



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

TWENTIETH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

SECOND REGULAR SESSION, 2017

LEGISLATIVE JOURNAL

5th Day, Second Regular Session

Monday, September 11, 2017

The House of Representatives of the Twentieth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature convened its Emergency Session, Fifth Day, Second Regular Session on Monday, September 11, 2017, at 2:00 p.m., in the House Chamber on Capitol Hill, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Honorable Rafael S. Demapan, Speaker of the House, presided.

Speaker Rafael S. Demapan: Today marks the 9/11, the day that many will never forget when the World Trade Center was attacked. Let's remember and pay tribute to those who lost their lives. Let's also pray for those affected and who lost their lives from hurricane Harvey, Irma and other natural disasters. So in God's name we pray and at this moment we all rise for a moment of silence.

A moment of silence was observed.

ROLL CALL

The Clerk called the roll and all twenty members were present.

Speaker Rafael S. Demapan: *Si Yu'us Ma'ase*, Clerk. Let the record reflect that twenty members are present. Before we proceed, let me recognize the Floor Leader for the motion for today's emergency session.

Floor Leader Glenn L. Maratita: *Si Yu'us Ma'ase*, Mr. Speaker. Pursuant to the Open Government Act and the Official Rules of the House of Representatives, I move that this House agrees that an emergency exist and the reason for finding that an emergency exist is for the pressing and urging need to address fiscal year 2018 budget. On that note, Mr. Speaker, I so move.

The motion was seconded.

There was no discussion, the Chair recognized the Clerk to call the roll.

The Clerk called the roll on the motion that an emergency session exists to address the Fiscal Year 2018 Budget with the following results:

| | |
|--------------------------------------------|-----|
| Representative Francisco C. Aguon | yes |
| Representative Edwin P. Aldan | yes |
| Representative Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao | yes |
| Representative Donald C. Barcinas | yes |
| Representative Ivan A. Blanco | yes |
| Representative Francisco S. Dela Cruz | yes |
| Representative Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero | yes |
| Representative Lorenzo I. Deleon Guerrero | yes |
| Representative Angel A. Demapan | yes |
| Speaker Rafael S. Demapan | yes |
| Representative Joseph Lee Pan T. Guerrero | yes |
| Representative Alice S. Igitol | yes |
| Representative Jose I. Itibus | yes |
| Representative Glenn L. Maratita | yes |
| Representative Janet U. Maratita | yes |
| Representative Edwin K. Propst | yes |
| Representative Gregorio M. Sablan, Jr. | yes |
| Representative John Paul P. Sablan | yes |
| Representative Vinson F. Sablan | yes |
| Representative Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez | yes |

House Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker, all 20 members present voted “yes.”

Speaker Rafael S. Demapan: *Si Yu’us Ma’ase*, Clerk. With all 20 members voting in the affirmative, motion for an emergency session hereby carries. Thank you, members. Going down to our Order of Business, Public Comments. Anyone who wishes to comment on any of the item on today’s business, you may do so. I ask that you state your name for the record.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

One individual made comments pertaining to the following:

SEN. COMM. 20-70: (9/8/17) Returning H. B. NO. 20-105, HD2, entitled, “To make appropriations for the operations and activities of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, its agencies, instrumentalities, and independent programs, and to provide budget authority for government corporations for Fiscal Year 2018; and for other purposes,” which was passed by the Senate with amendments on September 8, 2017, in the form of *H. B. NO. 20-105, HD2, SD3*. [For action on Senate amendments]

Mr. Crispin M. Ogo, Program Manager for the Indigenous Affairs Office

The Chair directed the members to item VII, Senate Communications and recognized the Floor Leader.

ADOPTION OF JOURNALS

None

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

House Bills: None

House Local Bills: None

House Legislative Initiatives: None

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

House Resolutions: None

House Joint Resolutions: None

House Commemorative Resolutions: None

House Concurrent Resolutions: None

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR

None

SENATE COMMUNICATIONS

The Floor Leader made a motion to accept Senate Communication 20-70 so that it becomes property of the House.

SEN. COMM. 20-70: (9/8/17) Returning H. B. NO. 20-105, HD2, entitled, “To make appropriations for the operations and activities of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, its agencies, instrumentalities, and independent programs, and to provide budget authority for government corporations for Fiscal Year 2018; and for other purposes,” which was passed by the Senate with amendments on September 8, 2017, in the form of *H. B. NO. 20-105, HD2, SD3*. [For action on Senate amendments]

The motion was seconded.

There was no discussion and the motion to accept Senate Communication 20-70 so that it becomes property of the House was carried by voice vote. There was no nay vote.

