

SECOND NORTHERN MARIANAS CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

SAIPAN, CM 96950

Telephone  
6517/6572

Officers

Herman T. Guerrero, President  
Vicente M. Calvo, 1st Vice President  
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Juan T. Lizama, Floor Leader

REPORT TO THE CONVENTION BY THE  
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND OTHER MATTERS

Members

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Alonzo Iglisomar  
David L. Igitol  
Rita H. Inos  
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Karl T. Reyes  
Joaquin A. Tenorio  
Francisco Tomokane  
William S. Torres  
Ramon G. Villagomez  
Ignacio Villanueva

Subject: Committee Recommendation No. 43

The Committee on Finance and Other Matters recommends that the Convention meeting in Committee of the Whole adopt the attached recommendation with respect to the official seal and flag of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.


The proposed constitutional amendment would have the effect of redesigning the official seal and flag of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands to reflect the traditional and cultural heritage of the Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Northern Mariana Islands.

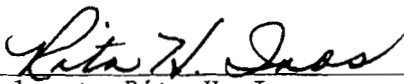
The official seal of the Commonwealth shall consist of a circular field of blue having in its center a white star superimposed on a grey latte stone, surrounded by the traditional Carolinian Mwäär consisting of the following flowers: Langilang, flores Mayu (Seyur), Angagha, and Teibwo, on the outer border, and the words encircling the Mwäär: "Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands" and "Official Seal." The official flag of the Commonwealth shall consist, on both sides of a rectangular field of blue, a white star in the center, superimposed on a grey latte stone, surrounded by the traditional Carolinian Mwäär. The dimensions of the seal and flag, the mwäär, the star and latte stone shall be provided by law.

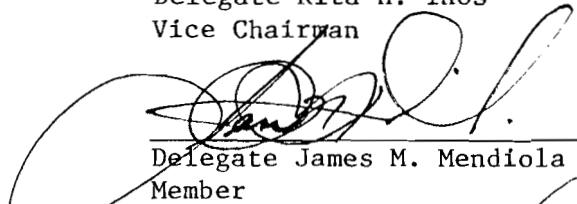
The Committee believes that the inclusion of the official languages of the Commonwealth in this new Article would be appropriate as part of its recognition of the culture and traditions of the people of the Commonwealth. The government shall encourage the usage and preservation of the Chamorro and Carolinian languages, where appropriate, in government, schools, and other official functions. Section 3 would permit government agencies to choose, where appropriate, any of the three languages. Section 3 does not confer a right on an individual to have a document be translated at government expense into another one of the official languages. It merely permits a government agency to choose one or more of three languages in which to transact its business.


Your Committee on Finance and Other Matters is in accord with the intent and purpose of Delegate Proposal Nos. 107-85 and 293-85 and recommends its passage on final reading in the form attached hereto as Committee Draft 1.


Respectfully submitted,

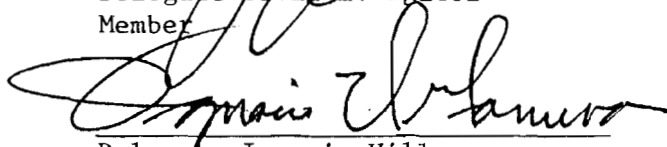
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Delegate Lorenzo I. Guerrero  
Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Delegate Rita H. Inos  
Vice Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Delegate James M. Mendiola  
Member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Delegate Maria T. Pangelinan  
Member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Delegate David L. Igitol  
Member

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Delegate Ignacio Villanueva  
Member

The Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Mariana Islands have in recent years expressed a growing concern over the future of their two languages. This concern has manifested itself in the movement for bilingual forms of education in all of the Mariana Islands, the passage of statutes regarding official languages and the establishment of language commissions.

The Guam experience has been one of continual decline in Chamorro language proficiency over the past two to three decades. The death of the Chamorro language on Guam has been widely prophesied. While the Chamorro language appears strong in the Northern Marianas, there are signs that the trends which have occurred on Guam are now beginning on Saipan. In addition, the Saipan language experience is made more complex by the existence of the Carolinian language, which is acknowledged as a legitimate indigenous language of the area.

The reasons usually given for the state of the Carolinian and Chamorro languages are numerous. They include inadequate attention in education, the arrival of mass media, economic development, the lack of government support, the changing nature of the Catholic Church and increased levels of immigration. Many individuals also analyze the situation as a natural consequence of close political identification with the United States. Guam has been a Territory of the U.S. since 1898 and the Northern Marianas has opted for Commonwealth status with the U.S. in 1977.

