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FIRST REGULAR SESSION - 2017

SJ 20-05

Fourth Day

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

In compliance with the Open Government Act, Senate President, Arnold I. Palacios, issued a session call on March 17, 2017, that the Senate of the Twentieth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature will convene this open and public session. The notice, the official session call, and the session agenda was filed in the Office of the Senate Clerk; released to the media; and posted at the Entrance Halls of the Office of the Governor, the Senate and the House of Representatives, posted on the Commonwealth Legislature's website at [www.cnmileg.gov.mp](http://www.cnmileg.gov.mp).

The Senate of the Twentieth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature convened its 4<sup>th</sup> Day, First Regular Session, on March 22, 2017, at 1:20 p.m., in the Senate Chamber, Capitol Hill Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The Honorable Arnold I. Palacios, President of the Senate, presided.

A moment of silent prayer was observed.

**President Palacios:** Clerk, please call the roll.

The Senate Clerk called the roll, eight (8) members were present with Senator Mesngon being excused.

**President Palacios:** With all eight (8) members present, we've established a quorum to conduct our session this afternoon. Please let record reflect that Senator Mesngong is excused from today's session. We are under Public Comment.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

**President Palacios:** The Chair would like now to invite members of the public given the opportunity to make comments on any of the agenda item on the order of business for today's session. Please state your name and the organization that you are representing, and perhaps even the subject matter on the agenda that you will be speaking of. Thank you. Please proceed.

**Mr. Mathew DLGuerrero:** Thank you, Mr. President, and members of the Senate. My name is Mathew DeLeon Guerrero I am the Chief of Staff for Governor Torres. Thank you for allowing me to speak today in support of SB 20-02, the establishment of Planning and Development Office.

Planning is the essential component of developing for a success community that pertains to generations. However, the structure of the system today does not provide for adequate mechanism to devote necessary focus on resources to the vital cause. This is why Governor Torres was in full support of this bill in the Nineteenth Legislature, S.B. 19-95, and why he asked that I reiterate his support today. With the issues on the Governor's table, from the developing of our human resources to the development of infrastructures and the infrastructure we need to succeed a dedicated essential planning is essential. In effort to limit the time here, I just wanted to provide that when we're at the farm with my father he used to tell me that the best time to plant a fruit tree was fifteen years ago. If we want our next generation fifteen year from now to get the fruits of our development to ensure that they have the prosperous community we need to plant the tree now, we need to start planting now. Governor Torres is in full support of this bill and hope to see it come to freshen and have inclusion of it into the final budget in September. Thank you very much.

**President Palacios:** Thank you Mr. DLGuerrero. Are there any other members in the public in the auditions that would like to speak today on any of the agenda item? Ms. Ogomuro, welcome.

**Ms. Therese Ogomoro:** Thank you. Good Morning, Mr. President and members, I am Therese Ogomoro the Zoning Administrator and am here to comment on Senate Bill No. 20-02. The Zoning Board Office would like to say, they were not officially informed or advised to make comment on this bill but I am here this afternoon to present my comments orally and submitted also in writing. As an agency directly involved in the regulation of land uses, I am hereby submitting the Zoning Office's comments on SB 20-02 SDI, which seeks to establish an office for Planning and Development for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. These comments do not reflect the opinion of the Commonwealth Zoning Board ("Zoning Board"). The Zoning Office supports the intent of this bill as amended from its earlier version. The creation of a Planning & Development office to centralize information from agencies will be most beneficial for our government and the CNMI's economic process to ensure that developments are supported by available infrastructures and resources within our means. It is our understanding that the office of Planning & Development would not have regulatory functions, but would prepare a comprehensive development plan to guide the regulatory process for the CNMI. We note that this bill seeks to change one section of the Zoning Code of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, 2 CMC §§ 7201-7255, while leaving related sections throughout the Zoning Code unchanged. The bill would change § 7231, Land Use Districts, to transfer the functions of the Zoning Board to the office of Planning & Development, while leaving the Zoning Board's power unchanged with respect to other sections of the law. These sections include, among others, § 7242, which sets forth procedures to changes in district boundaries, uses, and requirements, and § 7221, which governs public participation on proposed land use districts, boundaries, or regulations. It is unclear as to whether or not this Act seeks to take away, in its entirety, the responsibilities of the Zoning Board to determine and make recommendations to the Legislature on land use districts. Simply changing § 7231 will lead to confusion in the interpretation of the code. This office seeks your clarification in this area, and hopes that the Zoning Board will be officially asked to submit comments on this issue. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

**President Palacios:** Thank you maam. I guess some of these comments will be addressed when we take up and deliberate on the legislation today. Just as a point of information the previous version was submitted to Zoning and we did work with both, CRM, DEQ and Zoning to mark up the revision of the present version of this legislation with Kate, Frank and folks that were involved and the staff. Anybody else would like to make any public comments at this point? --There being none, we will move on. This afternoon at the Chairs request, both the Chairman on Education and Youth and Chairman on Health and Welfare requested two chairs to collaborate and coordinate a presentation by Latte Training Academy one of the educational institution that have been doing a lot of training in the Commonwealth to catch up with the workforce needs. This afternoon we have key management folks from Latte Training Academy to give us a presentation. With having said that, I would like to ask the Floor Leader to effectuate a motion to go into the Committee of the Whole.

**Floor Leader Borja:** Thank you, Mr. President. I move to resolve into the Committee of the Whole.

The motion has been seconded.

**President Palacios:** Motion is to resolve into the Committee of the Whole, it's been seconded. Discussion? Ready? Those in favor of the motion please say, "Aye," those oppose say "Nay".

Several members voiced "Aye".

**President Palacios:** Motion carries. We are now in the Committee of the Whole and Floor Leader will conduct the session from here.

**The members resolved into Committee of the Whole at 1:25 p.m.**

### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

**President Palacios:** I would like to ask Mr. Ornoski and Ariel Viam to please join us up here in the Chamber.

**Ms. Ariel Viam:** Thank you very much. My name is Ariel Viam, I am the Executive Director of the Latte Training Academy and thank you all of you for inviting us here today to do this presentation. We're really just here to let you know a little bit more about us and what are our successes have been today. The Latte Training Academy was founded in 2013 and we are a Federal 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization and we offer credentialed workforce development. We offer nationally and industry recognized certification courses in hotel and hospitality, elite health, bookkeeping, and information technology. Today we have certified over four hundred (400) CNMI residents and we have a certification achievement rate of ninety-four percent (94%). We've established partnerships with regional public and private stakeholders. The Latte Training Academy as I mentioned, there's a 501(C)(3) nonprofit organization located in the CNMI, the organization was founded in 2013 in respond to the need to develop the local workforce in the island of Saipan, Tinian, Rota and Guam. The organization first began offering trainings which resulted in nationally certified certification in

the summer of 2014. The first sets of trainings provided were premised in the CNMI economic main stay of tourism. As such, the Latte Training Academy partnered with the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute to offer their comprehensive skills, tasks, and results training known as START. In 2015 the organization expanded its course offerings to include trainings which let internationally recognize certification of certified lobotomy technicians, certified billing and coding specialist and certified nursing assistance. Just recently in the beginning of 2017 the organization expanded again to offer nationally certified certification for business including bookkeeping and information technology. The Latte Training Academy is governed by a Board of Directors compromised by community members residing in both CNMI and Guam. Unfortunately, all of our bureau members are off-island today so they cannot be here but they send their regrets. While the board governs organizational strategy, operational strategy is managed by the Executive Director, myself Ariel Biam. As a founding member of the Latte Training Academy in 2013, I served as the Organization Inaugural Board President for the first year and half. This continuity from Board President to Executive Director has maintained a strong familiarity with the organizations foundation and vision has led to a wider way of services and partnerships. Our current partnerships beginning in 2014 Latte Training Academy, which I will refer to at times during this presentation as LTA, partnered with the CNMI Public School System and the CNMI Workforce Investment Agency, to offer trainings to eligible participants referred by each agency. In an effort to expand services to a wider segment of the population LTA will be entering into partnership with additional funding agencies including the CNMI Department of Commerce, the Northern Marianas College, and the Pacific Islands Small Business Development center network. Despite a significant demand for trainings that are being provided a segment of the population exist that is ineligible for services through our partner agencies and are unable to avail of the LTA trainings, programs due to their own financial constrained and therefore, that is primarily the focus of today's discussion with all of you today. The Latte Training Academy has partnered with respective professionals versed in workforce and professional trainings specific to the CNMI in partnership with Island Training Solutions of which Jim Aronuski is present here today, the organization has secured the license to deliver hotel and hospitality trainings and certifications under the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute called "AHLEI". All AHLEI trainings are developed by global leaders in the hotel and hospitality industry. The hotel and hospitality programs provide specific skills, knowledge leading to an industry recognized importable professional certification from the American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute. Our training program provides an in-depth understanding of all the aspects of hotel and hospitality operations. The programs teach the foundation of operations the while promoting a long-term career pathways available to students. The program promotes professionalism, confident and positive work ethic. In addition, the Latte Training Academy works alongside with the Saipan Chamber of Commerce and the Hotel Association in the Northern Mariana Islands to provide students work experience and internship the opportunity which anticipated in any job placement while upon success in the completion of the program. The Latte Training Academy has also partnered with respective professionals in the area allied to the Guam Marianas Training Center which is located on beach road on Saipan. Ms. Fail Valis sends her regrets that she cannot be present today. The certified Phlebotomy Technical Technician certification is an introductory level course that will familiarize participants with the duties associated with practice of severing puncture, capillary puncture, and special collection procedures. The students have an experience with quality control, infection control and safety procedures as well as laboratory computer systems. The course includes classroom instruction and laboratory practicums. The certified nursing assistant