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

The Floor Leader made a motion to place House Bill 20-105, HD2, SD3 on the Bill Calendar for action.

The motion was seconded.

There was no discussion and the motion to place House Bill 20-105, HD2, SD3 on the Bill Calendar was carried by voice vote. There was no nay vote.

The Chair directed the members to item XVI, Bill Calendar and recognized the Floor Leader.

HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES

None

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS

None

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

None

REPORTS OF SPECIAL AND CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

RESOLUTION CALENDAR

None

BILL CALENDAR

Floor Leader Glenn L. Maratita: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Prior to our session and the position of the leadership, Mr. Speaker at this time I move to reject Senate amendments to House Bill 20-105, HD2 and move to conference. So move.

Speaker Rafael S. Demapan: Can you –

Floor Leader Glenn L. Maratita: Let me restate. I move to reject Senate amendments to House Bill 20-105, HD2, SD3 and move to conference. So move.

H. B. NO. 20-105, HD2, SD3

To make appropriations for the operations and activities of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, its agencies, instrumentalities, and independent programs, and to provide budget authority for government corporations for Fiscal Year 2018; and for other purposes. [*See SEN. COMM. 20-70*]

The motion was seconded.

Speaker Rafael S. Demapan: *Si Yu'us Ma'ase*, Floor Leader. Motion to reject Senate amendment has been seconded. Discussion on that motion? Recognize Chairman Angel.

Representative Angel A. Demapan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In line with the motion to reject House Bill 20-105, HD2, SD3, I just want to state for the record that the original bill having been a product of the House Committee on Ways and Means and later a product to the full House, passed on to the Senate underwent some drastic changes that warrant a thorough review and for that purpose Mr. Speaker there is a motion on the floor to reject. In summary, I just want to point out that after being passed in the Senate there is a movement of about \$2.5 Million Dollars through various departments and agencies and programs. We are a bit concern and would like to work in conference committee to address some of the concerns at the outset can be seen in the most recent version of SD3. Particularly some of the operations budgets in various departments and agencies in the executive branch have been significantly reduced. We are also very concerned with some of the modifications being proposed in SD3 that touches about \$1.5 Million Dollars in the MVA budget. We'd also like to take a look at the statutory use of the tobacco control fund of which there's a provision essentially earmarking an existing earmark. We'd also like to look at some funds being proposed in SD3 that is going to benefit various independent programs in the Commonwealth only because some of these independent programs just received the concurrence of the Saipan and Northern Islands legislative delegation in recent legislation approved just last Friday. So we'd like to make sure that the funding that exist in the SNILD bill and the funding be proposed in the general funding budget are not a duplication of funding request for such independent programs. We'd also like to consider that the House and the Senate in passing House Bill 20-99, SS1 contains significant provisions and would provide much relief to all three municipalities in the form of appropriations to the First, Second and Third Municipalities. So we'd like to see that in the final version of the general fund budget that we take into consideration the additional resources we anticipate in the event House Bill 20-99, SS1 becomes law. We're also concerned on the legislative site of the reduction of over \$200,000.00 from the Legislative Bureau budget, which was supposed to go to the construction and procurement or a generator to ensure that legislative business remains uninterrupted in times of power outage or in times of disaster when legislative action is needed. Mr. Speaker, these are just a few of the concerns that we've been able to lift in our preliminary review of the budget bill before us and in line with this Mr. Speaker, I echo the sentiment of the Floor Leader and ask this body to reject this legislation so that we can prepare a compromise and final workable version in conference committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker Rafael S. Demapan: *Si Yu'us Ma'ase*, Chairman Angel. Let me now recognize Representative Lorenzo Deleon Guerrero.

Representative Lorenzo I. Deleon Guerrero: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In line with the Chairman of Ways and Means Representative Angel, we've known briefly what are the amendments made by the Senate. We need to think deficit reduction. If we are to use move funds within during the deliberation with the conference committee seriously think about deficit reductions such as land compensation, court judgements and include portions of that along with the \$1 Million that has already been identified in the bill. I yield for now Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Speaker Rafael S. Demapan: *Si Yu'us Ma'ase*, Representative Deleon Guerrero. So noted. Recognize the Floor Leader.

Floor Leader Glenn L. Maratita: Thank you, Speaker. Just so I put on record, we have approximately or nearly half a million dollars of increase for the First Senatorial District again, I would like to make my position known to this body that I do support the amendments that was made by the Senate and I do wish to respect the position of the other members. Although it's kind of funny because I offered the motion. I wish not to laugh about it, then again Mr. Speaker, I wish to announce that I do support the Senate amendments. Thank you.

