

GOVERNMENT OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
OFFICE OF THE RESIDENT COMMISSIONER  
SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS 96950

CABLE ADDRESS  
RESCOM MARIANAS

November 18, 1976

Lorenzo I. Guerrero, President  
Northern Marianas Constitutional Convention  
Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950

Dear Mr. Guerrero:

Mr. Concepcion is presently in the Mainland and will not return until next week. Therefore, as Acting Director, I have discussed the draft Constitution with my staff and offer the following comments.

1. Section 11- In light of the dire budgetary needs of education in the Marianas, the spending of \$470,000 in salaries for legislators to pass laws for approximately 14,000 people seems high. Currently this department can only expend about \$6.00 per student per year for instructional and general supplies. The legislators salaries show they receive \$33.50 per constituent. Are the legislators that much more important than our children?
2. Section 13- The department supports this section. The school board members might also be elected although whether elected or appointed, the main thing is that there should be a school board.

In most places, the school board has the responsibility of hiring personnel. Hopefully, a decentralized personnel system will allow for that option here in the Northern Marianas.

3. Article XV, Section 1 The Convention and Marianas legislators should be aware that someone must pay for "free" education. If compulsory school attendance is required while funding provided is inadequate for the needs of all students, it is like putting some of our young people in prison. They are forced to attend an institution which does nothing for them, when they might be benefited more, by other, outside-the-school experiences.

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Evidence of this is obvious in many schools in the United States where riots and student unrest have erupted.

4. The major difficulty within the education system is teachers with poor preparation for teaching. While the Constitution may not be the proper document to establish a policy concerning minimum teacher qualifications, the up-grading of teachers is top priority for improvement of the overall society of the Northern Marianas.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft Constitution. When Mr. Concepcion returns, he may wish to add his own comments.

Sincerely

  
Roger N. Ludwick