



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

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 24-67
Date: December 2, 2025
RE: House Bill No. 24-15

Honorable Karl R. King-Nabors
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 House Bill No. 24-15 was referred, entitled:

“To establish public sector employee and public sector employer relations through organized labor within the Commonwealth; and for other purposes,”

begs leave to report as follows:

I. RECOMMENDATION:

After considerable discussion and deliberation, your Committee recommends its passage in the form of House Bill No. 24-15, Senate Substitute 1.

II. ANALYSIS:

A. Purpose:

The purpose of House Bill No. 24-15 is to establish public sector employee and public sector employer relations through organized labor within the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

B. Committee Findings:

Your Committee finds that House Bill 24-15, entitled the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Labor-Management Relations Act, intends to establish a legal framework that governs the relationship between public employees and their employers in the Commonwealth. Specifically, the proposed legislation addresses the procedures of collective bargaining, to promote effective communications concerning labor rights and workplace conditions through a structured process for public sector employee and employer relations through organized labor.

Your Committee further finds that essential and critical services to the public are carried out by dedicated and selfless employees who are committed to fulfilling their responsibilities. In order to safeguard the rights of these employees and ensure their continued ability to serve and protect the well-being of the community, collective bargaining provides a vital mechanism for employees to have their voices heard and respected. Often represented by labor unions, these negotiations help improve employment conditions in key areas such as wages, benefits, working conditions, and other related matters.

Your Committee met on December 2, 2025, to formally discuss the proposed legislation and review written testimonies submitted for consideration. Upon further review of the proposed legislation and a thorough acknowledgement of the existing economic hardships of the Commonwealth, your Committee determined that additional amendments were necessary. These proposed amendments aim to implement provisions that prevent wage and benefit negotiations from exceeding available revenues to refrain from the creation of unfunded obligations for the government.

It is for these reasons that your Committee supports the intent of the proposed legislation and recommends its passage in the form of House Bill No. 24-15, Senate Substitute 1.

C. Legislative History:

House Bill No. 24-15 was formally introduced by Representative Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao on March 21, 2025, and was referred to the House Standing Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations (JGO) for disposition. On April 29, 2025, the House JGO Committee adopted House Standing Committee Report (SCR) No. 24-3, recommending passage of House Bill No. 24-15 in its current form. On May 15, 2025, during the First Day, Second Special Session of the House of Representatives, House SCR 24-3 was adopted, and the House of Representatives passed House Bill No. 24-15 in its current form. On May 19, 2025, House Bill No. 24-15 was transmitted to the Senate and was subsequently referred to the Senate Standing Committee on Judiciary, Government, and Law for disposition.

D. Public Hearing and Comment:

1. Public Hearing. No public hearing was scheduled for House Bill No. 24-15. However, a committee meeting, which is open to the public, was held on December 2, 2025. See below for further details.
2. Committee Meeting. The proposed legislation made its first appearance during the scheduled committee meeting on Tuesday, December 2, 2025. The committee meeting notices and agenda were officially posted on November 26, 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. Oral testimonies in support of the proposed legislation were presented by the following:
 - a. Cris John Rios Deleon Guerrero, Police Officer, CNMI Department of Public Safety
 - b. Paul B. Sasamoto, President, Northern Marianas Professional Firefighters Union (NMPFU) - IAFF Local 5335 and the CNMI Order of Professional Policing (OPP), received December 2, 2025 (*Copy of statement attached.*)
 - c. Edward S. Dela Cruz, Jr., Fire Lieutenant, Commonwealth Ports Authority Aircraft Rescue Firefighter, received December 2, 2025 (*Copy of statement attached.*)
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, to include additional written testimonies officially received by the Committee, are as follows:
 - a. Office of the Attorney General, *no comment received*
 - b. Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, *no comment received*
 - c. Department of Public Safety, *no comment received*
 - d. Veterans Affairs Office, *no comment received*
 - e. Paul B. Sasamoto, President, NMPFU IAFF – Local 5335, and Cris John R. Deleon Guerrero, President, CNMI Order of Professional Policing, Northern Marianas Professional Firefighters Union, *dated November 21, 2025*
 - f. Juan Rebuénog Camacho, personal testimony, *received December 1, 2025*
 - g. Mildred Sablan-Camacho, personal testimony, *received December 1, 2025*
 - h. Naomi Cabrera Sablan, personal testimony, *received December 1, 2025*
 - i. Herman Camacho Santos, Jr., personal testimony, *received December 1, 2025*
 - j. Leilani Sablan Cepeda, personal testimony, *received December 1, 2025*
 - k. Dianoah Reyes, Firefighter I, Commonwealth Ports Authority Aircraft Rescue Firefighter, *received December 2, 2025*
 - l. Jonathan Mirefel, Firefighter I, Commonwealth Ports Authority Aircraft Rescue Firefighter/Union 5335, *received December 2, 2025*
 - m. Lionel Sanchez, Lionel 5335 – Northern Marianas Professional Fire Fighters Union, *received December 2, 2025*