certification prepares students for the fundamental skills of a nursing assistant. The nursing assistant certification course offers 160 hours of instruction and hands on experience in basic nursing skills, personal care skills in safety and emergency care issues. The certified billing and coding specialist course thoroughly prepares students to code medical records correctly and optimize reimbursement for a full range of medical services. Students were introduced to various techniques for finding and applying the correct codes in today's standard coding system. The Latte Training Academy recently teamed up with professionals in the IT industry through its partnership in with Cannoli Works of Saipan which is a subsidiary of a Colorado base Cannoli Works. The organization is headed by IT professionals with nearly twenty years of IT experience. This comp TIA information technology fundamental certification course provides an in-depth entry-level course instruction in the various components of information technology. This includes examination of software landscapes to include understanding various operating systems and identifications of common programs applications and their purposes as well as identification of various alternate technologies. The A plus certification is a basic certification that demonstrates proficiency with computer hardware and operating systems. The certification helps demonstrate proficiency with the use of computers emulated the devices core elements of the A plus certification criteria include knowledge of computer anatomy, operating systems in computer data usage elements. LTA has once again partnered with the Island Training Solutions to offer courses certified by the National Bookkeepers Association. The Bookkeeper certification program is dedicated to an emphasis on significance of accounting as the true groundwork for the participant professional, educational, vocational and businesses objective. The programs develop the participant's understandings of bookkeeping and accounting the basic bookkeeping function, analyzing business transaction and general journal and ledger accounting adjustment and monthly and annual closing processes as well as preparing financial statements. We also have certification classes available in quick books and office manager. As you can see the programs we offer in line with the job categories of the highest need based on CW applications. And I send this information to you by email also yesterday I did receive bounce backs from every one of your emails so I got in touched with Carla, I believe her name is, San Nicolas, she said she's going to look into that on why that was happening, but you guys do have this information in hard copy but if you need it again I could certainly get it to you. Now we want to talk about the successes to today, so since we first started classes in 2014, we have enrolled five hundred and fifty-five (555) students, we are currently instructing ninety-three (93) students, twenty (20) of them are from the allied health program and seventy-three (73) are the hotel and hospitality programs. Of the four hundred and sixty-two (462) previous students so not counting the ninety-three (93) were currently instructing, four hundred and twenty-five (425) completed their course which about an eight percent (8%) nutrition rate, this is excellent for the industry. Then of the four hundred and twenty-five (425) that completed, four hundred and one (401) passed certifications so that is a ninety-four percent (94%) passed rates, again, we're very proud of that number that we've in the short amount of time since the summer of 2014 we've been able to get four hundred (400) plus students out there who have certification and are able to help our workforce in the job categories that are needed. One way to look at that is that basically for every hundred students that enroll eighty-six percent (86%) successfully attain certification to enter their workforce in their desired field and another way to look at is that every one dollar spent eighty-six cents (\$0.086) results in a student receiving and industry standard certification in their field ready to competitively enter the workforce. The LTA founders also envision an organization that provided the Marianas with skilled in preferred workforce through the provision of resources and services not readily available within the region. To honor them and

support the continued educational options the scholarship programs was developed. The purpose of the Latte Training Academy founders' scholarship program is to provide support to students who've fully supported and successfully completed the Latte Training Academy program. LTA believes that continued education in career development of its students is essential to the long-term success of that individual as well as to the overall community in which that student resides. The program aims to provide financial assistance to former LTA students through a competitive process for the continued education in career development for a successful applicant. There are eleven thousand dollars available each year through ten awards, there's nine one thousand dollars' scholarship and one two thousand dollars' scholarship and these scholarships are one of the ways nonprofit has given back to the community we serve and you can see there one of the students that received her scholarship just recently. So looking forward the Latte Training Academy currently provides services based on our partner agencies eligibility. So as we discuss PSS services are only available to PSS students, and WOHA services were only available to eligible WOHA participants. LTA has revived grant funding through AHLEI technical assistance through funding made available to CNMI US eligible workers. But as motioned earlier, there are entire segments of the population who request training but do not fit these eligibility categories. We have received community demands through our websites calls and emails requesting inclusions to courses although not eligible through partner agencies for example, people have been turned away from the January cohort of allied health classes because they were not HOWA eligible and the department of labor had denied utilizing CW funding to cover their tuition and by that time the student was able to cover their tuition by themselves. But services can be expanded to reach a wider segment of the CNMI population. LTA submitted a proposal for CW funding to the CNMI Department of Labor in October 2016, just last week at the instruction of the Governor the Latte-Training Academy has approved three CW funding. Additional funding will allow us to provide services to both Rota and Tinian with relative ease. When we requested this presentation a couple of months ago after Senator Palacios attended our January PSS Certification Ceremony, Latte Training Academies intentions was requesting inclusion into appropriation bills related to training services based on our proven track record presented here today. Being left out of these appropriations gives those that are included an upper hand in financial bidding projects over successful workforce development agencies such as Latte Training Academy. I wanted to thank you for your time and attention and just let you ask any question you may have but hope that you see from this presentation that we may be a quiet agency but were out there doing what the community needs and really developing some other workforce. Thank you very much.

**Floor Leader Borja:** Thank you. The floor is now open for any members who have any question? Recognize Senator Paul?

**Senator Mangloña:** Thank you for the wonderful presentation. My question though, you mentioned there were three hundred some (300) students that graduated from your program since 2014?

**Ms. Ariel:** Yes, four hundred and twenty-five (425) actually graduated, four hundred and one (401) got certified.

**Senator Mangloña:** Those students are they presently employed when they undergo training?

**Ms. Ariel:** At the time of their training most of them had some type of employment but did not have employment in that particular field of their interest but what we have done is we have tracked them and yes they are employed in the industry in which their being certified.

**Senator Mangloña:** How many of those were unemployed?

**Ms. Ariel:** We didn't actually ask them prior to them signing up what their current employment status was and about moving them to an employment status but we are certainly tracking more and more information each time with them and if they are now in the covered area.

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**Senator Mangloña:** I'm just asking this to see the success side of getting them trained and then plugging them in into various private companies.

**Mr. Jim:** If I can answer from the hospitality standpoint were majority of the numbers are coming from? Most of the folks that are in our programs were not employed. As you'll find is that we have a tracking system at the end for about six months (6), and in solid sixty to seventy percent (60% to 70%) of the folks that went through our training we were able to find jobs at hotels and restaurant and tour companies around the island that's a huge number and most of the students and the people that are participated whether it's part-time or full time but they were able to get employed. But then there's no secret that the hotels, restaurant and tour companies around the island need qualified folks and were able to meet that need to a certain point.

**Senator Mangloña:** Thank you. Let me ask you first, how long are these programs issued?

**Mr. Jim:** The one's we teach majority of them we called Start Program and those are approximately three months long. Approximately a hundred and eighty hours' worth of classroom time on top of that we have what we called a Shadowing Program where the students that participate will go into different hotels for various amounts of time to learn firsthand. This is how quite frankly most of our participants are being hired, they're showing their skills, and their desires, and their dress and their professionalism when they're at the hotel and they're basically offered a position.

**Senator Mangloña:** As far as the hospital is concern I know that you are doing some training for some positions in the hospital, right?

**Mr. Jim:** That would be Ariel's guide, we just do the hospitality.

**Ms. Ariel:** So a couple of things to answer, to go back a little bit, I actually do have a list of areas and job titles in in which our graduates have been employed, it has over hundreds of places where they're currently working, so if you would like this this list, I can leave it for you. In addition to that the programs that he spoke about, he gave you the time frames but the certified nursing program is a hundred and sixty hours, the phlebotomy tech is eighty hours, the billing and coding is eighty hours. We actually have been working with the hospital so of the text, two of them were hired at CHCC laboratory one them was hired at DALs laboratory and a couple of the other text have been hired or I

should say the certified nursing assistance have been hired at local/private physicians' offices too. They are working into the system of the medical billers and coders were currently training two from CHCC as well as the three from Kagman Community Health Center they are not being trained under our funding they're trained under their own funding. So we are building the workforce that hadn't been employed those that are in the physicians' but maybe didn't have the certification or the full understanding of the employment position are also been trained as well. So yes, we are working with the hospital on that.

**Senator Mangloña:** I just want to comment, I know this one student for example I met in San Diego last year, she actually put five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) of her own money to invest in her learning one simple task, you know a person needs dialysis they put a needle attachment and every time you get the hemodialysis treatment you just plug it in. She just learns that one thing, invest five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) and she's making like almost forty thousand dollars (\$40,000.00) a year. So if people know that, if we can coordinate with the hospital for certain slots you know that actually doesn't require a nurse. I know that our hospital requires so many nurses and maybe one of the positions is just to do that kind of job. What I'm saying is that if we can delineate some of these positions and say that you don't really need a registered nurse for that slot we can train that person and all she does is put that thing checks it if it's okay then you eliminate one nursing position. I know that the student there invested, she went to borrow money so that she can undergo five thousand dollars (\$5,000.00) training in less than a year and she has a job. I hope that we can see something like that with your program also for certain positions that we know once a student undergo training we can eliminate the need of hiring over qualified person for that duty.

**Ms. Ariel:** Absolutely.

**President Palacios:** Floor Leader?

**Floor Leader Borja:** Senator Quitugua?

**Senator Quitugua:** Thank you Floor Leader. I noticed that you also do trainings with PSS students, are those students' seniors, or juniors, or sophomores that will make a difference in terms of employment because if they're only sophomores and juniors and they completed the program then of course they will not be under employment because they are still in high school.

**Ms. Ariel:** I will answer then allow Jim to also supplement if he'd like to. What we do when we do sign ups is we do seniors first, we take seniors as priority and then we go to juniors and sophomores. We don't sophomores at this time because we want them to be of working age. Many of our students no matter what grade they're in still have part time positions and are filling the need even they are still in high school. We do have some that have graduated and are just concentrating on high school but for the most part many of them are even looking for even part time employment. They are working while they're in school and then when they do graduate that has been moving very successfully into full time employment. We've been working with PSS since 2014 so we've seen that transition to even those that have the part time employment as a junior are continuing to work after they graduate.



**Floor Leader Borja:** Jim?

**Mr. Jim:** Just to specify that most of the students that are list in the PSS programs are seniors. We do have juniors in there very few sophomores on occasion but to keep the classes fill up as a matter of fact we got people asking about classes for fall of next year they are high in demand. All of our classes this year have been considered sold out, they are usually sold out. We recruit over of the summer and over the Christmas break for two semesters and by the time school starts these classes are full with a waiting list. The demand is high and the demand from the hotels and restaurants is also high.

