



The Senate
NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
P.O. BOX 500129
SAIPAN, MP 96950

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 24-17
Date: June 20, 2025
RE: Senate Bill No. 24-21

S-Adopted 7/14/25


Honorable Dennis James C. Mendiola
President of the Senate
Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. President:

Your Committee on Judiciary, Government, and Law to which Senate Bill No. 24-21 was referred, entitled:

“To amend 9 CMC § 2103 to require execution of a Notice of Transfer and Release of Liability by the appropriate parties upon the ownership transfer of a vehicle,”

begs leave to report as follows:

I. RECOMMENDATION:

After considerable discussion and deliberation, your Committee recommends the passage of Senate Bill No. 24-21 in its current form.

II. ANALYSIS:

A. Purpose:

The purpose of Senate Bill No. 24-21 is to require the execution of a Notice of Transfer and Release of Liability by the appropriate parties upon the ownership transfer of a vehicle by amending 9 CMC § 2103.

B. Committee Findings:

Your Committee finds that currently in the Commonwealth, an owner transferring a registered vehicle or bicycle to another individual must endorse the name and address of the new owner on the back of the registration card with the transfer date indicated. The original owner must promptly submit the registration card to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) Bureau of Motor Vehicle (BMV). The new owner must then apply for and obtain a registration card before the new owner operates the vehicle or bicycle.

Your Committee further finds that the existing transfer process in the Commonwealth does not fully absolve the seller from liability. If the registration form is still valid and the buyer, or new owner, has not updated ownership details, any accidents or traffic violations involving that vehicle or bicycle remain the responsibility of the original owner, despite the transfer of ownership.

Your Committee met on June 20, 2025, to formally discuss the proposed legislation and review the comments officially received by the Committee. Your Committee recognizes that Senate Bill No. 24-21 intends to address the dilemma of the existing transfer process by amending 9 CMC § 2103 to mandate that a Notice of Transfer and Release of Liability be executed by the relevant parties during the ownership transfer of a motor vehicle or bicycle. Furthermore, 9 CMC § 1205 requires the BMV Director of the Department of Public Safety to create the necessary forms to uphold laws regarding the use, transfer, and inspection of vehicles. Upon further review of the comment received by DPS BMV Director Eric F. David, your Committee acknowledges that while DPS has specific requirements regarding transfer of ownership, the existing process does not necessitate any documentation to formally release liability from the previous owner to the buyer, which is the intent of the proposed legislation.

It is for these reasons that your Committee supports the intent of the proposed legislation and recommends the passage of Senate Bill No. 24-21 in its current form.

C. Legislative History:

Senate Bill No. 24-21 was formally introduced by Senator Francisco Q. Cruz on February 11, 2025, and was subsequently referred to the Senate Standing Committee on Judiciary, Government, and Law for disposition.

During the Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, a similar legislation, Senate Bill No. 23-31, was formally introduced by Senator Francisco Q. Cruz on February 23, 2023, and was subsequently referred to the Senate Standing Committee on Judiciary, Government, and Law for disposition. On January 3, 2025, the Senate convened its 8th Day, Fourth Regular Session, and a motion was made and seconded to file all remaining bills, resolutions, reports, and other assignments given to committees that require Senate action. Accordingly, Senate Bill No. 23-55 was filed, and the Senate of the Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature adjourned *sine die*.

During the Twenty-Second Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, a similar legislation, Senate Bill No. 22-68, was formally introduced by Senator Francisco Q. Cruz on October 22, 2021, and was subsequently referred to the Senate Standing Committee on Judiciary, Government, Law, and Federal Relations (JGLFR) for disposition. On January 24, 2022, the Senate JGLFR Committee adopted Senate Bill No. 22-68 in its current form, which was reported to the full body of the Senate under Senate Standing Committee Report No. 22-61. On February 3, 2022, during the 1st Day, Third Regular Session of the Senate, SCR No. 22-61 was adopted by the Senate; and the Senate passed Senate Bill No. 22-68 in its current form. Senate Bill No. 22-68 was transmitted to the House of Representatives on February 4, 2022. Senate Bill No. 22-68 was referred to the House Standing Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations for disposition. On January 5, 2023, the House of Representatives convened its Ninth Day, Fourth Regular Session, and a motion was made and seconded to file all remaining bills, resolutions, reports, and other assignments given to committees, to include Senate Communications that require House action. Accordingly, Senate Bill No. 22-68 was filed, and the House of Representatives of the Twenty-Second Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature adjourned *sine die*.

