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**TO: Herman T. Guerrero**

**FROM: HPW**

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**MESSAGE.**

Herman: The Governor would like a letter from the Committee setting forth its view regarding the proposed deferral of the vote. Here is a draft. I think we might want to wait until tomorrow's meeting before sending it out.

Howard

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## Draft Letter to the Governor re Legislation to Defer Vote on Amendments

Dear Governor Tenorio:

We understand that the Legislature has transmitted for your consideration SB No. 9-209 postponing the vote on the amendments to the Constitution proposed by the Third Constitutional Convention until March 1996. I am writing on behalf of the Post Convention Committee to request that you not approve this proposal.

As you know, the Legislature failed to act for many months on the requests of the Pre-Convention Committee and the Convention for deferral of the vote on the proposed amendments. Consequently the Post Convention Committee had no choice but to organize and begin to execute the necessary public education program in anticipation of a vote on the amendments at the general election as required by the Commonwealth Constitution. In addition, consultation with the Board of Elections confirmed the need to have the official ballots drafted and printed early in October in order to meet the November deadline and send the ballots to off-island voters and make them available for absentee voters.

All of this work was well underway by the time that the Legislature finally acted on the deferral proposal last week. Enclosed for your information is a summary of the public education campaign that is now underway. I am sure that you have seen the very detailed descriptions of the 19 amendments that are being published on a daily basis by both the Marianas Variety and the Tribune. The public meetings to date have been very useful and the Committee is confident that the voters will be fully informed regarding the proposed amendments by the time they are asked to vote on them in early November.

Deferral of the vote on the proposed amendments until March serves no useful purpose. The Committee has seen no evidence that the proposed amendments will become entangled with the campaigns being conducted by candidates for political office; the Convention was thoroughly non-partisan in nature and the proposed amendments are addressed to the institutions and practices of the Commonwealth government and not to the policies or actions of any particular office or government official. Indeed, deferral of the vote will involve the expenditure of additional funds estimated somewhere between \$500,000 and one million dollars -- money which could be better spend on other important Commonwealth programs and services.

The proposed amendments are the result of the hard work of 27 delegates elected to review and revise the Constitution as they thought appropriate. The delegates identified many important problems that they decided should be addressed by proposed amendments to the Constitution. Their deliberations were extensively publicized during the Convention's 60 days and the public meetings and hearings held by the Convention were well attended. The Committee believes that these amendments should be placed before the voters at the general election when these recollections and the public education campaign will have served to inform the voters fully regarding the significance of the proposed amendments that they are being asked

to ratify.

If the Committee can be of further assistance to you with respect to your consideration of SB No. 9-209, please let me know.

**Herman T. Guerrero**  
**Chairman, Post-Convention Committee**

## POST-CONVENTION COMMITTEE PUBLIC EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

**Print media:** Descriptions of each of the 19 proposed amendments have been printed and are being published by both the Marianas Variety and the Tribune as inserts to their regular issues.

**Television:** Two hour-long programs discussing all constitutional amendments have been taped by the delegates and have been aired several times on Saipan Cable TV and Marianas Cable Vision.

. John Gonzales is hosting a one-hour show on Saipan Cable TV on Tuesday evenings that will be devoted to the Con-Con amendments for the next four weeks.

. One-minute spots on each of the 19 amendments are being taped by the delegates in cooperation with the Northern Marianas College media department to be aired on Saipan Cable TV and Marianas Cable Vision for the next four weeks as public service or paid announcements.

**Radio:** The audio from the one-minute television spots will be aired for the next four weeks on two radio stations.

**Public meetings:** Meetings have been conducted with Commonwealth business and professional groups interested in the proposed amendments, and additional meetings are scheduled. Special materials have been prepared outlining the objectives of the Convention and the means used to achieve these objectives.

. Public meetings in the 11 villages have been scheduled and publicized. These meetings begin this week. The meeting places have been arranged, delegates have been scheduled to attend to answer questions, and public education materials have been printed for distribution at the meetings.

. The Governor has asked his department heads to permit employees to attend other meetings during the workday (consistent with departmental needs) at which Convention delegates will explain the proposed amendments and answer questions. A convenient location for these meetings has been reserved, and explanatory materials are ready for distribution.

**Mailers:** The Committee is mailing to all off-island voters the inserts published in the news media.

. The voter registration list provided by the Election Board has been put into a database to support special information efforts with the voters on Rota and Tinian.

. The public information materials are being posted on the computer bulletin board on Saipan.