**Senator Quitugua:** What about the nursing assistant, I understand that there's also a program. Now, I don't know if they are still continuing the program because I think the instructor left to work in the private clinic. Since you have a nursing assistant under your program do you carry over that program with PSS?

**Ms. Ariel:** There's few details there, yes, you are correct. Letty left and she is now working at Saipan Health Center. They did originally approach us to continue the program however they didn't want to continue it in structure that we have. Just so you know, the program that we offer is not for certification. They offer nursing assistant program but the students do not end up with sitting for the exam or end up taking their certification. So that was the piece that was missing. We talk with PSS and more than willing to make that available not just to Southern High School but all three of the high schools. At this time PSS felt that they did not have the funding in order to go forward with that they have strictly wanted to just to have one of our instructors come in and just continue what Letty was doing. Unfortunately, one of the things that we are working forward is certification only because we really feel that that is for the students to go back and get actual job. We've had a few of the people who have graduated from the Southern class come in for certification program to actually get the certification to back up what they have learned when they were in Southern High School. We will be thrilled to work further with PSS but we are going to push that it be for certification so the people can actually enter the workforce appropriately.

**Senator Quitugua:** Last question, what about the – because also you mentioned that you are partnering with WIA. Are you providing training to those people who are dislocated since at one time they were employed and lost their employment do provide that? Because I understand there is number of people who are dislocated at this time and I believe WIA has funding from the federal for these dislocated workers.

**Ms. Ariel:** Just in the beginning of this year when we extended our offerings to include the business and the IT we also expanded the offering of having something a little bit like, like what you're saying to help out people rush up their skills and be able to get back into the workforce. We are looking at that new area on helping them get into the workforce and make themselves ready and maybe even as simple as getting together a resume that really promotes themselves for the skills that they have.

**Mr. Jim:** The intent of the program was born out of the project from 2006 called, Bridge Project, which we got Hawaii funding and where we did nine weeks course with folks that were displaced, disconnect from their job, lay off at the time, were the parents sent their kids off to school now they want to get back in the workforce. We did everything from basic need assessment, to find out what careers they want to get to, maybe they want to go towards the law enforcement, maybe a nursing or health care, maybe more in the hospitality different areas so we guide them in those areas and then work with them on their skills making sure they did have basic interview skills, that the resume was in great shape, obviously we would print their resume when they needed them. But also we would teach customer service, talk about safety and also the rule of work that also in the cases of the employer and how to meet to expectations to come into work and be on time and what to expect an hour and the schedule changes. There's a reasonable success if there is funding there we would be willing to reiterate that program and have it on paper that we want this program because if I may, we believe that there is un-sizable population of folks that possibly could be in the age of twenty-five to forty-five that are not getting serviced. I think that this, or what you've mentioned getting folks up to speed in workforce and basic training is essential to get them to more comfortable with workforce rather than just filling an application, and not getting a phone call back and getting frustrated, there has to be. And if there's a federal funding from WIOA we will be able to put into great use.

**Ms. Ariel:** WIOA has received our listing of our new courses and it wasn't in here because it doesn't result in certification but we do include a work keys and a work readiness aspect of that in the funding that we have given to them on what we are available for should their clients need us.

**Floor Leader Borja:** Senator Santos?

**Senator Santos:** Thank you Mr. Chairman. I have a several questions and my first question is just a follow up question reference to nursing assistant, so to obtain a certification in nursing assistant the student must complete at least under the sixty hours more than half of that is to perform in clinical settings. May we know where the students will perform that clinical setting is it in the private clinic or CHCC?

**Ms. Ariel:** They perform it in a setting that is made to be clinical at the area in which they – sorry the words aren't coming out the way – it is kind a like a laboratory setting so some of those hours are in the laboratory settings. They are doing the skills and the mock skills with dummies and things like that. That is what a lot of hands on training is, it's not with an actual patient but we've working into the system learning the hands on skills with dummies and different types of things like that.

**Senator Santos:** So it is at the Latte Training Academy.

**Ms. Ariel:** We actually have those being held at the Guam Marianas Training Center in Beach Road because there are so many different pieces of equipment and things that they needed in order to go with that. It is the same with the phlebotomy as you were talking about, there's so many things that they need that we don't ask them to transport that to our site instead we just allow the students to have it at Guam Marianas Training Center. They were already set up.

**Senator Santos:** It is not at private clinic or CHCC?

**Ms. Ariel:** No.

**Senator Santos:** Very good. My next question is, is the nursing assistant certification equivalent to perhaps an AA Degree at NMC for nursing assistant or not?

**Ms. Ariel:** No, it's not. The AA Degree at NMC is for registered nurses. They don't have nursing assistant degree. It is not to become a registered nurse it's strictly for a certified in nursing assistant. But we do work with NMC they are one of our partners and we have kind of like a pipe line, we're trying to help those students hopefully if they would like to go on for more education to become a registered nurse, if that is their desire.

**Senator Santos:** Okay, very good. My last question is, what services can be provided to the islands of Rota and Tinian if additional funding is identified?

**Ms. Ariel:** That's actually very difficult, you are correct. There always issues with serving Rota and Tinian. As you have mentioned, a lot of our trainings offer hands on time and the facilities are not there, we were looking for hotel and hospitality and Jim can speak more into this. We were looking to utilize the Tinian Dynasty and then Tinian Dynasty closed down so that becomes very difficult to give them that time in the field if there is no field time. So we are looking into different options in all of our areas in all of the programs that we offer. With the bookkeeping and the IT that is a lot of distance learning and computer base, so we think that might be one area where we can service them much easier. I will let Jim answer for any plans with hotel and hospitality.

**Mr. Jim:** I can't wait to get to Rota and Tinian. These are islands as we all know under served in many areas and labor trainings is indeed one them. It was disappointed the Tinian Dynasty closed but Rota Resort is open and we have couple of hotels in Rota that are operational and all we need is the ability to get funding and we can start marketing in getting people sign up for the classes. Yes, it will be cost involving travel but we believe after the say, the first set of courses that will be able to find and identify folks in Rota and in Tinian to be able to teach these classes to minimize those costs and allow me to go by to monitor on regular basis but not every class. It will be great to be able to have those services offer in those two islands. They're desperately need, they have hotels there, they have potential hospitality, boom as well.

**Senator Santos:** Thank you very much for your response to the last question. Perhaps we can further the discussion with the Mayor of Rota and the Rota Legislative Delegation. Thank you again for your time this afternoon. I yield for now.

**Floor Leader Borja:** Next is Senator Igisomar?

**Senator Igisomar:** Thank you very much Floor Leader. I just wanted to state that I do know these two individuals Mr. Jim Oronuski and Ms. Ariel. We've worked in the past with the CNMI Department of Commerce back then during the 110229 passage implementation with programs that

came out of DOY and as well as programs that Commerce initiated QED, the Quick Employee Development which were results of the failed report on Foreign Economic Development 2010 by interior. I know that there is a need there is a need for this program. I have a question, how do you see yourself because we have NMTI, we have PSS, we have NMC, we have Department of Labor, we have Department of Labor Employee Services, Department of Labor WIA, we also have, I am not sure where the vulcanize Acts fits in with them and then, we have you and we have Jim, so where do you see yourself with respect to all these, do we for example pick and choose and say forget about you, I already have the others? I'm just trying to get to the point. So where do you see Latte Training in all these areas, is there a particular specific area, skills that you're targeting that maybe missing from the others or how does it complement in all those areas, educational institutions that are available in addition to our Department of Labor whether you collaborate or if you may add some? I think I may have an idea but it'll be best if it's you.

**Ms. Ariel:** Absolutely and I appreciate that question it's a very good one. We are not looking to replace anything that is currently happening. What we did was look at what we need was at the time when we developed this in 2013, no one was doing hotel and hospitality which was the first one we went into. At that time, we actually did approach NMTI and ask them if they wanted to work with us where we know that they do culinary very well and we said we are not going to take on culinary, you are doing culinary excellently, so how about we do hotel and hospitality you do culinary, at that time they were not interested in that partnership. However, we did not let that stop us we said to them we feel there is a need here in this community we wanted to move forward. Since then, the others that you have mentioned have all been partners with us. We look at the development. The reason why we brought in elite health was because exactly how you had mentioned there is a need in the hospital and it was something that was not being addressed. Unfortunately, the college has an AA Degree but it takes two years to get through and their success rate on the end collects is not stellar. So in the time frame until 2019 we are not going to be able to replace our nurses. We were just looking in what you are saying where we don't want to go without nurses where there needed but if someone is working above their skill level let's get a CNA in there that we can get in in a hundred and sixty hours instead of two years of training so that is certainly what we are looking at. When we develop further we are looking at the job categories that are being used in the CW requests for visas and based on that we also look on what was being offered and also what could be offered in a quicker amount of time to be able to fill that need. That is where we went with the business, accounting, bookkeeping, office manager because those are great needs as well as the IT. We do take into account what the community needs are as well as what also is being offered out there. And as you were saying with PSS, currently we work with PSS and their co-op program and again we see these all, not a duplication of effort as PSS has said, the students who take our program they get credit for our program as well as if they get a job out of our program they don't have to do the co-ops. They are considered a successful student in the co-op program because that is basically what co-op is to get into the workforce. We see ourselves as the pipe line between PSS and us kind a being in the middle area and then on to NMC. So certainly, we don't see it a duplication efforts and we get a lot of referrals for our allied health from NMC, from people who are going to the program and wanting to start working faster than the two years to take them to complete and asking which of the programs they can be part of. So absolutely this is all together and it is not about taking away from one it's just more about being a little equitable in what's being offered across the board so that those that have

results as you have seen from us are actually being able to provide their own wider segment of the population.

