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TITLE III

Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern
Mariana Islands

Section 301. The people of the Northern Mariana Islands shall frame and approve a Constitution in accordance with this Agreement. The people of the Northern Mariana Islands shall retain the right to initiate and to approve amendments to their Constitution in accordance with a procedure to be provided therein.

Section 302. The United States shall have no authority to review or to disapprove the original provisions of the Constitution except as provided in Section _____ [initial approval]. Further, the United States shall have no authority to review or to disapprove any amendments to the Constitution. The federal courts, however, shall be competent to determine whether the Constitution and the amendments thereto are consistent with this Agreement and with those provisions of the Constitution of the United States and federal laws applicable within the Northern Mariana Islands.

Section 303. (a) The Constitution of the Commonwealth shall provide for a republican form of government with separate executive, legislative, and judicial branches and shall contain a bill of rights.

(b) The executive power of the Commonwealth shall be vested in a popularly-elected governor and such other officials as may be provided for by the Constitution.

(c) The legislative power of the Commonwealth shall be vested in a popularly-elected legislature, and shall extend

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to all rightful subjects of legislation. Nothing in this Agreement or in the provisions of the United States Constitution or federal laws applicable within the Commonwealth shall prevent the Constitution of the Commonwealth from providing for a distribution of the membership of the legislature on a basis [other than merely population.] [which provides appropriate representation for all of the Islands within the Commonwealth.]

(d) The judicial power of the Commonwealth shall be vested in such courts as the Constitution may provide. The operation of the courts of the Commonwealth shall be compatible with the federal judicial system of the United States.