

A PROPOSAL

To add a New Section 9 of Article IV entitled "Community Court."

BE IT ADOPTED BY THE SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION:

1 Section 1. The Commonwealth Trial Court shall establish
2 within its system a Division entitled "Community Court."

3 Section 2. Function: The Community courts for the Northern
4 Marianas have jurisdiction over most civil matters where the
5 amount of money or value of property at issue is \$200 or less.
6 The community courts possess no authority to decide admiralty or
7 maritime cases regardless of the amount in controversy. The power
8 of the community courts to determine the ownership of land is
9 limited to decisions concerning the right to immediate possession.

10 In the area of criminal law, the community courts may decide
11 cases in which a punishment of not more than a \$100 fine or six
12 month jail term or both may be imposed. The jurisdiction of the
13 community courts in civil and criminal cases is concurrent with
14 that of the district courts.

15 Three community courts, presided over by one judge each,
16 serve the Northern Marianas.

17 Section 3. Both aggrieved parties shall appeal before the
18 community court without the representation of counsel.

19 Section 4. The decision in the community court is final
20 and not appealable.

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Offered by:

Rita H. Inos
Delegate Rita H. Inos, Rota

Vicente M. Calvo
Delegate Vicente M. Calvo, Rota

Paul A. Manglona
Delegate Paul A. Manglona, Rota

Aniceto H. Mundo
Delegate Aniceto H. Mundo, Rota