**Mr. Jim:** If I can also add, I don't think there is duplication don't let the word duplication we should be worry about as much because I think it is about capacity. I think our philosophy is, if there is one class being offered let's say hospitality for example, then the class can hold twenty-five and there's fifty people that wants to take it, and we're only going to fund one of them then that doesn't make a lot of sense to me personally, it doesn't make sense to the hotels, it doesn't make sense to the businesses and the community there are many folks who want to be certified as soon as possible. So if one entry can train in one level, the other entry in other level we can start a class tomorrow in Kagman. I have the capacity of the instructors, materials, we just don't have the funding and if we were being able to offer something in Kagman for example, where a person won't have to drive all the way across the island to get classes, wouldn't that be great. We could hold one in Rota, yes we could get one in Rota and Tinian in short period of time. It is about capacity, it's about making sure that anybody who really wants to get into workforce try to eliminate those barriers and I think we are part of that solution we're certainly not want to compete where they're offering classes at six o'clock, we're going to offer one at six o'clock. We want to make sure some people work in the morning, they want to be certified to get in the afternoon, we can do weekend courses. It is about the people in the NMI who want to get out in the workforce and taking opportunities, economic opportunities that we have now in getting them position to do that. It's going to make them businesses happy, and it's certainly going to make the folks and the family happy. I don't think it's a competition. I think some people because they're saying you're doing this and we're doing this, why you're doing the same thing. I don't see it that way, I see that we are offering opportunities. I guess it be the same argument why you have three high schools, you get different transportations. I digress but I think you get my point. Thank you.

**Senator Igisomar:** Thank you Jim. Actually I wanted to hear that there should be clarity for other people because when we did the QED acronym is quick employ development it was really derived for mathematics quad era demonstradum which means to say we have there for solve the solution and the idea back then was a shekinah at the same time was during the gulf war a shekinah approach because back then we didn't have much trained nurse to train our people so the idea was to boost out I think we did about seven to eight trade companies or programs similar to you and we spread out and in that I believe that you survive the boot camp per se because out of all those only two or three of you left if not only by yourself who survived that training and you did better ratio because your reporting approximately 60 to 80 percent placement to back then out of 300 people trained too I think only 20 to 25 percent were employed and from that shekinah approach from that vast building we were able to employ at least it was a beginning to myself and I believe 25 percent it was awesome back then but now you bringing up the bar up to 65 percent that's super awesome. But the issue I'm hoping to leave you is to continue most especially to work with our department of labor for aside from capacity building really on placement of workers because that was the key challenge that we were able to train them but somehow there is reluctance between the employer and the employees the trainees and somehow when we got off somewhere along the way I think by attrition the trainees somehow got pushed out so to continue the effort and hopefully help them out department of labor in keeping those employees employed or working with the employers.

**Mr. Jim:** If I can add, the first thing in the fail program it was a genesis to all of this and I think one of the disconnects was that we weren't the placement was difficult we didn't have internships going on at that time or shadowing and we learn from that program and whatever program we do will be able to have especially hospitality to be able to have a partner so we can send the person ten hours to get the exposure to see what's really going on in the classrooms to be able to touch it and feel it and that's been my opinion the change in getting us the 20 to 30 placement to 60 percent placement where an employer can actually see the employee work day to day and get things done. I think the other thing I'd like to add while I'm doing this is we have partners in every single hotel on this island we have students in those hotels at this moment doing shadowing every hotel from Kensington to Coral Ocean Point to Lao Lao Bay and even some of the small ones Galleria hotel behind DFS the smaller ones and they actually graduate as a front desk manager were utilizing the resources that we have our partners are excited to be able to get folks that have sat in the classrooms for three months for 180 hours they know these folks are going to show to work there going to show the effort to get in we've been fairly successful in that area so our partners are helping us get the employment and I think you'll see the increase as the economy continue to flourish.

**Senator Igisomar:** Thank you very much Jim. Thank you very much Floor Leader.

**Floor Leader Borja:** Thank you. Next is Senator Jude Hofschneider.

**Senator Hofschneider:** Thank you Floor Leader, Mr. Jim and ma'am. Certainly rather interesting to hear the comments and presentation itself and certainly appreciate the statistics. I somewhat have the connection or similarity in line with the question Senator Igisomar in having all these institutions that are popping up trying to address the shortfall of employees and maybe not much of a question but probably just a statement that whatever ingredients you guys are putting together so far with the academy certainly doing the community a favor as far as job placement and all these four categories that you guys have. I like that word pipeline we can appreciate that as far as the pipeline between PSS into your academy and then potentially over to NMC and I also appreciate the fact that your clear and the certification is not necessarily for an RN or MPA as I put my acronym together. So as we move ahead rest assured that we are, just yesterday we had a very important meeting with the Governor's Office Chief of Staff and Mr. Alex Sablan from CW Task Force and it was basically everything that has to do with human resource needs here and from the CW to the available workforce that we can provide here so backtrack that a little, let me fast forward to today this is an effort in itself Jim I know you from previous past you know with the operations throughout the Saipan is pretty much embedded to this concept so I wanted to say that to you guys. We look forward to an increase in your cohort and I understand the other aspects of things you're paying attention to it so I wanted to say thank you.

**Ms. Ariel:** I appreciate that you know you had said popping up but one of the things we do prior to ourselves on is that Jim has been part of the community doing trainings for years as well as Theo Vallance from Guam Medical Center both of them have worked with WIA and HOWA in the past and what we try to do with this was try and bring them under our umbrella where we can offer services in one area so that it wasn't so confusing for the community to try and reach out to find what was

available to them. So we really give our compliments to the partners we have and their instructors because they are phenomenal they are what drives this result and it has been excellent. When you're talking about capacity we are thrilled with the students that we put forth but we do feel that our capacity is much stronger as Jim said he has instructors that could be ready to go tomorrow if there was a class and when we put forth our CW funding proposal to department of labor back in October we had told them that we could accept three hundred more students and we would feel that we would still have the same results so we feel that we could have three hundred more a year on top of what we do currently we still have the same results cause we are definitely going for quality and not just quantity we don't want to just take students just for the points saying that we now have seven hundred but yet there not meeting the certification exam so we like those numbers that ninety-four percent have passed their certifications exams so we don't want to get extended to the point where we are not doing our quality but we do have the capacity to do much more and we are just waiting to hear back from the department of labor on our request. We updated it last week for her with our news standings and the directive of the governor and were just waiting to see what they will allow us to put forth for them so thank you.

**Floor Leader Borja:** Any other members have any concerns or questions. Okay so you go second round Senator Quitugua.

**Senator Quitugua:** In your training do you train all students or all people that would like to be train or you concentrate on your training with US citizens or just anybody that would want to be train?

**Ms. Ariel:** So currently we offer our services to anyone in the public but whether they apply for any of the positions like whether they apply for any of the funding services would depend on that so obviously CW funding is going to our local residence, it's not going to people that are holding CW. However, if someone who have a CW would like to take training and if they would like to pay for themselves so that they do have that certification we won't deny that so the training is available out there to all its dependent on the funding source whether or not they qualify for that funding.

**Mr. Jim:** The majority of the folks in the hospitality business are US eligible workers than few folks that are not but that was allowable by the funding sources that we got about ninety/ninety-five percent go to the US citizens and that's what the employers want they want us to go out and train folks that are not eligible to work in the CNMI it's not part of our formula and frankly it doesn't make a lot of sense.

**Senator Quitugua:** Okay thank you. I like that the process that you are doing which is tracking the students in terms of job placements and I know that if ever a funding source comes out from the Legislature, I am pretty sure that the members will ask you for data's and particularly job placements of our people. I really commend you of keeping track of the placement of your students in the job market. Thank you.

**Mr. Jim:** If I could add something Senator, I mean how we track them. I'm going to share a little bit of how we track that. It's just that I'm not a young man, but we have some young folks that help us and we keep up to date with these students whether through WhatsApp, through Facebook

messenger, we have our own Facebook group where we post information about jobs that are available and we also post tips, suggestions, articles on resume writing, and interviewing, and so were a person may have graduate in 2014, they're still getting that information today. They're completely out of the program, they're no longer registered but we keep them on Facebook group they're getting up to date they come back to us and that's how we keep up to them, where they're working and find out, if they go back to school or they're off-island so it is an active program. We try to do it for six months but some folks keeping contact with us for a very long time.

**Floor Leader Borja**: Thank you. Senator Mangloña?

**Senator Mangloña**: Thank you. How are you getting financial help from this CW funding? You are not getting any help now.

**Ms. Ariel**: No.

**Senator Mangloña**: The Governor just recently approved assistance for your group.

**Ms. Ariel**: Yes, as of last week.

**Senator Mangloña**: How do you expect to get help from that?

**Ms. Ariel**: When you say, how do we expect to get help--

**Senator Mangloña**: Is it by student, is it a grant?

**Ms. Ariel**: Yes. What we put forth was really just for direct payment, we are not asking for anything besides student training. So what we said was, we gave them a list of what are offerings were as well as the cost range, each offering has a different cost based on number of hours that it takes to go through. We told them, we planned it to be a student driven so we couldn't give them an exact, we will do twenty in CNA, or we will do twenty in hotel and hospitality because we want the student to choose what they are interested in and what they will do and therefore that will set the price. But basically, we want to utilize that funding to do direct training, this isn't to, you know, we are not going to get the funding then use it to build our program in anyway. It is really just --

**Senator Mangloña**: What kind of funding you are looking at to help you this year?

**Mr. Jim**: The amount of funding?

**Senator Mangloña**: Yes.

**Ms. Ariel**: I'm sorry that is what you're saying. So what we told them was actually we have the capacity to do three hundred students and based on the projective what we expected the students to sign up for based on the passed experienced, we told them that that would be about equivalent to nine hundred thousand dollars (\$900,000.00) that we could handle, we don't expect to receive nine



hundred thousand dollars. So what were you saying is what we could handle, so what we're waiting for now is for the Secretary of Labor to say, this is the amount of money that we are going to earmarked towards Latte Training Academy and then base on that we would put out our marketing just the same and utilize other funding sources first and only utilize the CW funding as the last available for those that are eligible. But basically, we have the capacity for three hundred students and because our classes range in cost from about eighteen hundred to thirty-five hundred depending on the class, it falls in that range of what we coded for them. But again saying we don't expect to get the full amount we understand the needs.

**Senator Mangloña**: I just wanted to ask if the scholarship system would work, you know where you would give them x amount per course and then use that to pay you that way if your program or other institution program is working the word goes around so that you have more students that means they like your program and you're doing a good job and you just pay them, give them scholarship funding.