- n. Northern Marianas Professional Firefighters Union Meeting Survey with the 23rd Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, *received December 2, 2025*

E. Estimated Fiscal Cost:

No fiscal analysis was prepared for the proposed legislation.

However, House Bill No. 24-15, as amended, includes a new provision, Section 113, that aims at ensuring the fiscal responsibility of the Commonwealth government in accordance with available funds and budgetary appropriations.

F. Summary of Committee Amendments:

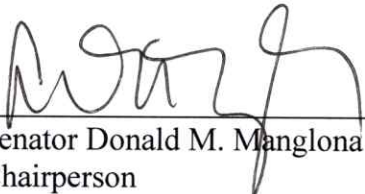
Your Committee agreed to the following amendments:

1. Section 2. Findings and Purpose. Page 2, lines 10-13, amended to include intent of the proposed amendments adopted by the Committee.
2. Section 3. Enactment. Section 101. Definitions. Page 4, lines 6-9, amended to insert a definition for “fiscal impact statement”.
3. Section 3. Enactment. Page 12, lines 1-20, inserted a *NEW* Section 113 to provide safeguarding provisions of fiscal responsibility for the government. Succeeding section renumbered accordingly.
4. Technical and typographical amendments made throughout the proposed legislation.


III. CONCLUSION:

Your Committee agrees with the intent and purpose of the proposed legislation and recommends the passage of the proposed legislation in the form of House Bill No. 24-15, Senate Substitute 1.

Respectfully submitted,



Senator Donald M. Manglona
Chairperson



Senator Manny Gregory T. Castro
Vice Chairperson

Senator Celina R. Babauta
Member



Senator Francisco Q. Cruz
Member

Senator Ronnie M. Calvo
Member



Senator Corina L. Magofna
Member

Reviewed by:



Senate Legal Counsel

Attachment(s):

1. Written Testimonies:

- a. Paul B. Sasamoto, President, NMPFU IAFF – Local 5335, and Cris John R. Deleon Guerrero, President, CNMI Order of Professional Policing, Northern Marianas Professional Firefighters Union, *dated November 21, 2025*
- b. Juan Rebuénog Camacho, personal testimony, *received December 1, 2025*
- c. Mildred Sablan-Camacho, personal testimony, *received December 1, 2025*
- d. Naomi Cabrera Sablan, personal testimony, *received December 1, 2025*
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- l. Edward S. Dela Cruz, Jr., Fire Lieutenant, Commonwealth Ports Authority Aircraft Rescue Firefighter, *received December 2, 2025*

TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH

LEGISLATURE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 21, 2025

First Regular Session, 2025

H. B. 24-15, SS1

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To establish public sector employee and public sector employer relations through organized labor within the Commonwealth; and for other purposes.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE 24TH NORTHERN MARIANAS
COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:**

1 **Section 1. Title.** This Act may be cited as the “Commonwealth of the
2 Northern Mariana Islands Labor-Management Relations Act.”

3 **Section 2. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that public sector
4 employees within the CNMI Government have the right to organize and
5 collectively bargain with an organization of their own choosing, which is protected.
6 It is the purpose of this legislation to promote full communication between public
7 employers and public employees by providing a reasonable method of resolving
8 disputes regarding salaries, wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of
9 employment between public employee organizations and public employers. It is
10 also the purpose of this legislation to promote the improvement of personnel
11 management and employer-employee relations with the various public agencies in
12 the Commonwealth Government by providing a uniform basis for recognizing the

1 right of employees to join organizations of their own choice and be represented by
2 those organizations in their employment relationships with public or private
3 agencies through collective bargaining. This legislation is intended to strengthen
4 public employer-employee relations through the establishment of uniform and
5 orderly methods of communication between public employees and public
6 employers by which they are employed and provide public employees with the right
7 to self-organization; to form, join, or assist employee organizations; to bargain
8 collectively through representatives of their own choosing; and to engage in other
9 concerted activities for collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection.