D. Public Hearing and Comment:

1. Public Hearing. No public hearing was scheduled for Senate Bill No. 24-21. However, committee meetings, which are open to the public, were held on May 6, 2025, and June 20, 2025. See below for further details.
2. Committee Meeting. The proposed legislation made its first appearance during the scheduled committee meeting on Tuesday, May 6, 2025. The committee meeting notices and agenda were officially posted on May 1, 2025, on various legislative forums and social media sites to invite members of the general public to provide comments as indicated under *Item No. IV. Public Comment* on the Committee Agenda. However, no oral testimonies in support or in opposition of the proposed legislation were presented before the Committee.

The proposed legislation made its second appearance during the scheduled committee meeting on Friday, June 20, 2025. The committee meeting notice was posted on June 12, 2025 and the agenda was officially posted on June 17, 2025, on various legislative forums and social media sites to invite members of the general public to provide comments as indicated under *Item No. IV. Public Comment* on the Committee Agenda. However, no oral testimonies in support or in opposition of the proposed legislation were presented before the Committee.

3. Written Comment. Your Committee sent out several requests for comments on the proposed legislation. To date, the status of comments received from the following government and private entities is as follows:
 - a. Office of the Attorney General, *no comment received*
 - b. Mayor of the Municipality of Rota, *no comment received*

- c. Mayor of the Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan, *no comment received*
- d. *Honorable Ramon "RB" Jose Blas Camacho, Mayor of the Municipality of Saipan, received March 26, 2025*
- e. Mayor of the Northern Islands, *no comment received*
- f. Rota Municipal Council, *no comment received*
- g. Tinian Municipal Council, *no comment received*
- h. Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council, *no comment received*
- i. *Eric F. David, Director, CNMI Bureau of Motor Vehicle, Department of Public Safety, received March 18, 2025*

E. Estimated Fiscal Cost:

The enactment of Senate Bill No. 24-21 will result in minimal expenses for the Commonwealth government for the design and printing of the Notice of Transfer and Release of Liability forms and public outreach to fulfill the intent of the proposed legislation. However, safeguarding residents from property damage in the case that the property has been formally transferred to another individual outweighs the cost to prevent undue hardship on the previous owner.

F. Summary of Committee Amendments:

Your Committee made no amendments to the proposed legislation.

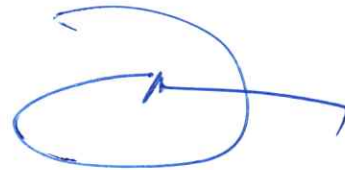
III. CONCLUSION:

Your Committee agrees with the intent and purpose of the proposed legislation and recommends the passage of Senate Bill No. 24-21 in its current form.

Respectfully submitted,



Senator Karl R. King-Nabors
Chairperson



Senator Francisco Q. Cruz
Vice Chairperson

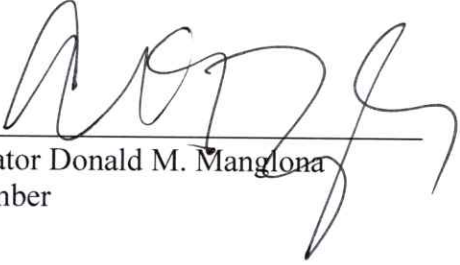


Senator Ronnie M. Calvo
Member




Senator Manny Gregory T. Castro
Member

Senator Corina L. Magofna
Member



Senator Donald M. Manglona
Member

Reviewed by:



Senate Legal Counsel

Attachment(s): Written Comment(s)

- 1. Eric F. David, Director, CNMI Bureau of Motor Vehicle, Department of Public Safety, received March 18, 2025*
- 2. Honorable Ramon "RB" Jose Blas Camacho, Mayor of the Municipality of Saipan, received March 26, 2025*



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

2794 Tekken St. Susupe | Jose M. Sablan Building
P.O. Box 500791 Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone: (670) 664-9000 / 9001, Front Desk



Arnold I. Palacios
Governor

David M. Apatang
Lieutenant Governor

Anthony I. Macaranas
Commissioner

March 17, 2025

Senator Karl R. King-Nabors
Vice President of the Senate
24th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
Honorable Jesus P. Mafnas Building, Capitol Hill
P.O. Box 500129 Saipan, MP 96950

Ref: **S.B. No. 24-21**. To amend 9CMC Sub-Section 2103 to require execution of a Notice of Transfer and Release of Liability by the appropriate parties upon the ownership transfer of a vehicle.

I write in response to your request for insight and comments on Senate Bill No. 24-21. Base on my review of this bill, I submit the following comments for thoughts by the requestee and to its committee.

The Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Motor Vehicle currently has in place requirements and documentations which meets the request of this Sub-Section. Please find attach documents for your review and should this not meet the conditions required, please don't hesitate to contact me at 670-285-1371 or email at eric.david@dps.gov.mp.

Best regards,

Eric F. David
Director, CNMI-Bureau of Motor Vehicle

Cc: *DPS, Commissioner Office*
BMV-File

*Recd
3/18/25
JES*



Arnold I. Palacios
Governor

David M. Apatang
Lieutenant Governor

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
Jose M. Sablan Building
Caller Box 10007 Susupe, Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone: (670) 664-9001 (24 Hours) Facsimile: (670) 664-9019
BUREAU OF MOTOR VEHICLES



Anthony I. Macaranas
Commissioner

LIST OF VEHICLE REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

NEW/IMPORT

- Vehicle Registration/Certification of Title from State or country of origin.
- Bill of Sale
- Bill of Lading
- Motor vehicle safety inspection
- Motor vehicle insurance liability
- Provide copy of driver license or other form of picture I.D.
- Must complete vehicle registration application form.

RENEWAL

- Motor vehicle registration card
- Motor vehicle safety inspection checklist
- Motor vehicle liability insurance card
- Must complete vehicle registration application form for change of information

TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP

- Must complete vehicle application form, bill of sale and certification form. All forms must be notarized, otherwise, BMV personnel can acknowledge the presence of both parties (Seller & Buyer).
- Provide copy of current driver license for buyer and seller.
- If a company or business is selling the vehicle, only authorized representative will sign the bill of sale and certificate of ownership to relinquish rights of the vehicle. Proof of written authorization is required.
- Registered Owner(s) must sign on the bill of sale, certification form and certificate of ownership slip.
- Must provide motor vehicle insurance liability.

TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP & RENEWAL

- Refer to Transfer of Ownership – You only need to provide safety inspection checklist.

DUPLICATE –Vehicle Registration & Certificate of Ownership

Authorization letter is required if you are not the registered owner(s) of the vehicle.

MUST PRESENT PAYMENT RECEIPT FOR ALL TRANSACTION LISTED ABOVE AT THE DIVISION REVENUE & TAXATION.



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
BUREAU OF MOTOR VEHICLES



SAIPAN

TINIAN

ROTA

VEHICLE REGISTRATION APPLICATION

9 CMC, Division 2, Subsection 2101, Registration Application.

Every owner of a motor vehicle shall, before operating any such motor vehicle on any highway of the Commonwealth, register it with the Bureau, The application for registration shall be made on the prescribed form, signed by the owner or authorized representative with written authorization

RENEWAL WITH NO CHANGE: Indicate license plate number only

HAS THIS VEHICLE BEEN MODIFIED OR CHANGED FROM DESIGN? If yes, explain or furnish an affidavit regarding modification change: _____

<input type="checkbox"/> NEW	<input type="checkbox"/> RENEWAL	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> CNMI GOVERNMENT	DATE: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> USED	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSFER	<input type="checkbox"/> NON-COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. GOVT/U.S. MILITARY	RECEIVED BY: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> CHANGE OF INFORMATION				RECEIPT NO: _____

OWNER #1 PLEASE CHECK: And **OR** Or

NAME: (Last) (First) (Middle Name) EMPLOYER SOCIAL SECURITY NO.: DATE OF BIRTH:

ADDRESS: (RESIDENCE) MAILING ADDRESS DRIVER'S LICENSE NO. CITIZENSHIP ETHNIC TELEPHONE NO.

OWNER #2 PLEASE CHECK: And **OR** Or

NAME: (Last) (First) (Middle Name) EMPLOYER SOCIAL SECURITY NO.: DATE OF BIRTH:

ADDRESS: (RESIDENCE) MAILING ADDRESS DRIVER'S LICENSE NO. CITIZENSHIP ETHNIC TELEPHONE NO.

BUSINESS/COMPANY NAME BUSINESS LOCATION MAILING ADDRESS TELEPHONE NO.

PLEASE CHECK: LEGAL OWNER LIEN HOLDER

NAME OF LEGAL OWNER OR LIENHOLDER #1 ADDRESS TELEPHONE NO.

BUSINESS /COMPANY NAME ADDRESS TELEPHONE NO.

