

May 18, 1972
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THIRD MARIANA ISLANDS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE, 1972

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

DISTRICT LAW NO. 3-124

AN ACT CREATING THE MARIANAS POLITICAL
STATUS COMMISSION; SETTING FOURTH ITS
POWERS AND DUTIES; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSE

BE IT ENACTED BY THE 3RD. MARIANA ISLANDS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE, THAT:

Section 1. Statement of Purposes. The Mariana Islands District Legislature finds that the people of the Mariana Islands District desire a close political relationship with the United States of America, a future political status different from that which has been tentatively chosen by the people of the remainder of the districts of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, as expressed by their representatives in the Congress of Micronesia. The Mariana Islands District Legislature further notes that the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and of the Trusteeship Agreement, call for self-determination and self-government for all people of the Trust Territory. Since the Congress of Micronesia has reached a tentative solution to the question of political status not in accordance with the wishes of a majority of the people of the Marianas, the Mariana Islands District Legislature views it imperative that the people of the Marianas take appropriate and necessary steps toward their own resolution of this important question. To this extent, the Mariana Islands District Legislature hereby creates the Marianas Political Status Commission, and sets forth its powers and duties.

Section 2. Marianas Political Status Commission.

(A) There is hereby created the Marianas Political Status Commission, hereinafter referred to as Commission. The Commission shall consist of the following members:

- (1) Two persons to be selected by the Mariana Islands District Legislature,
- (2) The Marianas Representatives to the Joint Committee on Future Status of the Congress of Micronesia,
- (3) Two persons to be selected by the Rota Municipal Council,

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- (4) Two persons to be selected by the Tinian Municipal Council,
 - (5) Two persons to be selected by the Saipan Legislature,
 - (6) One person to be appointed by the Mayor of the Municipality of Saipan to represent the people of the Northern Marianas,
 - (7) A representative to be selected by the members of the Popular Party of the Mariana Islands District,
 - (8) A representative to be selected by the members of the Territory Party of the Mariana Islands District,
 - (9) A representative to be selected by the members of the United Carolinian Association of Saipan, and
 - (10) A representative to be appointed by the Mariana Islands District Administrator from a list of names to be submitted by duly organized business associations, firms, and organizations in the Mariana Islands District.

Selection shall be made by resolution of any legislative body selecting, and person to be selected need not be a member of the legislative body. Any person to be selected or appointed to the Commission shall be twenty-one (21) years of age or over, a citizen of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and bona fide resident of the Mariana Islands District. No person who has been convicted of a felony by any court of the Trust Territory or any court of the United States, shall become a member of the Commission unless the person so convicted has been pardoned and has had restored to him his civil rights. No person shall become a member of the Commission unless and until the appointing authority shall have informed, by letter, the President of the Mariana Islands District Legislature. Selection and appointment to the Commission shall be made within ninety (90) days from the enactment of this Act.

(B) The Commission shall select from its own members a Chairman and such other officers as it may require; 4
provided, however, that the President of the Mariana Islands District Legislature shall convene the Commission and preside at its first meeting until such time as a Chairman can be selected. The first meeting of the Commission shall be called within thirty (30) days after the appointment of all members.

(C) The Commission may adopt such rules of procedure as it deems necessary or appropriate to exercise its powers, duties and functions under this Act.

(D) Membership on the Commission shall continue without specified term; provided, however, that a member's appointment may be revoked in the same manner as his appointment, for cause. Vacancies because of death, resignation, inability to serve, or other reason, shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(E) Members of the Commission shall be compensated at the rate of twenty dollars (\$20.00) per day when actually performing functions of the Commission under this Act at the direction of the Chairman, except that those members who are government employees or full-time legislative officials or employees shall take leave from work or leave without pay from their regular government or legislative positions in order to receive compensation under this Act. All members shall also receive travel expenses and per diem at Trust Territory Government rates. The Chairman shall certify all claims for payment.

Section 9. Powers and Duties of the Commission. The Commission shall have the following powers and duties:

- (A) To make such studies as it may deem necessary concerning the issue of the future political status of the Mariana Islands District leading toward a close political relationship with the United States of America;
- (B) To establish contacts and discuss the issue of future political status of the Mariana Islands District with appropriate persons and organizations within the United States, and in the United Nations, and solicit understanding support of the position of the people of the Mariana Islands District;
- (C) To conduct discussions and negotiations with the United States Government on the future political status of the Mariana Islands District; provided, however, that any agreement reached on such issue shall not be binding on the people of the Mariana Islands District until ratified through a plebiscite or referendum;

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- (D) To conduct political education within the Mariana Islands District;
 - (E) To conduct a study of the alternative forms of democratic internal government available, and prepare basic constitutional proposals for submission as working papers to a Mariana Islands Constitutional Convention, if the same be authorized by the Mariana Islands District Legislature, and may study and make recommendations concerning the organization and timing of a Constitutional Convention;
 - (F) It shall submit periodic reports concerning its activities under this Act to the Mariana Islands District Legislature during its regular session;
 - (G) It may employ or engage consultants, technical services and any other staff as it may require to effectively promote the function of the Commission. The Mariana Islands District Legislature may make available technical assistance to the Commission upon request by the Chairman of the Commission; and
 - (H) To perform such other functions or duties as the Mariana Islands District Legislature may by law or resolution prescribe. The Commission shall have perpetual existence; unless sooner terminated by the Mariana Islands District Legislature.

Section 4. There is hereby appropriated out of any unobligated surplus in the General Fund of the Mariana Islands District Legislature, the sum of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) to carry out the purpose of this Act, and shall remain available until expended.

Section 5. The District Treasurer is hereby authorized to make the funds authorized by this Act available to the Commission, who shall have control over the expenditure of those funds in accordance with the purposes of this Act. The sum herein appropriated shall be expended at the request, direction and approval of the Chairman of the Commission.

Section 6. This Act shall take effect upon approval by the District Administrator, or upon its becoming law without such approval.

PASSED BY THE 3RD. MARIANA ISLANDS DISTRICT LEGISLATURE MAY 18, 1972.

/s/ Vicente N. Santos
President

/s/ Daniel T. Muna
Legislative Secretary

Signed this 19th day of May 1972.

/s/ Francisco C. Ada
District Administrator
Mariana Islands District