10 The Legislature further finds that collective bargaining must be
11 implemented in a manner that protects the fiscal health of the Commonwealth.
12 Negotiations affecting wages and benefits shall not exceed available revenues or
13 create unfunded mandates on any government entity.

14 **Section 3. Enactment.** Title 4, Economic Resources, Division 9, Labor, is
15 hereby amended to add a new Chapter 10, titled "Labor-Management Relations
16 Act," that shall read as follows:

17 **"Chapter 10. Labor-Management Relations Act.**

18 **"Section 101. Definitions.** As used in this section, the term:

19 (a) "Public Employee" shall mean any person holding a position by
20 appointment or employment in classified civil service of a public employer to
21 include probationary or limited-term employees, including employees of

1 municipalities, autonomous agencies, senatorial districts, and other political
2 subdivisions of the Commonwealth.

3 (b) "Public Employer" shall mean (1) the Commonwealth of the Northern
4 Mariana Islands, herein referred to as the "CNMI or Commonwealth," (2) a
5 municipality, an autonomous agency, a senatorial district, or other political
6 subdivision of the Commonwealth, (3) a school system or any government entity
7 operating a public school, college or university, (4) a public authority, commission,
8 or corporation, public agency, or instrumentality or unit of government which
9 exercises governmental powers under the laws of the Commonwealth.

10 (c) "Employee Organization" shall mean any lawful association,
11 organization, federation, council, or labor union, the membership of which includes
12 public employees, and assists its members to improve their salaries, wages, hours,
13 and terms and conditions of employment.

14 (d) "Mediation" shall mean an effort by an impartial third party to assist in
15 the reconciliation of a dispute regarding salaries, wages, hours, and other terms and
16 conditions of employment between representatives of the public employer and the
17 recognized employee organization or recognized employee organizations through
18 interpretation, suggestion, and advice.

19 (e) "Terms and Conditions of Employment" shall mean salaries, wages,
20 hours, and other terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to
21 health/life/dental/vision insurance, retirement plans or savings accounts, and other

1 fringe benefits. The terms and conditions of employment shall include discipline
2 and disciplinary procedures.

3 (f) "Recognized Employee Organization" shall mean an employee
4 organization which has been certified as the exclusive representative of an
5 appropriate bargaining unit.

6 (g) "Fiscal Impact Statement" means a written analysis prepared by the
7 Secretary of Finance or the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) estimating
8 the cost of at least three fiscal years of any proposed collective-bargaining
9 agreement.

10 **Section 102. Right to Join an Organization.**

11 (a) Public employees shall have the right to form, join, and participate in the
12 activities of employee organizations of their own choosing for the purpose of
13 representation on all matters of employer-employee relations, including salaries,
14 wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment.

15 (b) The procedures for an employee organization being certified as the
16 exclusive representative of an appropriate bargaining unit include: (1) through
17 documented majority process (card-check) whereby a majority of employees in an
18 appropriate bargaining unit designate an employee organization as their exclusive
19 representative by signing authorization cards, petitions, or other suitable physical
20 evidence to be verified by the CNMI Department of Labor, or (2) through an
21 election by secret ballot to determine the exclusive representative conducted by the

1 CNMI Department of Labor; whenever (1) two or more employee organizations
2 claim to represent at least 30% of employees in an appropriate unit, (2) an employee
3 organization petitions the CNMI Department of Labor for an election showing at
4 least 30% of employees in an appropriate unit wish to be represented by the
5 petitioner, or (3) at least 30% of employees in a bargaining unit allege that the
6 exclusive representative no longer represents a majority of the employees. If the
7 employee organization receives a majority vote cast in an election, that employee
8 organization will be deemed the exclusive representative of the appropriate
9 bargaining unit. In an election in which two or more employee organizations are on
10 the ballot, if no choice receives a majority of the votes, there will be a run-off
11 election between the two choices that receive the most votes.