VEHICLE INFORMATION RIGHT HAND DRIVE: Y _____ N _____

LICENSE PLATE NO.	YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	BODY TYPE	COLOR	WEIGHT	FUEL	CAPACITY
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VEHICLE IDENTIFICATION	ENGINE NO.	CYLINDERS	VEHICLE TYPE	PREVIOUS LICENSE NO. AND STATE
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INSURED BY: POLICY NO.: POLICY EXPIRES

PRINT NAME & SIGN TITLE (OWNER OR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE) DATE SIGNED

**MOTOR CARRIER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
DECLARATION FORM**

_____ (Name of Company Representative) of _____ (Company Name) declare knowledge of Public Law 10-11 "Motor Carrier Safety Act," the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR) and the federal Hazardous Material Regulations (FHMR).

Signature of Company Representative: _____ Date: _____



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
 Telephone: (670) 664-9069/9070
BUREAU OF MOTOR VEHICLES

VEHICLE BILL OF SALE

I, WE, _____ (Seller) of Saipan,
 Northern Mariana Islands hereby sell/have sold to _____ (Buyer)
 whose address is: _____, Saipan, MP 96950. Vehicle described
 below:

Year Make : _____ VIN Number : _____
 Model : _____ Color : _____
 Vehicle Type : _____ License Plate : _____

The vehicle is/was sold to the above named buyer for the amount of : _____
 _____ (U.S. \$ _____)

I, We, _____ (Seller) hereby relinquish all
 my/our rights of the vehicle to _____ (Buyer) and
 also acknowledge lien holder to be in favor of _____

 Print & Sign Seller's Name

 Print & Sign Buyer's Name

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ON THIS _____ day of _____, 202 __, _____ and
 _____, personally appeared before me, a Notary Public in
 and for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal the day and
 year first above written.

 NOTARY PUBLIC



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
 P. O. BOX 500791
 Telephone: (670) 664-9069/9070 Facsimile: (670) 664-9067

BUREAU OF MOTOR VEHICLES

CERTIFICATION

I, We, _____, certify that I/We the legal owner(s) of this _____ / _____ / _____.

Year, Make Model of Vehicle, Vehicle ID Number/License Plate Number.

I, we, entitled to transfer ownership of this vehicle and that its odometer reading is: _____ miles and, to the best of my/our knowledge, reflects the actual mileage of the vehicle described herein, unless one of the following is checked:

- 1. The amount of mileage stated is in excess of 99,999 miles.
- 2. The mileage stated is not the actual miles.
- 3. The vehicle is a truck with a gross weight rating of 16,000 pounds or more.

Stated under the penalty of perjury laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands signed this _____ day of _____, 20____ in Saipan.

Signature

Subscribed and sworn to before me this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Notary Public



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

MUNICIPALITY OF SAIPAN
CTC Building, 2799 Teer Drive Suite A, Oleai
P.O. Box 501457 Saipan, MP 96950

(670) 234-6208 • Fax: (670) 234-1190 • Email: saipanmayor@mos.gov.mp



R. "RB" Jose Blas Camacho
Mayor of Saipan

March 21, 2025

The Honorable Karl King- Nabors
Vice- President of the Senate
Chairman
Senate Standing Committee on Judiciary, Government, and Law
24th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
P.O. Box 500129
Saipan, MP 96950



Subject: Senate Bill 24-21: "To amend 9 CMC § 2103 to require execution of a Notice of Transfer and release of Liability by the appropriate parties upon the ownership transfer of a vehicles."

Hafa Adai yan Tirow Vice- President and Chairman King- Nabors,

Thank you for providing the Office of the Mayor, Municipality of Saipan the opportunity to provide comments on the above subject.

This amendment is an important step toward improving the accuracy of vehicle ownership records and ensuring accountability in the transfer process. Without a formalized process to confirm the transfer of ownership, previous owners may still be held liable for violations, fines, or other legal matters related to a vehicle they no longer possess. By requiring a Notice of Transfer and Release of Liability, this bill will help prevent such issues and establish clear responsibility for each vehicle on the road.

In addition to improving record-keeping, this measure will enhance public safety by ensuring that vehicles are properly registered under their rightful owners.

I support the intent of this bill and encourage careful consideration of its implementation to ensure a smooth transition for vehicle owners and regulatory agencies. Providing clear guidelines and accessible means for filing the required notice will be essential in making this process efficient and effective for the public.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (670)234-6208 or via email at saipanmayor@mos.gov.mp.