Speaker Rafael S. Demapan: Thank you, Floor Leader. Appears to me that we are ready. Clerk for the roll call.

The Clerk called the roll on the motion to reject House Bill 20-105, HD2, SD3 and move to a Conference Committee with the following results:

| | |
|--------------------------------------------|-----|
| Representative Francisco C. Aguon | yes |
| Representative Edwin P. Aldan | no |
| Representative Blas Jonathan "BJ" T. Attao | yes |
| Representative Donald C. Barcinas | yes |
| Representative Ivan A. Blanco | yes |
| Representative Francisco S. Dela Cruz | yes |
| Representative Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero | yes |
| Representative Lorenzo I. Deleon Guerrero | yes |
| Representative Angel A. Demapan | yes |
| Speaker Rafael S. Demapan | yes |
| Representative Joseph Lee Pan T. Guerrero | yes |
| Representative Alice S. Igitol | yes |
| Representative Jose I. Itibus | yes |
| Representative Glenn L. Maratita | no |
| Representative Janet U. Maratita | yes |
| Representative Edwin K. Propst | yes |
| Representative Gregorio M. Sablan, Jr. | yes |
| Representative John Paul P. Sablan | yes |
| Representative Vinson F. Sablan | yes |
| Representative Edmund Joseph S. Villagomez | yes |

House Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker 18 members voted "yes" and 2 members voted "yes."

Speaker Rafael S. Demapan: *Si Yu'us Ma'ase*, Clerk. With 18 members voting to reject Senate amendments on House Bill 20-105, HD2, SD3 that Senate amendment hereby carries. Thank

you, members. Let me now take the time to appoint the conferee. Chairman Angel Demapan will remain as the Chairman for the House. The Vice Speaker Janet Maratita will be a part of the conferee and Chairman Joe Deleon Guerrero. So with that I also implore the conferee team to please expedite the review on the budget and I'm hoping that if and everything goes well, we hope to have a product by September 20. Hopefully, by then the Senate will also consider that request. As we all know, we are on a budget crisis and we want to make sure that we avoid having a government shutdown. So with that a conferee team has been established. Further discussion? Ready? So, going down to item XVII, Miscellaneous? XVIII, Announcement? Appears to be none. Floor Leader for the adjournment.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

None

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Floor Leader Glenn L. Maratita: On that note Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn subject to your call, so move.

The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote. There was no nay vote.

The House adjourned at 2:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Venetia S. Rosario
House Journal Clerk

APPEARANCE OF LOCAL BILLS

FIRST LEGISLATIVE DAY: 1st Legislative appearance of a local bill is on the day it is introduced.

SECOND LEGISLATIVE DAY: NONE

THIRD LEGISLATIVE DAY:

H. L. B. NO. 20-39: To amend Saipan Local Law 19-4 to restrict adult gambling machine businesses to certain areas; and for other purposes. Introduced by REP. JANET U. MARATITA of Saipan, Precinct 1 (*for herself*) on August 30, 2017.

Appearance of Measures introduced on the House Floor during the House Session on

September 5, 2017:

[Added-9/5/17] H. B. NO. 20-122: To amend Title 9 of the Commonwealth Code to allow the Bureau of Motor Vehicles to suspend the expiration of a driver’s license for military personnel and their spouses while on deployment. Introduced by REP. EDWIN K. PROPST of Saipan, Precinct 1 (*for himself*) on September 5, 2017; subsequently referred to the Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations.

[Added-9/5/17] H. B. NO. 20-123: To limit the excise tax exemption to tobacco products and alcoholic beverages to items brought in by individuals arriving at the airport and sea port. Introduced by REP. JOHN PAUL P. SABLAN of Saipan, Precinct 2 (*for himself*) on September 5, 2017.

H. RES. NO. 20-13: To extend our sincere condolences and sympathies to the family of the late Honorable Tony A. de Brum and to honor his memory whose worthy endeavors contributed to the quality and character of a true dignitary for his country, the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Introduced by REP. ANGEL A. DEMAPAN of Saipan, Precinct 1 (*for himself*, Representatives Francisco C. Aguon, Edwin P. Aldan, Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao, Donald C. Barcinas, Ivan A. Blanco, Francisco S. Dela Cruz, Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero, Lorenzo I. Deleon Guerrero, Rafael S. Demapan, Joseph Lee Pan T. Guerrero, Alice S. Igitol, Jose I. Itibus, Glenn L. Maratita, Janet U. Maratita, Edwin K. Propst, Gregorio M. Sablan Jr., John Paul P. Sablan, Vinson F. Sablan, and Edmund S. Villagomez) on September 5, 2017; was subsequently placed on the Resolution Calendar.

House information on deadlines for override: None