**Ms. Ariel**: Absolutely. That is actually what we requested we didn't call it scholarship, but that is what we requested, we had five students who signed up for the certified nursing assistant class in January, that didn't work eligible for WIA funding or any other funding source we had but we're in fact eligible for CW funding so they met that eligibility. We notify the Department and Labor that we have these five various specific students would you sponsor them, so exactly what you are saying, like them saying, that they are going to pay us directly for their schooling and that is what the course is. If you look at that as a scholarship, or a sponsor, or however you want to look at it we are completely open to that. What we are going for is just the funding that is needed for the actual training. For the past three years we've been working with PSS through their co-op program. So definitely PSS, I believe it was two years that we have the funding through the Department of Commerce, OIA and then this past year WIA actually has funded thirty-five of the elite health. So they have only funded thirty-five of our graduates that we told you about. So of the four hundred and twenty-five graduates that we had thirty-five of them came from WIA.

**Senator Mangloña**: And you also have departments paying for example in Rota and Tinian calling you for certification.

**Ms. Ariel**: So far with met with the Tinian Task Force that was working towards workforce development so we did meet with them, when was that about six, eight months ago?

**Senator Igisomar**: That was a year ago.

**Ms. Ariel**: We did tell them that we'd be available to them, obviously the time has passed through that and haven't come to florescent. No, right now we are not receiving any funding sources for Rota and Tinian.

**Senator Mangloña**: Last question, Chairman. Yesterday, as the Chairman of Federal Relations indicated we met with CW people and Governor's Chief of Staff, talking about one of the issue, wages, if there is any position in the courses that you're teaching that you think we should put a

minimum wage on, a higher minimum wage on the particular position. What would those be, do you have a listing of those that you think they should automatically be eight dollars an hour and not six fifty or those slots that you are training that calls for absolutely a floor salary.

**Ms. Ariel:** I will let Jim first answer that then I will add anything to it.

**Mr. Jim:** Interesting question. Certainly I think that the way our economy is moving and the competitive nature being a business man, myself, the competitive nature of employment, that wages are going up and it'll be my opinion that probably we don't need to put a fix number on certain position that would be – I don't think that is necessary. What we are saying is that if I can't get employees, or can't keep employees just like me for example in general that we have to pay a better wages and provide a better incentive to keep people and means better wages better health care in that kind of stuffs and I think that is going natural. The said and say, the coming graduates for the certification in bookkeeping, they're going to demand a higher salary. It's just that simple. Person who is not certified versus a person who is certified is going demand. And same as our students coming out of the hospitality, somebody of the street has no experience they start on a minimum wage, versus person coming out of our program has a certification from the American Hotel and Lodging Education Institute is going to demand and will get more money. Now, whether that is fifty cents an hour, twenty-five cents an hour, a buck an hour, depending on the classification that will be it. The short answer Senator, I wouldn't want to venture into forcing folks to pay a certain amount but because I think the economy is driving. If our economy was stag men a few years ago there might be some needs to that increase, stimulate folks going into the workforce. At this point, I am not sure that would be something I would recommend. But again, that is just me personally. I'm a businessman.

**Ms. Ariel:** I do agree that I think the market and the demand will definitely dictate if the people with certifications or associates degree from NMC would be paid more. So, I do think that is something as setting a dollar amount by industry standards.

**Senator Mangloña:** I just ask that because I've assume that you've done this in the states also. And for me, as long as the salary is, you can hire somebody CW for six dollars and fifty cents it's never going to be our incentive to hire our people here with the training, even if they have those there's always going to be that driving force where you have to bring it down to the minimum wage because we can always get workers from outside. I am just saying this because you're training people also in the state and you know what their getting paid for certification that you certified our people with and I'm not saying that we should pay them the same amount but at least with that training that is getting five dollars more than other just somewhat going back to the verbatim wages.

**Ms. Ariel:** So again, we are not saying that because they have the certification they should not accept the job at a lower amount. But we are saying that those people will start to value themselves in what they have and will start pushing their employers for increases as they see fit. But I do think that one of the things that drives that is obviously the CW supposedly be tapering off, and I also think with sometimes with the way the jobs are advertise says that the person has to have seven point five years of experience such a cashier just because that's what the person is holding with the CW

that they have. I think what we could do to help in the community is really find out what is the minimum requirement for that position and that is what should be advertised. Not basically advertising the resume of that person that holds the position but saying what I need for this position is this and it could be five years of experience or a certification. And those things are where are students would be able to then compete with those that have the experience because they do hold a certification. So I think there are areas to help with that were you're saying people are going to move towards CW anyway but I think there will be if we can help with really getting out what the minimum requirement of the job is and advertising that as oppose to putting dollar amount on.

**Floor Leader Borja:** Okay. Senator Cruz, again.

**Senator Cruz:** Thank you Mr. Chairman. I don't know if that answers my question, these over four hundred that have been certified under your institution, are these under entry levels for the workforce or there is some management level?

**Mr. Jim:** For the courses that we are teaching now and for the last few years, these are workforce ready positions, these are entry level positions, they are not management courses we have a wonderful supervisory training program but right now we do not have the funding to hold it. Frankly, this is what the hotels and restaurants are asking for as they need that entry level employed, the stewards, the front desk person, the house keeper. We did through the Department of Commerce class holds I think thirty-five to forty slots that were for people who are already in a position within a hotel to help them advance. We call these specialty courses, certification courses, specifically in housekeeping, specifically in front desk, specifically food server type positions that would allow them for those people who might want to see a track maybe be a floor leader, a shift leader to eventually get into supervisory to take this course. It is a forty hours course with a forty-hours internship that they got certification, I think we passed everybody but one. Everybody got certified except for one folk so that was probably the closes that we've been to getting to a supervisory course. We just haven't had the funding that is bit more expensive as you might imagine, it's a full supervisory introduction in management course, I can't wait if we get funding to teach that, because our philosophy also in the hotel school portion of it is that, if we allow the folks that are say, wanting to get into that supervisory position, when they leave that position at the front desk proper to go into a floor leader or to a supervisory they freeze up the position for somebody else. We want to be able to make sure that and might also not know but imagine that a hotel many of the supervisory management are foreign labor. We also have to get people prepared. If we continue to just do the entry level, we got to think about how do we get folks ready and prepare to get into supervisory. The hotels now are feeling the pinch because a lot of the folks are leaving this year. The ability to teach management courses is needed but right now we have focus on the entry level or close to entry level.

**Ms. Ariel:** And just to echo on what Jim has said doe hotel and hospitality it stands the same with the others. Right now the need in the workforce that we've been seeing and that we've been responding to is at the entry level so that is the focus. As the need of the community we plan to develop as well like we have been. Yes, the focus right now is most of our students are entry level.

**Senator Cruz:** Thank you. The reason why I ask this is because if in case we are not given the opportunity to extend beyond 2019, I'm worried that most entry level will be working for big company and no one to supervise. I know that NMC are providing also students that are needed for our big companies, like hotels and other big businesses, like what Senator Igisomar mentioned, and NMTI and even with other institutions or nonprofit organization. The other question is you mentioned that you're partnered with hotels and even with WIA, when these people graduate from your institution do you refer them to WIA, or you refer directly to hotels, or you find them a job?

**Mr. Jim:** No, we don't go to EOWA at all we go directly to the hotel. Our partnership is directly with the hotel and our classes, our instructors and my staff we coordinate, it's hard to explain this shattering and the internship programs that we have is coordinated through our office and we have seventy-five students that would have to go to eleven hotels that is quite complicated, we get those folks in there directly and that's usually when they get hired. If there's an opportunity where some kids, let say about at seventy-five, fifty get employed and the rest are not and then it's our job to sit there and say, are you interested in working, they might want go to military, they might decide to go to college not wanting to go to school but we would then for those students that said, yes, what hotel did you like working at the most because you usually get a chance of two or three, would you like to apply over there and let us help you get in the door but again, it's still the individuals' opportunity. Yes, I haven't gone to EOWA to place, it's been us directly to make it happen.

**Senator Cruz:** Thank you. So you are partners with Department of Commerce and EOWA in regards to what positions are needed in case these positions are not all CW positions? Do you partnered with them to know what positions they have needed?

**Mr. Jim:** We have gotten the information, we are familiar with what is needed with the workforce with the CW applications through the chamber of commerce and hotel associations and what they need and what their immediate needs are and not necessarily through the department of labor or EOWA

**Ms. Ariel:** Department of Labor just provided us last week with a listing of the CW job categories from the fiscal year 2015, so they just provided us with that last week and said well maybe you would want to consider this when your developing the next courses you want and what we found was that we already have courses that speak to eight of the top job categories that are being filled so we have had our pulse on the community needs from direct resources within the community more so than waiting for the data to filter down from fiscal year 2015 and not until receiving it last week. So we definitely have been trying to act a little bit more rapidly to get the needs of the community.

**Senator Cruz:** Thank you and I appreciate the effort and the support of your program for the best interest on the program of the workforce. Thank you.

**Floor Leader Borja:** On behalf of the members of the senate I would like to thank you both for your wonderful presentation and for answering the questions and concerns of the members and I would like to congratulate you two for a job well done and I ask that you continue to assist the CNMI in

fixing our labor problems. Again congratulations job well done and thank you for your continued support. At this time, I would like to move to rise back to our preliminary session.

The motion has been seconded.

**President Palacios**: There's a motion on the floor to rise back to our preliminary session and it has been seconded. Those in favor of the motion please say, "Aye". Opposed say, "Nay".

Several members voiced "Aye."

**The Senate rise back to preliminary session at 2:40 p.m.**

**President Palacios**: We are back to our preliminary session. I think some of the members would like to take a three minutes' recess.

The Senate recessed at 2:40 p.m.

**RECESS**

The Senate reconvened at 2:50 p.m.

**President Palacios**: We left off at agenda item B. There being no item on C, we move down to agenda item D, Messages from the Governor.

**MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR**

The Clerk voiced Governor's Message No. 20-31.

