information.

(a) All procurement records must be uploaded to the Department of Finance's website within ten days of the contract being awarded.

(b) All records must follow the searchable terms detailed under § 102.

§ 104. Mandatory Publication of Procurement Amendments.

(a) All amendments, modifications, extensions, or other alterations to the value, scope, or other material parts to an existing procurement contract must be uploaded within ten days of said change.

(b) The original contract shall continue to exist inside of the procurement website and shall not be deleted, so that the public may properly compare and

contrast the changes made between the original and amended contract. The same shall be done for all amendments made to the contract.

§ 105. Redactions and Exemptions.

(a) No contract shall be uploaded to the website if it is not disclosable under CNMI or federal law.

(b) When only a certain portion of the contract is exempt from being uploaded, the non-exempt portion shall nevertheless be uploaded to the website.

(c) Any redaction shall recognize the authority authorizing said redaction.

§ 106. Enforceability.

(a) It shall be the responsibility of the Secretary of Finance to fulfill the timely publication of contracts to the procurement website.

§ 107. Regulations.

The Secretary of the Department of Finance shall adopt regulations necessary to implement the provisions of this article."

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

Section 5. Savings Clause. This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired

under statutes repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior law. The enactment of the Act shall not have the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal, which shall already be in existence on the date this Act becomes effective.

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

Prefiled: 10/9/2026

Date: 10/17/2026 Introduced by: _____
Senator Christopher JN. Dela Cruz

Reviewed for Legal Sufficiency by:

_____
Legal Counsel