12 **Section 103. Exercise of Lawful Action as Elected, Appointed, or**
13 **Recognized Representative of any Employee Bargaining Unit.** No public
14 employee shall be subject to punitive or adverse action, such as termination,
15 suspension, discipline, demotion, retaliation, subject to a hostile working
16 environment, loss of wages or benefits, or denial of promotion, or threatened with
17 any such action, for engaging in self-organization; forming, joining, or assisting
18 employee organization(s); bargaining collectively through representatives of their
19 own choosing; or engaging in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective
20 bargaining or other mutual aid or protection.

21 **Section 104. Representation of Members; Membership Admission and**

1 **Dismissal Regulations; Right to Personal Appearance.** Recognized employee
2 organizations shall have the right to represent their members in their employment
3 relations with public agencies through collective bargaining. Employee
4 organizations may establish reasonable restrictions regarding who may join and
5 may make reasonable provisions for the ~~dismal~~ dismissal of ~~inviduals~~ individuals
6 from membership.

7 **Section 105. Scope of Representation.** The scope of representation shall
8 include all matters relating to employment conditions and employer-employee
9 relations, including, but not limited to, salaries, wages, hours, and other terms and
10 conditions of employment.

11 **Section 106. Notice of Proposed Act relating to matters within the Scope**
12 **of Representation; Meeting; Emergencies.**

13 (a) Except in cases of emergency as provided in this section, the governing
14 body of a public employer, and boards and commissions designated by law or by
15 the governing body of a public employer, shall be give reasonable written notice to
16 each recognized employee organization affected by any ordinance, rule, resolution,
17 or regulation directly relating to matters with the scope of representation proposed
18 to be adopted by the governing body or the designated boards and commissions and
19 shall allow the recognized employee organization to meet with the governing body
20 or the boads or commissions prior to the implementation of any such ordinance,
21 rule, resolution, or regulation. No ordinance, rule, resolution, or regulation shall

1 conflict with this section or any collective bargaining agreement.

2 (b) In cases of emergency when the governing body or the designated boards
3 or commissions determine that an ordinance, rule, resolution, or regulation must be
4 adopted immediately without prior notice or meeting with a recongnized employee
5 organization, and provided that the ordinance, rule, resolution, or regulation does
6 not conflict with this section or any collective bargaining agreement, the governing
7 body or the boards or commissions shall provide notice and opportunity to meet at
8 the earliest practical time following the adoption of the ordinance, rule, resolution,
9 or regulation.

10 **Section 107. Conferences: Meet and Negotiate in Good Faith.** The
11 governing body of a public employer, or such boards, commissions, administrative
12 officers, or other representatives as may be properly designated by law or by such
13 governing body, shall meet and negotiate in good faith regarding salaries, wages,
14 hours, and other terms and conditions of employment with representatives of such
15 organized employee organizations. "Meet and Negotiate in Good Faith" shall mean
16 that a public employer or such representatives as it may designate, and
17 representatives of recognized employee organizations or such representatives as it
18 may designate, shall have the mutual obligation personally to meet and confer
19 promptly upon request by either party and continue for such reasonable period of
20 time in order to exchange freely information, opinions, and proposals, and to
21 endeavor to reach an agreement on matters with the scope of representation prior

1 to the adoption by the public employer of its final budget for the ensuing year. The
2 process should include adequate time for the resolution of impasses as set forth in
3 this section.

4 **Section 108. Memorandum of Agreement.** If an agreement is reached by
5 the representatives of the public employer and a recognized employee
6 organization(s), they shall jointly prepare a written memorandum of such
7 understanding or tentative agreement, which shall not be ~~biding~~ binding, and
8 present it to the members of the employee organization for ratification. The
9 memorandum of understanding or tentative agreement shall become binding after
10 ratification by a majority of the employee organization's members and thereafter
11 shall be signed by at least one representative from the employee organization and
12 one representative from the public employer.

13 **Section 109. Time Off Allowances to Employee Representatives.** Public
14 employers shall allow a reasonable number of public employee representatives of
15 recognized employee organizations reasonable time off without loss of
16 compensation or other benefits when formally meeting and conferring with
17 representatives of the public employer on matters within the scope of
18 representation.