It is clear that the reasons for the perceived decline of the indigenous languages of the Marianas are complex and that the factors often identified are inter-related. While it is true that the question of language survival for Chamorro and Carolinian has been frequently discussed, it has not been discussed formally. Moreover, it has not had the benefit for protection under the CNMI constitution.

A PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

To amend the Northern Marianas Constitution to add a new Article \_\_\_\_\_  
to include a new official seal and flag of the Northern Marianas.

BE IT ADOPTED BY THE SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION:

Upon ratification pursuant to Section 5 of Article XVIII of the Commonwealth  
of the Northern Mariana Islands Constitution and Public Law No. 4-30, the  
Constitution of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is amended  
to read as follows:

1 Effective upon ratification, a new Article \_\_\_\_\_ is added to read:

2 "Article \_\_\_\_\_. OFFICIAL SEAL, FLAG AND LANGUAGES.

3 "Section 1. Official Seal. The official seal of the  
4 Commonwealth shall consist of a circular field of blue  
5 having in its center a white star superimposed on a grey  
6 latte stone, surrounded by the traditional Carolinian Mwäär  
7 consisting of the following flowers: Langilang, Flores Mayo,  
8 (Seyür), Angagha, and Teibwo, on the outer border, and the  
9 words encircling the mwäär. "Commonwealth of the Northern  
10 Mariana Islands" and "Official Seal."

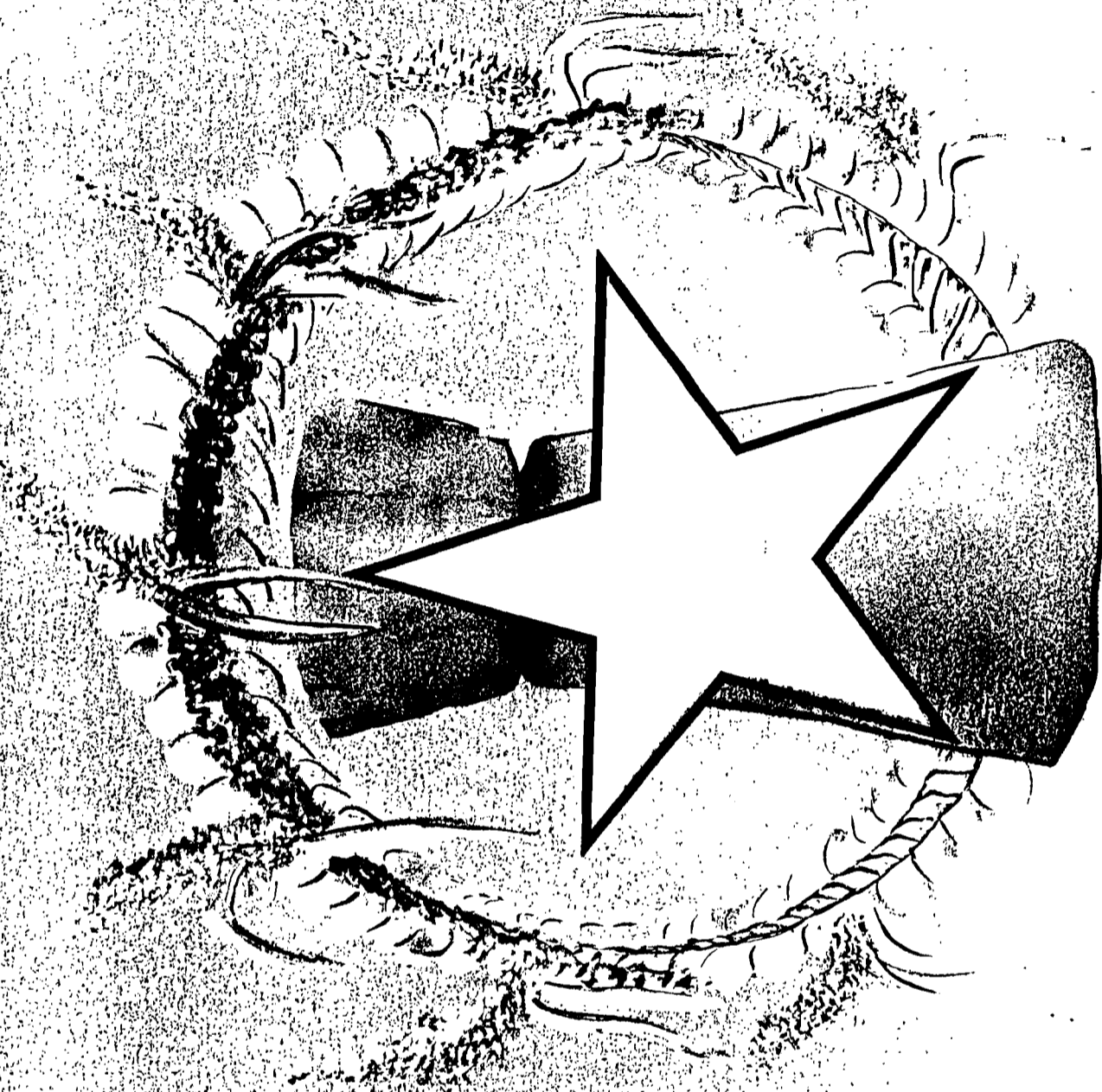
11 "Section 2. Official Flag. The official flag of the  
12 Commonwealth shall consist, on both sides of a rectangular  
13 field of blue, a white star in the center, superimposed on a  
14 gray latte stone, surrounded by the traditional Carolinian  
15 Mwäär. The dimensions of the flag, the mwäär, the star and  
16 latte stone shall be provided by law."