Sincerely,

RAMON "RB" JOSE BLAS CAMACHO
Mayor, Office of the Municipality of Saipan

Visit us online at saipanmayor.cnmi.gov [saipanmayorrbcamacho](https://www.facebook.com/saipanmayorrbcamacho)

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To amend 9 CMC § 2103 to require execution of a Notice of Transfer and Release of Liability by the appropriate parties upon the ownership transfer of a vehicle.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE TWENTY-FOURTH
NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:**

1 **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.**

2 The Legislature acknowledges that 9 CMC § 1205 provides that the Director of
3 the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) shall develop and provide suitable forms of
4 applications, certificates of title, registration cards, operators' licenses, and all other
5 required and necessary forms. The Legislature finds that in most States it is necessary to
6 execute a Notice of Transfer and Release of Liability between the parties that lets the
7 Department of Motor Vehicle know that the former vehicle owner is no longer
8 responsible for parking/traffic violations or civil or criminal liability associated with the
9 vehicle after the date of the sale.

10 The Legislature finds that releasing the liability of the former owner of a vehicle
11 upon the sale of the vehicle is necessary. Therefore, the purpose of this
12 Act is to require the execution of a Notice and Release of Liability upon the transfer of a
13 vehicle.

14 **Section 2. Amendment.** 9 CMC § 2103 is amended to read:

15 “§ 2103. Registration: Transfer of Vehicle.

16 (a) An owner upon transferring a registered vehicle or bicycle shall endorse the
17 name and address of the transferee and the date of transfer upon the reverse side of the
18 registration card issued for the vehicle or bicycle and immediately forward the card to the

1 bureau. ~~The transferee, before operating or permitting the operation of the vehicle or~~
2 ~~bicycle upon a highway, shall apply and obtain the registration thereof as upon an~~
3 ~~original registration. In the event of a transfer by inheritance, devise, bequest, execution,~~
4 ~~sale or repossession upon default of performance of an agreement of sale of a registered~~
5 ~~vehicle or bicycle, the registration shall expire and the vehicle or bicycle may not be~~
6 ~~operated upon the highways until and unless the person entitled to it applies for and~~
7 ~~obtains the registration thereof.~~ At the same time, the owner (transferor) and the new
8 owner (transferee) shall sign a Notice of Transfer and Release of Liability (NTRL). The
9 Director shall develop the NTRL and make it readily available.

10 (b) An owner upon transferring a registered motor vehicle, shall state on the form
11 provided by the bureau:

12 "I certify that I am the legal owner entitled to transfer ownership of this vehicle
13 and that its odometer reading is _____ miles and, to the best of my knowledge, reflects
14 the actual mileage of the vehicle described herein, unless one of the following statements
15 is checked.

16 (1) The amount of mileage stated is in excess of 99,999 miles.

17 (2) The mileage stated is not the actual mileage.

18 (3) The vehicle is a truck with a gross vehicle weight rating of 16,000
19 pounds or more."

20 (c) The transferee, before operating or permitting the operation of the vehicle or
21 bicycle upon a highway, shall apply and obtain the registration thereof as upon an
22 original registration. In the event of a transfer by inheritance, devise, bequest, execution,
23 sale or repossession upon default of performance of an agreement of sale of a registered
24 vehicle or bicycle, the registration shall expire and the vehicle or bicycle may not be
25 operated upon the highways until and unless the person entitled to it applies for and
26 obtains the registration thereof.

27 (e d) Notwithstanding any provision of the Uniform Commercial Code (title 5 of
28 this code [5 CMC § 1101 et seq.]), until the chief has issued the new registration card,
29 delivery of the vehicle shall be deemed not to have been made, title to it shall be deemed

1 not to have passed, and the intended transfer shall be deemed not to be valid or effective
2 for any purpose.

3 (d e) A security interest in a motor vehicle required to be registered under this title
4 may be perfected only by registration of the security interest by notation upon the
5 certificate of title of the motor vehicle. The validity, attachment, priority, and
6 enforcement of the perfected security interest shall be governed by article 9 of title 5 of
7 this code (the Uniform Commercial Code) [5 CMC § 9101 et seq.]”


8 **Section 3. Severability.** If any provision of this Act or the application of any
9 such provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of
10 competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to
11 persons or circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected
12 thereby.

13 **Section 4. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not
14 be construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under
15 statutes repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted under the statutes.
16 Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or
17 pursuant to prior law. The enactment of the Act shall not have the effect of terminating,
18 or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal, which shall already be in
19 existence on the date this Act becomes effective.

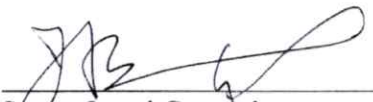
20 **Section 5. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the
21 Governor or becoming law without such approval.

Date: 2/11/25

Introduced By: _____


Senator Francisco Q. Cruz

Reviewed for Legal Sufficiency by:


Senate Legal Counsel