19 **Section 110. Mediation; Appointment of Mediator; Costs.** If, after a
20 reasonable period, representatives of the public employer and the recognized
21 employee organization fail to reach an agreement, the public employer and the

1 recognized employee organization shall appoint a mediator mutually agreeable to
2 the parties. Mediation shall be scheduled promptly after selection of the mediator.

3 **Section 111. Impasse.** If, after the mediation procedures in Section 110 have
4 been exhausted, and an impasse remains between the parties, the public employer
5 and the employee organization shall submit the outstanding issues to compulsory,
6 final, and binding interest arbitration.

7 **Section 112. Interest Arbitration.**

8 (a) Within ten (10) days after the mediation procedures in Section 110 have
9 been exhausted, each party shall select one arbitrator of their choosing, and these
10 two arbitrators shall select a third neutral arbitrator within five (5) days of their
11 selection. The arbitrators shall invoke fact-finding with recommendation for
12 settlement of all issues in dispute unless the parties reach a voluntary settlement
13 prior to the issuance of the fact-finders' report and recommended terms of
14 settlement. Fact-finding shall be limited to those issues that are within the required
15 scope of negotiations unless the parties to the fact-finding agree to fact-finding on
16 permissive subjects of negotiation. Throughout formal arbitration proceedings, the
17 chosen arbitrators may mediate or assist the parties in reaching a mutually agreeable
18 settlement on some or all of the issues.

19 (b) At the conclusion of the arbitration hearings, the arbitration panel shall
20 direct each of the parties to submit, with such time limit as the panel may establish,
21 a last offer of settlement on each of the issues in dispute. The arbitration panel shall

1 decide each issue by majority vote by selecting whichever last offer of settlement
2 on that issue it finds most nearly conforms with those factors listed below in
3 subsection (c) of this section.

4 (c) The arbitrators shall decide the dispute based on a reasonable
5 determination of the issues, giving due weight to those factors listed below that are
6 judged relevant for the resolution of the specific dispute. In the award, the panel of
7 arbitrators shall indicate which of the factors are deemed relevant, satisfactorily
8 explain why the others are not relevant, and provide an analysis of the evidence on
9 each relevant factor:

10 (1) the interests and welfare of the public and the financial ability of the
11 Commonwealth to finance the cost items proposed by each party to the
12 impasse;

13 (2) the overall compensation presently received by the public
14 employees, including direct wage compensation, vacation, holidays, and
15 excused time, insurance and pensions, medical and hospitalization benefits,
16 the continuity and stability of employment, and all other benefits received;

17 (3) comparison of salaries, wages, hours, and conditions of employment
18 of the employees involved in the arbitration proceedings with the salaries,
19 wages, hours, and conditions of employment of other employees performing
20 the same or similar services and with other employees generally in public
21 employment;

1 (4) stipulations of the parties;

2 (5) the lawful authority of the public employer;

3 (6) statutory restrictions on the public employer;

4 (7) the cost of living;

5 (8) the continuity and stability of employment, including seniority
6 rights and such other factors not confined to the foregoing which are
7 ordinarily or traditionally considered in the determination of salaries, wages,
8 hours, and conditions of employment through collective negotiations and
9 collective bargaining between the parties; and

10 (9) such other factors not confined to the foregoing, which are normally
11 and traditionally taken into consideration in the determination of salaries,
12 wages, hours, terms and conditions of employment through collective
13 bargaining, mediation, fact-finding, arbitration or otherwise between the
14 parties.

15 (d) The decision of the panel of arbitrators shall be final and binding on the
16 parties and shall include an opinion and an award. The arbitrators shall have a
17 period of sixty (60) days from the termination of the hearing in which to submit
18 their decision to the parties.

19 (e) Costs of interest arbitration shall be divided one-half to the public
20 employer and one-half to the recognized employee organization.

1 **Section 113. Fiscal Responsibility.**

2 (a) Negotiations over wages, monetary benefits, step increases, differential
3 pay, leave cash-out formulas, or other economic item shall be limited to the funding
4 levels appropriated by the Legislature and to available revenues as certified by the
5 Secretary of Finance.

6 (b) No collective-bargaining agreement may obligate the Commonwealth
7 or any government entity to expend funds not already appropriated or to commit to
8 future appropriations.