17 "Section 3. Official Languages. The official languages  
18 of the Commonwealth shall be ~~English~~, Chamorro, and Carolinian,

*and  
English*

20 Committee on Finance & Other Matters

21  
*Adopted by the  
the Comte of the  
State 7/14/85*



A PROPOSAL

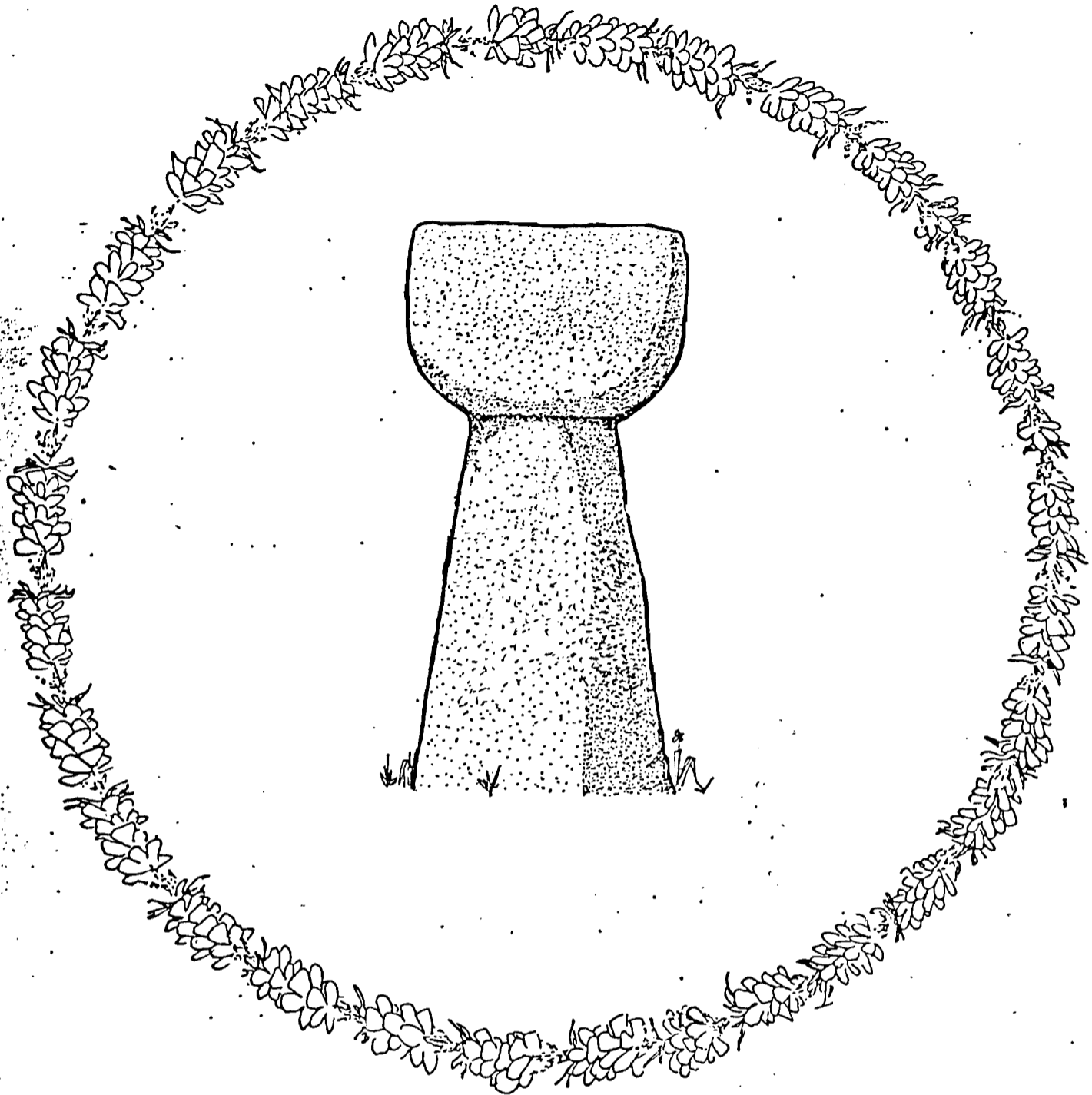
To amend the Northern Marianas Constitution to add a new Article \_\_\_\_\_ to include a new official seal and flag of the Northern Marianas.