**President Palacios**: Any member wants to make short comments on this message? Senator Hofschneider?

**Senator Hofschneider**: Thank you Mr. President. I was one of the co-authors of this Public Law and I just want to express appreciation to Governor Torres for acting on the legislation rather quickly. I do know that as a result of this it was agency driven legislation and blessed by certain agencies that are responsible to address some of the flows of the statute then, some of which have enable progress with other necessary movements within the CNMI. I wanted to also thank the members of the Legislature for their expeditious support on the matter and we're ready to go ahead. Si Yu'us Maase.

**President Palacios**: Thank you. Senator Cruz?

**Senator Cruz**: Thank you Mr. President. I would like to extend my appreciation to the Senate and the House of Representatives for approving this legislation without amendment and also the

Administration for signing into law. It is a big relief for the people of Tinian especially the development on the island of Tinian and as well as the entire Commonwealth. Thank you Mr. President.

**President Palacios**: Thank you. Anymore, ready? There are no communications from the Judiciary, nor communications from Heads of Executive Department so were down to agenda item G, Communications from the House.

### COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE HOUSE

The Clerk voiced House Communication Nos. 20-10 and 20-11.

**President Palacios**: Any member wants to make comments to those communications? There being none. Ready? Communication from the Senate, agenda item H.

### COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE SENATE

The Clerk voiced Senate Communication No. 20-35

**President Palacios**: Thank you. Agenda items I and J there being none so we're down to Agenda Item K. Floor Leader?

**Floor Leader Borja**: Thank you Mr. President. We do have two prefiled bills, Senate Bill No. 20-30, "to reduce unemployment to resident workers by encouraging them to work under contracts for services to the Commonwealth Government or for capital improvement projects that pays the employee under such contract at least the prevailing U.S. Minimum wage; and for other purposes", introduced by Senator Paul Mangloña, and Senate Bill No. 20-31, to establish a CNMI Civilian Volunteer Police Reserve to provide additional manpower for the suppression of crime and preservation of law and order; and for other purposes." Same bill also authored by Senator Paul Mangloña.

**President Palacios**: Thank you. We are under agenda item L also, are there any other Introduction of Bills, Initiatives, Local Bills and Resolutions, by any members. Senator Hofschneider recognized.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS, INITIATIVES, LOCAL BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

**Senator Hofschneider**: Thank you Mr. President. I am formally introducing Senate Bill -- I'm going to ask the Clerk if she can number it accordingly, this is a similar bill I introduced in the 19<sup>th</sup> Legislature, it is, "A Bill for an Act to enable the CNMI to participate in the Western Interstate Commission for higher educations professional student exchange program; and for other purposes."

**President Palacios:** Thank you. Senator Santos?

**Senator Santos:** Thank you Mr. President. This is a Senate Local Bill No. 20-01, I would like to officially introduce, “To establish medical substance allowance program for the First Senatorial District; and for other purposes.” Thank you Mr. President.

**President Palacios:** Thank you. Any other introductions of bills and resolutions? -- There being none. We are down to agenda item M, Reports of Standing Committees.

## REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

**President Palacios:** Floor Leader?

**Floor Leader Borja:** Thank you Mr. President. We do have four Standing Committee Reports. I move for the adoption of Standing Committee Report No. 20-02, from the Committee on Executive Appointments & Government Investigations, reporting on the appointment of Dr. Lorenzo B. Hocog to serve as a member of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Board of Trustees representing the First Senatorial District.

The motion was seconded.

**President Palacios:** The motion is for the adoption of Standing Committee Report No. 20-02, has been moved and seconded, discussion on the motion? Senator Cruz recognized.

**Senator Cruz:** Thank you Mr. President. Mr. President this is the Senate Standing Committee Report No. 20-02, the appointment of Dr. Lorenzo B. Hocog. Mr. President your Standing Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations to which was referred the appointment of Dr. Lorenzo B. Hocog, to serve as a member of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Board of Trustees begs leave to report as follows: Pursuant to 3 CMC §2825, Dr. Lorenzo B. Hocog was nominated by Governor Ralph DLG. Torres, on February 08, 2017, to serve as a member of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Board of Trustees. The Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations recommends that the Senate give its advice and consent to the appointment of Dr. Lorenzo B. Hocog to serve as member of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Board of Trustees. However, your Committee has examined all pertinent documents submitted relating to Dr. Lorenzo B. Hocog's overall credentials. In addition, your committee took into account all oral testimonies presented during the public hearing. After much deliberation and base on the overall assessment of Dr. Lorenzo B. Hocog's credentials, experiences, testimonies and other relevant issues considered, your committee is convinced that Dr. Lorenzo B. Hocog possesses the qualification and leadership skills necessary to serve as a member of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Board of Trustees. In addition, during the Public Hearing that was conducted on March 15, 2017, several testified in support of the appointee and no one opposed the appointee. I ask the full Senate to support Senate Standing Committee Report No. 20-02. Thank you Mr. President.

**President Palacios:** Thank you Senator Cruz. Any other comments, statements, Senator Santos recognize.

**Senator Santos:** Thank you Mr. President. Mr. President, I am sorry but I would like to yield to Chairman Cruz.

**President Palacios:** Thank you. Chairman Cruz?

**Senator Cruz:** Thank you. Just to include the full conclusion of the Committee Report, Mr. President and I apologize to the Senate members. The Committee concludes that the appointment of Dr. Lorenzo B. Hocog and it meets all necessary requirement pursuant to 3 CMC §2825. Furthermore Dr. Lorenzo B. Hocog has submitted all required documents in conformance with Rule 8, Section 5 of the Senate Rules. Thank you Mr. President.

**President Palacios:** Thank you. The Chair now recognizes Senator Santos.

**Senator Santos:** Thank you Mr. President. First, I would like to applaud the Honorable Governor and Lt. Governor for appointing Dr. Hocog to represent Rota as a Board of Trustees to the CHCC governing board. During Dr. Hocog's testimony last week, Dr. Hocog summarizes his oral testimonies in two simple codes: (1) That at the end of the day Health Care is about having the financial capabilities, and (2) At the end of the day Health Care is about the quality of care that we provide to our people. And so with his two simple codes, couple with his extensive background in health care and passion towards health care, I have full confidence that Dr. Hocog would try his very best to ensure that quality health care is provided or served to our people from the youngest to our eldest. Thank you Mr. President.

**President Palacios:** Thank you Senator Santos. Any other comments? No comments, ready for the question? Clerk, please call the roll.

CLERK called the roll:

Senator Francisco M. Borja	Yes
Senator Francisco Q. Cruz	Yes
Senator Jude U. Hofschneider	Hunggan (Yes)
Senator Sixto K. Igisomar	Aweer (Yes)
Senator Paul A. Mangloña	Yes
Senator Steve K. Mesngon	Excused
Senator Justo S. Quitugua	Yes
Senator Teresita A. Santos	Yes
President Arnold I. Palacios	Yes

CLERK: Mr. President, all eight (8) members voted "yes."



**President Palacios:** With all eight members present voting “yes” Standing Committee Report on the consent of Dr. Lorenzo B. Hocog to serve as a member of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Board of Trustees hereby passes the Senate. Floor Leader?

**Floor Leader Borja:** Thank you Mr. President. Standing Committee Report No. 20-03, from the Committee on Executive Appointments & Government Investigations, reporting on the appointment of Mr. William M. Cing to serve as a member of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Board of Trustees representing the Second Senatorial District, I move for its adoption.

The motion was seconded.

**President Palacios:** Motion is for the adoption of Standing Committee Report No. 20-03, the motion is being seconded, discussion? Senator Cruz recognized.

**Senator Cruz:** Thank you Mr. President. This is the Senate Standing Committee Report No. 20-03, the appointment of Mr. William M. Cing. Mr. President your Standing Committee on Executive Appointments & Government Investigations, to which was referred the appointment of Mr. William M. Cing to serve as a member of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Board of Trustees begs leave to report as follows: Pursuant to 3 CMC §2825, Mr. William M. Cing was nominated by Governor Ralph DLG. Torres on February 08, 2017, to serve as a member of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Board of Trustees, your Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations recommends that the Senate give its advice and consent to the appointment of Mr. William M. Cing to serve as member of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Board of Trustees. However, your Committee has examined all pertinent documents submitted relating to Mr. William M. Cing's overall credentials. In addition, your committee took into account all written and oral testimonies presented during the public hearing. After much deliberation and base on the overall assessment of Mr. William M. Cing's credentials, experiences, testimonies and other relevant issues considered, your committee is convinced that Mr. William M. Cing possess the qualification and leadership skills necessary to serve as a member of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation Board of Trustees. In additional during the Public Hearing that was conducted on March 15, 2017, several testified in support of the appointee no one opposed the appointee. In conclusion the Committee concludes that the appointment of Mr. William M. Cing meets all the necessary requirements pursuant to 3 CMC §2825. Furthermore Mr. William M. Cing has submitted all required documents in conformance with Rule 8, Section 5 of the Senate Rules. Again, I ask the full Senate members to support Senate Standing Committee Report No. 20-03. Thank you Mr. President.

**President Palacios:** Thank you Senator Cruz. Further comments no more comments? Senator Hofschneider recognized.

**Senator Hofschneider:** Thank you Mr. President. As we move to adopt the Committee Report, I must also commend to thank the Governor and also the nominee Mr. Cing for accepting such appointment. As we all know this is a very significant and important agency as we see over the last few years again, and again this morning, but nevertheless with the extensive knowledge of Mr.

Cing's background and credential experience in many aspects from management to be even being a part of the agency at some point in time. I am confident that his appointment to be a member of the Board of Trustees under the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation will be very significant, or it's a plus for the organization. I'm ready for the question. Thank you.

**President Palacios:** Thank you. Anymore comments on the motion? There being none, ready for the vote. Clerk, please call the roll.

CLERK called the roll:

Senator Francisco M. Borja	Yes
Senator Francisco Q. Cruz	Yes
Senator Jude U. Hofschneider	Hunggan (Yes)
Senator Sixto K. Igisomar	Aweer (Yes)
Senator Paul A. Mangloña	Yes
Senator Steve K. Mesngon	Excused
Senator Justo S. Quitugua	Yes
Senator Teresita A. Santos	Yes
President Arnold I. Palacios	Yes

CLERK: Mr. President, all eight (8) members voted "yes."