9 (c) In the event projected revenue shortfalls occur, the employer may
10 reopen negotiations on economic items to ensure continued compliance with
11 Commonwealth budget law.

12 (d) A collective-bargaining agreement requiring public expenditure shall
13 take effect unless the Legislature appropriates the necessary funds. Any economic
14 item not funded by law is null and void.

15 (e) The governor shall not approve any agreement unless accompanied with
16 a Fiscal Impact Statement confirming that projected costs fall within current
17 revenue forecasts and statutory spending limits.

18 (f) No government entity may enter into or enforce any agreement that
19 creates an unfunded mandate or obligates expenditures exceeding appropriations.
20 Violations of this subsection shall be reported to the Office of the Public Auditor.

21 **Section 114. Global Amendments (Firefighters).**

1 (a) Definition Alignment:

2 Any government agency, instrumentality, or independent program in the
3 Commonwealth employing firefighters shall define a "firefighter" as an employee
4 engaged in fire protection activities as defined in 29 U.S.C. §§ 203 (c), (x), and (y)
5 (1) and (2) and 29 C.F.R. § 553.230.

6 (b) FLSA Compliance:

7 To ensure compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), all
8 firefighters employed by the CNMI Government, including those under the
9 Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS) and
10 Commonwealth Ports Authority Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting (CPA ARFF),
11 shall be subject to the provisions of 29 U.S.C. § 207(k) and 29 C.F.R. § 553.230.
12 Firefighter personnel shall work a minimum 53-hour workweek and 106 hours per
13 pay period, with a work period of no fewer than 7 consecutive days and no more
14 than 28 consecutive days, in accordance with federal labor standards for fire
15 protection and emergency medical services personnel.

16 (c) Emergency Essential Designation:

17 Firefighters shall be designated as key and emergency essential personnel and
18 shall perform essential emergency functions in response to natural disasters, man-
19 made emergencies, or other catastrophic events. Their designation as emergency
20 essential employees shall ensure their availability for deployment during
21 emergencies at the Local, State, and Federal levels and shall enable the

1 Commonwealth to seek full federal reimbursement for all firefighter operational
2 expenditures incurred during such events.

3 (d) Recognition of Collective Bargaining Representative:

4 Firefighters who are active, dues-paying members of the International
5 Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) and are in good standing under the Northern
6 Marianas Professional Firefighters Union (NMPFU) IAFF-Local 5335 shall be
7 recognized as members of the sole and exclusive bargaining representative for
8 firefighters employed by the Commonwealth. The CNMI Government shall
9 acknowledge this representation in all matters related to collective bargaining,
10 wages, benefits, and employment conditions.”

11 **Section 4. Severability.** If any provisions of this Act or the application of
12 any such provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court
13 of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its
14 provisions to persons or circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid
15 shall not be affected thereby.

16 **Section 5. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein shall
17 not be construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired
18 under statutes repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted under the
19 statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted
20 under or pursuant to prior law. The enactment of the Act shall not have the effect

1 of terminating, or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal, which shall
2 already be in existence on the date this Act becomes effective.

3 **Section 6. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the
4 Governor, or it becoming law without such approval.

Prefiled: 3/18/2025

Date: _____

Introduced by: /s/ Rep. Blas Jonathan "BJ" T. Attao
/s/ Rep. Joel C. Camacho
/s/ Rep. Marissa R. Flores

Reviewed for legal sufficiency by:

/s/ Joseph L.G. Tajeron, Jr.
House Legal Counsel
Date: 3/18/2025



Northern Marianas Professional Firefighters Union
IAFF - Local 5335

P.O. Box 5763 CHRB
Saipan, MP 96950



November 21, 2025

Karl R. King-Nabors, Senate President
24th Northern Marianas Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Subject: H.B. 24-15 "CNMI Labor-Management Relations Act"



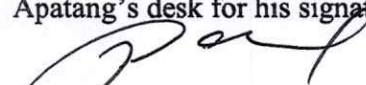
Hafa Adai Senate President King-Nabors:

This is a follow on to this house bill that was passed and transmitted back in May 19, 2025 to then Senate President and now Lt. Governor Dennis C. Mendiola and to you as the then Committee Chairperson for the Senate's Judiciary, Government and Law (JGL).

