

THIRD CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

RESOLUTION NO. 3

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

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A CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION RESOLUTION

~~To urge the Senate of the Ninth Northern Marianas~~  
Commonwealth Legislature to take expedited action upon and  
pass H.B. 9-408 which provides for a special election for the  
ratification by the people of the amendments to the CNMI  
Constitution proposed by the Third Northern Marianas  
Constitutional Convention.

1           WHEREAS, the Third Constitutional Convention of the Northern Mariana  
2 Islands ("Convention") convened on June 5, 1995 and is mandated by P.L. 9-18  
3 to adjourn on August 4, 1995 with the possibility of an extension of 15 days  
4 through no later than August 19, 1995; and

5           WHEREAS, the general election for 1995 is scheduled to take place on  
6 November 4, 1995 in accordance with Article VII, section 1 of the  
7 Commonwealth Constitution; and

8           WHEREAS, the Convention is charged with the responsibility to review  
9 the entire Commonwealth Constitution and propose amendments as it deems fit;  
10 and

11           WHEREAS, thus far more than 400 delegate proposals have been  
12 submitted to the Convention for its consideration, which proposals embrace a  
13 wide variety of issues and could potentially affect every article of the  
14 Constitution;

15           WHEREAS, Article XVIII, section 5 (a) of the Constitution provides that  
16 "[a] proposed amendment to [the] Constitution shall be submitted to the voters  
17 for ratification at the next regular election or at a special election established  
18 by law," and

19           WHEREAS, Public Law 9-18, section 19 (a), provides that the ratification  
20 of amendments proposed by the Convention shall take place on the November  
21 1995 regular general election; and

1 WHEREAS, under the statutory scheme of P.L. 9-18 as enacted, there  
2 would be less than a three months gap between the end of the Convention and  
3 the general election; and

4 WHEREAS, such time is clearly insufficient for public education and full  
5 public debate on the issues to be raised by the proposed amendments; and

6 WHEREAS, insufficient public debate could deprive the voting public of  
7 a reasonable opportunity to form an informed opinion on critical issues which  
8 will likely determine the course of the Commonwealth for many years to  
9 come;; and

10 WHEREAS, there is the further danger that placing the proposed  
11 amendments to the Constitution on a general election ballot would overly  
12 politicize the ratification process and detract from the substantive policy  
13 issues represented by the proposed amendments; and

14 WHEREAS, in recognition of the above concerns, Representatives Jesus  
15 T. Attao and Oscar M. Babauta introduced and the House of Representatives  
16 passed House Bill 9-408 which would provide for a special election for the  
17 ratification of amendments to the Constitution proposed by the Convention to  
18 take place six months after the 1995 general election; and

19 WHEREAS, House Bill 9-408 now awaits the action of the Senate; now  
20 therefore,

21 BE IT RESOLVED, that the Third Northern Marianas Constitutional  
22 Convention hereby respectfully urges the Senate of the Ninth Commonwealth  
23 Legislature, in consideration of all the concerns herein stated, to expeditiously  
24 act upon and pass House Bill 9-408 for the benefit of all of the people of the  
25 Commonwealth; and

26 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the President of the Convention shall  
27 certify and the Secretary of the Convention shall attest to the adoption of this  
28 resolution and thereafter transmit copies to the President of the Senate; to all  
29 members of the Senate; to the Speaker of the House; to all members of the  
30 House of Representatives; and to the Honorable Froilan C. Tenorio, Governor of  
31 the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Date: JUN. 1 1995

Introduced By: Herman T. Guerrero  
Delegate Herman T. Guerrero