**President Palacios:** With all eight members present here today voting "yes", Standing Committee Report on the confirmation of Mr. William M Cing to serve as a member of the CHCC Board of Trustees hereby passed the Senate, therefore, Mr. Cing is confirmed by the Senate. Floor Leader?

**Floor Leader Borja:** Thank you Mr. President. I move for the adoption of Standing Committee Report No. 20-04, from the Committee on Education and Youth Affairs reporting on Senate Bill No. 20-03, "to amend 1 CMC § 2261(b) and 2262(a), to limit the public high school student representative to the Board of Education to one year and rotated appointment by Senatorial District; and or other purposes."

The motion has been seconded.

**President Palacios:** The motion is for the adoption of Standing Committee Report No. 20-04 it has been moved and seconded discussion on that motion? Senator Quitugua?

**Senator Quitugua:** Thank you Mr. President. Mr. President just to summarize Standing Committee Report No. 20-04, this report is in reference to Senate Bill No. 20-03 which was a request bill by the former chairman of the Board of Education during the committees meeting with the board and the public school system commissioner and management requested that such bill be introduced to clarify the term of a student representative to the board of education. The bill was sent out for comments to the board of education and the public school system including the attorney general. So with the comments submitted the committee met on March 16, 2017 here in the Senate Chamber to examine

the comment submitted relative to S.B. No. 20-03, therefore this committee report explains the changes on Senate Bill No. 20-03, resulting from the comments from the formation board and entities. With the four members present during the meeting on March 16, 2017, the four members present concludes and decide that the bill be amended to reflect the recommendations of the three comments submitted. Thank you Mr. President.

**President Palacios**: Thank you. Any other comment? Ready for the question? Those in favor of the motion to adopt Standing Committee Report No. 20-04 please say, “Aye” opposed say “Nay”,

Several members voiced “Aye”.

**President Palacios**: Motion carries. Standing Committee Report No. 20-04 is hereby adopted. Floor Leader?

**Floor Leader Borja**: Thank you Mr. President. I move for the adoption of Standing Committee Report No. 20-05, from the Committee on Resources, Economic Development and Programs, reporting on Senate Bill No. 20-02, to establish the Office of Planning and Development; and for other purposes.

The motion was seconded.

**President Palacios**: The motion has been moved and seconded for the adoption of Standing Committee Report No. 20-05, discussion on that motion.

**Senator Mangloña**: Mr. President?

**President Palacios**: Senator Mangloña?

**Senator Mangloña**: Thank you Mr. President. I noticed in the Committee Report on page 3, that there was no public hearing conducted on this particular bill, I know that this is a comprehensive legislation that you introduced Mr. President, however, I believe that having heard some of the concerns by some members in the community although we support the intent of the bill there are in provision in the legislation areas that I have concern also and I am just wondering. I know this is just a committee report that we are entertaining at this particular point, but as far as the legislation itself, I have some concerns that in the deliberation I would like to bring up but I guess I am just somewhat concern that if we were to pass it without a public hearing or without at least allowing some discussion on the legislation. Thank you.

**President Palacios**: Thank you. Senator Santos?

**Senator Santos**: Thank you Mr. President. From the REDP Standing Committee Report, I read that the committee did solicited and in fact received a lot of favorable comments including comments to be considered or included in the legislation and for that, Mr. President, I would like to thank our

good Chairman of REDP, our Floor Leader the Honorable Senator Borja and you Mr. President being the author of the bill for considering comments submitted by the Municipality of Rota. Thank you Mr. President.

**President Palacios:** Thank you. Any other comments? In response to good Senator Mangloña, if you recall or maybe not this legislation came forth initially in the 19<sup>th</sup> Legislature. We have extensive list of agencies that have regulatory powers as well as those that deal with infrastructures, CUC, Public Works, regulatory agencies such as CRM, DEQ, DLNR, all CRM agencies were provided the opportunity to comment. Zoning Office indeed contrary to what Ms. Ogumonor had stated was contacted on this and they had submitted their comments previously. Infact, through the SEDC, Chamber of Commerce and other business organizations also commented. Through that process the zoning legal counsel reviewed the initial legislation and put forth recommendation which had been incorporated into this version of the previous legislation. So there is a quite an extensive, we had several meetings, SEDC had put this piece of legislation in fact on couple of peer meetings and discussed it and so did Chamber of Commerce. There are a lot of reviews, comments and recommendation to the existing previous legislation on this but your thoughts are noted.

**Senator Mangloña:** Thank you Mr. President. For example, my concern is on page 12, and I know we are just talking about the committee report but I am just alarmed that we did not catch this maybe in the 19<sup>th</sup> Legislature but if this product which is the comprehensive sustainable development plan is critical, I am concern that the Legislature actually on line 8, page 12, is allowed to review it an approve or disapprove but the process in which to approve somewhat puts us on the defense here because we have to act within sixty (60) days if we don't act then the plan shall be deemed disapprove. I am concern because I understand this includes the First Senatorial District, the planning process and first of all the representation here is very limited for the island of Rota out of fifteen (15). Then to say that whatever the plan is that the delegation does not have a say if the Legislature, and when we say Legislature, you mean the House and the Senate if the can agree on the plan then it shall be deem approve. That alarms me because for example, the federal highway funding would be included in this, and I have to say that I am very disappointed with the way the funding has been use with federal highway funding because we have almost four million dollars a year and we haven't seen a project from the federal highway funding in the last four or five years' appropriation for the island of Rota. If the plan comes up here for example, the federal highway funding and we cannot agree the Legislature then whatever the plan that they have that's deem approve. I just have a concern about this particular language for example on page 12, and this is not mention, the capital improvement project that we would need to implement and provide the appropriation for this funding. I am just concern for the other type of plans that will come under this development plan the legislature pretty much will not have a say because if the House and the Senate do not agree then its deem approve. That is all. Thank you Mr. President.

**President Palacios:** I certainly understand your concern. One of the thoughts went into this is the Commonwealth has had so many master plans submitted to this legislature, to this body. Master plans that cost in the hundreds of thousands of dollars and which requires legislative approval. And because of the lack of action on our part, I think it is time that we put our restriction and our action also to move forward. I think the committees whether it is JGO, or REDP, and I think the whole

Senate should involve themselves in this. We continue to see at least on the Third Senatorial District, beginning to be a chaotic development and that is because we did not put together a plan. I certainly do not discount the concerns of our colleague Senator Mangloña on the highway plan. That is something that we should take up with Public Works. We really should be very concern about that because of over the years the First and Second Senatorial District have been short chase then we need to bring them in and ask them as to why the federal highway plans do not put any sense of priority to the First and Second Senatorial Districts and it certainly within our authority and our prerogative to request DPW to answer to the concerns that we have. I think putting together a plan and then having it submit to this Legislature in sixty (60) days approval I think is appropriate and is reasonable because the planning process is not just a document that will be submitted to the Legislature, we will also be involve. I hope the members of the Senate and the Legislature as a whole would be involve in the whole process whether we're in the advisory but I am sure that in public hearings and stuff in the Legislature would be apprise in that process. I fully understand but I think it is time that we also as Legislatures step up and dedicate ourselves to putting together. My concern is that without something going forward we are always behind the eight ball we are always playing catch up whether its opportunities for funding for infrastructure. A casing point is our lack of planning when the first Obama Administration came up with its economic package. The Commonwealth once again was the last of the territories and the only reason why we had a fairly substantial amount was that our public school system had an infrastructure plan emplace, shovel ready infrastructure plan and they got the lines sure of that, the rest of our government did not. I understand some of the concerns in terms of participations but I think that the process in and of itself will lend that and I certainly appreciate the concern. I think sixty (60) days is reasonable time for us to work in getting something, whether it is in the First Senatorial District, Second Senatorial District, or Third Senatorial District and we can look at it and have a specific plan for each Senatorial District or its island itself and we can do that. It is my recommendation and I have shared this, Senator Mangloña just for your information, I had shared it with the Floor Leader that we will just be adopting the Committee Report this afternoon and I've ask that the bill itself would stay on the Bill Calendar and will not be acting on it today and so that we can take a look at the concerns of the zoning office and see if and what needs to be done if we have to do that and we will entertain it on next week session. That being the case, the chair will exercise its prerogative to call for the question. Are we ready? Those in favor of the motion to adopt Standing Committee Report No. 20-05 please say, "Aye" opposed say "Nay."

Several members voiced "Aye."

**President Palacios:** Motion carries. There being no items on agenda item, N and O. We're down to agenda item P, Bill Calendar.

## BILL CALENDAR

**President Palacios:** Floor Leader?

**Floor Leader Borja:** Thank you Mr. President. We do have on the agenda for final reading, so I move for the passage on final reading Senate Bill No. 20-03, SS1, entitled, "To amend 1

CMC §§ 2261(b) and 2262(a), to limit the public high school student representative to the Board of Education to one year and rotated appointment by public school; and for other purposes."

The motion has been seconded.

**President Palacios**: Motion is for the passage of Senate Bill No. 20-03, SS1, relative to the public high school student representative to the Board of Education. It has been moved and seconded. Discussion? Senator Quitugua?

**Senator Quitugua**: Thank you Mr. President. Mr. President Senate Bill No. 20-03 is hereby, amended based on the comments submitted as indicated in the committee report in the form of SS1. Thank you Mr. President.

**President Palacios**: Thank you. Any other comment? Senator Santos recognized.

**Senator Santos**: Thank you Mr. President. I had the opportunity to orally discuss this piece of legislation with our Rota Board of Education who fully supports the intent of the legislation to ensure equity amongst all the high schools in the CNMI that is high school student representative shall be a rotated appointment by public school and not rotation by senatorial district. Thank you Mr. President.