BE IT ADOPTED BY THE SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION:

1 Section 1. A new Article \_\_\_\_\_ is hereby added to read as  
2 follows:

3 "Section 1. Official Seal and Flag of the Commonwealth.  
4 To redesign the official seal and flag of the Commonwealth of the  
5 Northern Marianas Islands to reflect symbols of both Chamorro and  
6 Carolinians cultures. (See attached illustration) The taga stone  
7 represents the Chamorro culture while the mwuar represents the  
8 Carolinian culture."

9  
10 Date: 6/21/85 Offered by: Alonzo Igisomar  
11 Delegate Alonzo Igisomar, Saipan  
12 Lorenzo I. D. Guerrero  
13 Delegate Lorenzo I. D. Guerrero, Saipan  
14 David L. Igitol  
15 Delegate David L. Igitol, Saipan  
16 Jesus P. Mafnas  
17 Delegate Jesus P. Mafnas, Saipan  
18 Karl T. Reyes  
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20 Joaquin A. Tenorio  
21 Delegate Joaquin A. Tenorio, Saipan  
Francisco Tomokane  
Delegate Francisco Tomokane, Saipan  
Ramon G. Villagomez  
Delegate Ramon G. Villagomez, Saipan  
Ignacio Villanueva  
Delegate Ignacio Villanueva, Saipan  
William S. Torres  
Delegate William S. Torres, Saipan



20  
21

Delegate Francisco Tomokane, Saipan

*Ramon G. Villagomez*  
Delegate Ramon G. Villagomez, Saipan

*Ignacio Villanueva*  
Delegate Ignacio Villanueva, Saipan

*William S. Torres*  
Delegate William S. Torres, Saipan

Second Constitutional Convention  
Saipan, Northern Marianas

Delegate Proposal No. 293-85

FROM

A Proposal

To establish the official language of the Northern Marianas and regulate the use of foreign languages.

BE IT PROPOSED that a new article is added to the Constitution as follows:

"ARTICLE \_\_\_\_\_. Languages

"Section 1. The official language of government shall be English.

"Section 2. The government shall encourage the usage and preservation of the Chamorro and Carolinian languages where appropriate in government, schools and society in general.

"Section 3. No alien laborer's permit shall be issued to a foreign person who cannot speak in understandable English. An exemption may be granted by the governor or his designee only to persons in occupations not requiring regular contacts with the general public and only after announcing in a local newspaper his intention to do so.

"Section 4. No sign in foreign languages is permitted in the Northern Marianas unless it is accompanied by a sign in English.

Introduced by: Felicidad T. Ogumoro  
Felicidad T. Ogumoro

Date: 7/2/85



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A PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

