

NMC removed from Constitution

DELEGATES to the Third Constitutional Convention in a recent session said the CNMI Constitution must only contain the basic framework for the government as it started to delete provisions for agencies that are legislative in nature.

During a session held July 24, the ConCon decided to tentatively remove the Northern Marianas College in the Constitution and its following description. This is because, according to judiciary and other elected offices committee chairman Henry Hofschneider, the law providing for the establishment of the institution must come from and is a function of the Legislature.

"These are legislative matters," Hofschneider said, "Many people do not realize that we cannot act as a legislature when we are in a constitutional convention. We need to stick to constitutional subjects, which are the

basic framework for the government. Otherwise, our constitution would be hundreds of pages long."

Also, Tinian Del. David Q. Maratita lamented the fact that the Constitution has several provisions that create agencies and other programs. "Everybody wants to be in the constitution. But it is not our job to describe every government agency and tell it what to do. We have the greatest respect for the college and the job they are trying to do. They are a great asset to the Commonwealth, but these provisions just don't belong in a constitution. All the advice we receive agreed on that point."

Also, Rota Del. Justo S. Quitugua said, "The college wants the same provisions in the Constitution that they be in the law, but that is a duplication that we don't need. They can rely on the Legislature."

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