**President Palacios**: Thank you. Any other comment? Ready? Clerk, for the passage of Senate Bill No. 20-03, SS1.

CLERK called the roll:

Senator Francisco M. Borja	Yes
Senator Francisco Q. Cruz	Yes
Senator Jude U. Hofschneider	Hunggan (Yes)
Senator Sixto K. Igisomar	Aweer (Yes)
Senator Paul A. Mangloña	Yes
Senator Steve K. Mesngon	Excused
Senator Justo S. Quitugua	Yes
Senator Teresita A. Santos	Yes
President Arnold I. Palacios	Yes

CLERK: Mr. President, all eight (8) members voted "yes."

**President Palacios**: With all eight members voting "yes", Senate Bill No. 20-03, SS1, hereby passes the Senate on Final Reading. Floor Leader?

**Floor Leader Borja:** Thank you Mr. President. If no objections from the members, I move to defer action on Senate Bill No. 20-02, SD1, and this bill will remain on the calendar for the next session.

The motion has been seconded.

**President Palacios:** Thank you. After considering the comment made earlier by the Director of Zoning Office, as the author of this legislation I believe we'll give that opportunity and accommodate those recommendation, take a look at those recommendations and the Chair would respectfully request the legal counsel to work looking at those written recommendations submitted by Zoning Office and please work with the Chairman of Resources, Economic Development and Programs to come up with a revise if necessary version of the legislation. Senator Igisomar?

**Senator Igisomar:** Thank you Mr. President. I would like to make a comment if you don't mind, if I'm not out of line –*Imusheel shag ibwe ira reel Refaluwasch bwe isighulei meta bulul, meta bulul me meta faal mille sibwe delay li milel reel. Hu sangan-ha etyo gi Refaluwasch, kumeke ilekho tihu tungo hafa maas na rason para ta delay este lao un tungo dangkululu problemata i Marianas. Sen suete-hit gi tiempon ERA anai humuyong i ERA fund, sa guaha planu gi Commerce etyo ma'hangan CEDS, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy back in 2008, 2009. Ya taya'ya ha mu'atendi etyo na plan, taya. Manaiha Legislature magge lao nothing transpired, Suate anai humuyong i ERA, ya guaha etyo na planu etyo gue mana halom. Mana halom etyo na lista para ERA total of 300 million dollars lao muyon'na ti ma'patcha ti ma'chogue sa balen 125 to 130 million-ha guaha projects shovel already. Ya, I would like, na yangen magahet nafino-mu ni Presidente, i yomu privilege lao malagohu na insigidas pot fabot ta laknus este na bill ya ta apreba gi Senate ya hu ha'hanao para i House ya hu mama lai. Sa attan ha lokkue anai man'hanoa'hit para i MVA, i yona MVA meeting, bula bidadana pago i MVA gi bandan infrastructure, to improve the infrastructures of the CNMI lao taya mu a'atan what exactly should we do in addition to the infrastructure upgrade for the tourist. Taya mu a'atan, maulek-ha suete na humuyong si Governor pago. I landfill, i basula yan lokkue we had the infrastructure tax development tax funding ni malingo'ha, it went through our fingers, because a lack of something like this having a planning agency. So I just wanted to state for the record, Mr. President that of course we will delay for the next hearing but I truly sincerely request – puedi mohon sibwe agree bwe sibwe bota li milel bwe ebwe aghatchi malaweer aramasal faliw – todo i taotao Marianas hufan mauleg i linalan-niha. Si Yu'us maase, Mr. President.*

**President Palacios:** Thank you. Any other --Senator Mangloña?

**Senator Mangloña:** Thank you Mr. President. Also to ask the committee if they can look at the letter from Marian Aldan Peirce, Chairwoman of the Board of Directors, she made several points, Mr. President and one of which is the legislation may not adequately ensure that the Office of the Planning and Development is run in a professional matter so I don't take this likely coming from the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of the Marianas Visitors Authority. Also she made a good recommendation that maybe the bill should require that the OPD director be certified by the American Institute of Certified Planners, that is one recommendation. I take her other comments I tend to agree that the 15 members is simply too large to be practical, also she commented that MVA have some responsibilities and she's concern that OPD and MVA they might be conflicting policies

so we don't want to encounter that. She raised issues about zoning and overlapping authority, she even advised us to look at the website for the setup of this development planning. So I for one totally agree that planning, planning is very critical but we need to do it right and when we hear people that have concerns I think it's only proper that we listen to their concerns because we can also learn. I know that sometimes it makes you feel good to say that now if we passed this then there is a planning agency but we all know that there's a lot of studies that are collecting dust everywhere but even if we know that their studies if we're not committed to doing the plan doing it the right way then we will never be doing it right. For example, we have in the books Mr. President, you yourself introduced a bonding legislation for federal highway funding, but no one is following up we have the Department of Public Works should be doing that. We have completed the right of way manual for example, but we still haven't started to get all these land encroachment issues in the Commonwealth Address. There's always seems to be something more than the plan, there's always something that is blocking it. I just believe that we can just get all the people and come together and address this once and for all. We have less time in going back and forth with the House of Representatives on this legislation but, again, my concern here is where does the legislature come into play here? I can understand with the way the judicial do their rules and regulations where they give us 60 days and if we don't act on it becomes the proper rules for the court but I think this is a little bit different because the Legislature has to play a role in the planning. If the Legislature does not agree and let's say the House and the Senate does not agree to the planning than it automatically becomes the planning law of the Commonwealth. That concerns me because as you know the representation in this planning office does not include any appointee by the President or the Speaker to make an appointment of a Representative so at least the concern or the issue raise in the legislative whole or addressed in this console. So guess I'll just bring some of these concerns to the committee I hope they can be at least address. Thank you.

**President Palacios:** Thank you. Let me just very briefly address the concern that was brought up by MVA. Of course our full intent is for this office to be professionally run in a professional manner. We hope that the appointing authority which in this case the Governor appointing the head of this office will appoint somebody that is capable to do this monumental job. We went through the same pains, growing pains if you may with the zoning act for the Third Senatorial District. That was not easy. It took a long time for the Third Senatorial District Delegation to finally adopt and introduce a law to pass and enact the zoning bill that was proposed. It took a lot of public hearings but at the end that is what we did. This is not something that we foresee it is going to be an easy task it will acquire coordination. At times there will be some territorial infighting amongst agencies. By the end of the day the public needs to be served properly so that our infrastructures --You know Legislature needs to step-up and either approve or disapprove a plan and send it back for a revision but sixty days I think is appropriate. A lot of things that were mentioned in the comments submitted by MVA, is nothing new, this is part of the growing pain of a new type of process that we haven't had in decades. So with that, any other comments? We go to agenda item Q, Petitions, Memorials, and Miscellaneous Communications.

## PETITIONS, MEMORIALS AND MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS

The Clerk voiced Misc. Comm. Nos. 20-31 thru 20-46.



**President Palacios:** Any comments on any of the Miscellaneous Communications? Senator Quitugua or Senator Santos?

**Senator Santos:** Thank you Mr. President. This is in reference to Miscellaneous Communication No. 20-33, I would just like to congratulate the duly elected Youth Senators for the 16<sup>th</sup> CNMI Youth Congress most specially “Asaina C. Mangloña”, if I pronounced her name correctly, who will be representing Dr. Rita H. Inos Junior and Senior High School. Thank you, Mr. President.

**President Palacios:** Thank you. Any other – If there is no other --Let me just call your attentions to some of the Joint Presentations that with schedule, one them is Miscellaneous Communication No. 20-40 and 20-42, please make sure that you calendar it and also just a reminder on the Joint Session call for the State of the Commonwealth Address, which is scheduled for March 31, 2017, Miscellaneous Communication No. 20-41. The specific islands health officer association the committee on H&W, please takes note of this and I highly recommend members to the committee’s attendance to this conference on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March thru the 31<sup>st</sup>, this is on Miscellaneous Communication No. 20-39. And lastly, looks like the lottery autonomous agencies budget submissions are trickling in. Perhaps it’s time for the Chairman and members of Fiscal Affairs to begin to discuss per rules over these documents. I know some of them are rather volumous but Mr. Chairman, the Chair will trust that the committee will do its due diligent on the budget at this year.

**Senator Hofschneider:** Dully noted, Mr. President. Actually I was just looking at them, some of them ae directly addressed to the Chairman of the Delegation of Saipan, but I take your message rather clearly as it is just around the corner, I will be notifying the members once there is a formal meeting put together. That’s it. Thank you.

**President Palacios:** Thank you Mr. Chairman. It is my understanding just heads-up that the Governor might be touching on the resources in his budget proposal for the 2018 in the State of the Commonwealth Address so you might need to come with a notebook. With that, any other comment on any of the miscellaneous items? Senator JQ?

**Senator Quitugua:** Thank you Mr. President. Mr. President just to take note on No. 14, miscellaneous 20-44, just in case there’s a disagreement on this miscellaneous communication. I would like the Fiscal Committee to take a look at this and then make recommendations on this communication.

**President Palacios:** Thank you. I think there is perhaps a legal question and perhaps our legal counsel can take a look at that. Thank you for that reminder. We are down to agenda item R, Miscellaneous Business. There being none, Announcements.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**President Palacios:** I have couple, the Clerk request that for next week's session on Tinian, to ask the members of any bills, resolutions that needs to place, the closing of the agenda is tomorrow, Friday is a Holiday, so if we can request whatever committees or legislation that we need to put on the agenda for our next session, please check with the Clerk. And also a reminder, she reminds us that the attire for the State of the Commonwealth Address is coat and tie. Okay. Senator Q?

**Senator Cruz:** Thank you Mr. President. Just a reminder for the members of the Committee on Education and Youth Affairs, the Public Hearing and Committee Meeting tomorrow here in the Chamber at one o'clock (1:00 p.m.). Thank you.

**President Palacios:** Okay. Any other announcements? Floor Leader, call for the adjournment.

**Floor Leader Borja:** Thank you Mr. President. I move to adjourn subject to your call.

The motion has been seconded.

**President Palacios:** Motion is to adjourn subject to the call of the Chair, it's been seconded. Those in favor of the motion please say, "Aye". Opposed say, "Nay".

Several members voiced "Aye."

**President Palacios:** Motion carries. The Senate is hereby adjourned subject to the call.

The Senate adjourned at 3:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by:

**/s/Frances Joan P. Kaipat**  
Senate Journal Clerk