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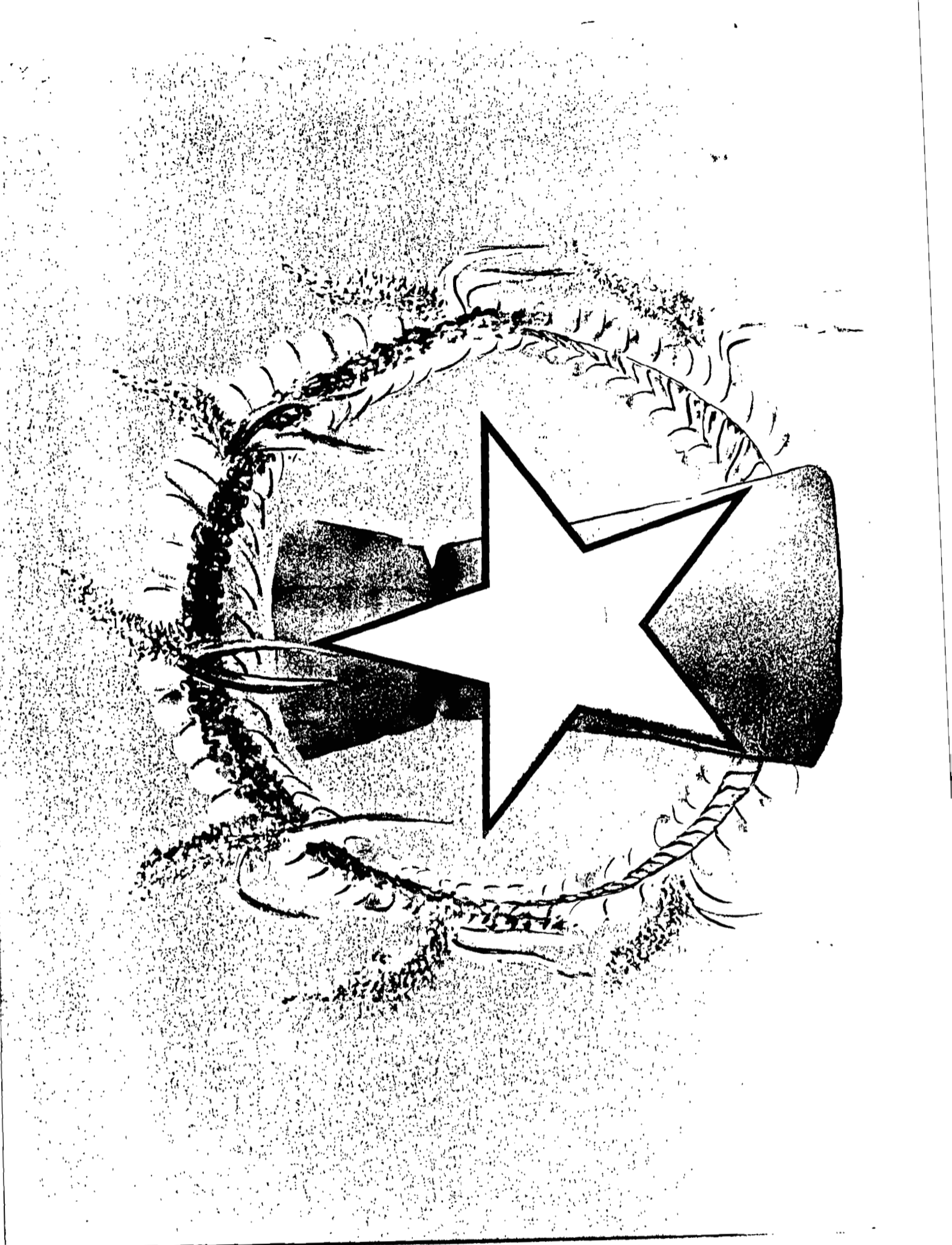
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16 latte stone shall be provided by law."

17 "Section 3. Official Languages. The official language  
18 of the Commonwealth shall be English, Chamorro, and Carolinian.

19  
20 Committee on Finance & Other Matters

21



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FRIENDLY PROPOSED FLOOR AMENDMENT TO  
COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION NO. 43.

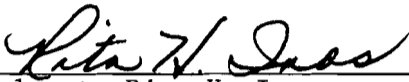
In order to reflect the continuing concept of the traditional and cultural heritage of the Chamorro and Carolinian people of the Northern Mariana Islands is hereby added a sentence in Section 3 to read as follow:

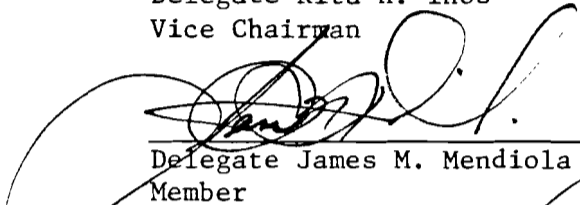
Add to line 19 - "The Commonwealth shall promote the study of Chamorro and Carolinian languages, including but not limited to Culture and History of the Northern Marianas Islands."

Your Committee on Finance and Other Matters is in accord with the intent and purpose of Delegate Proposal Nos. 107-85 and 293-85 and recommends its passage on final reading in the form attached hereto as Committee Draft 1.


Respectfully submitted,

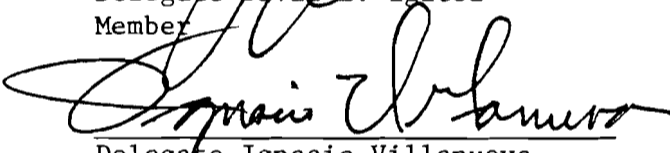
  
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Chairman

  
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Delegate Rita H. Inos  
Vice Chairman

  
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Delegate James M. Mendiola  
Member

  
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