After the passing of the late Governor Arnold I. Palacios in July 23, 2025, you became the Senate President and Senator Donald M. Manglona became the new Chairperson to the JGL committee. As we do understand that the Senate is busy with other important matters, this pending legislation is as equally important to the people of the CNMI.

We have made numerous attempts to schedule a committee meeting with Senator Manglona to discuss this very important bill to answer any questions on how it affects CNMI Government employees as a whole and more specifically for firefighters in the CNMI by advocating effectively for fair wages, comprehensive benefits, safe working conditions, and a better quality of life.

The Northern Marianas Professional Firefighters Union (NMPFU) - IAFF Local 5335 and the CNMI Order of Professional Policing (OPP) asks for your assistance and support in expeditiously moving this important legislation forward for passage in the Senate and then to Governor David M. Apatang's desk for his signature into law.


Paul B. Sasamoto, President
NMPFU IAFF - Local 5335


Cris John R. Deleon Guerrero, President
CNMI Order of Professional Policing

Received By: Jonathan OLC
Office of Senator Karl R. King-Nabors

Date: 11-21-25

Cc: David M. Apatang, Governor
Edmund S. Villagomez, House Speaker
Edward A. Kelly, IAFF General President
Stephen Gilman, IAFF 10th District VP
Brad Ruzzala, NMI News Service
Chris Nelson, KSPN2 News

Dennis C. Mendiola, Lt. Governor
Donald M. Manglona, Chairperson - JGL
Peter J. Leff, IAFF General Counsel
Tony Spitaleri, IAFF Lead Negotiator
Thomas Manglona II, Marianas Press

Juan Rebuenog Camacho
camacho.juanr@gmail.com

December 01, 2025

Committee Chairman Donald M. Manglona
CNMI Legislature



Dear Senator Manglona and Committee members:

I am writing this letter to show FULL Support of HB 24-15 ("To establish public sector employee and public sector employer relations through organized labor within the Commonwealth; and other purposes.") Passing this bill is mile stone in ensuring our workers are equally protected and having equal opportunities across the CNMI government.

Passing this bill will not only benefit the employees and employers but as a whole CNMI government. Establishing a Labor Union will provide first responders with Better Safer Workplace, Better Wages, Improve Working Conditions, Training and Development to Enhance the Skills for our First Responders, and the Worker Voice to improve Communications.

I Respectfully ask you, as the Committee Chairman and members to push forward and pass HB 24-15 so that our First Responders Men and Women can have the much needed support to continue serving our Community.

Thank You for your Continued Support.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Juan Rebuenog Camacho", written in a cursive style.

Juan Rebuenog Camacho

Mildred Sablan-Camacho

mildred.sablan@gmail.com; (670) 483-8350

PO Box 504585

Saipan, CNMI 96950

December 1, 2025

The Honorable Senator Donald Manglona
CNMI Legislature

Dear Senator Manglona:

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 24-15 in the Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature. This bill is a critical step toward strengthening labor rights, supporting collective bargaining, and ensuring fair protections for workers across the Commonwealth.

Labor unions have always played a central role in uplifting working families by advocating for equitable wages, improved benefits, safer workplaces, and fair employer-employee relations. The passage of HB 24-15 will help reinforce those values by promoting clearer guidelines for workplace cooperation, empowering labor representation, and modernizing labor frameworks to reflect current economic and social realities in the CNMI.

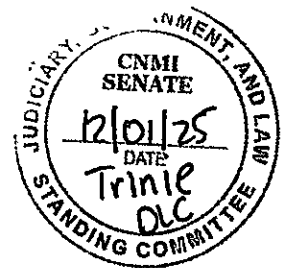
This legislation is especially meaningful to me because I firmly believe in advocating for employees, labor standards, and an equitable workplace policy in the Commonwealth, and I believe that supporting organized labor results in long-term benefits for employees, employers, and the community. When workers are given the chance to collaborate through structured collective-bargaining processes, the Commonwealth improves retention, morale, productivity, and service to the public.

I also acknowledge the importance of labor unions to Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, where many residents depend on fair employment systems that value both economic stability and worker dignity.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you and your colleagues to vote in favor of HB 24-15 and to champion its advancement. Thank you for your continued leadership and service to our islands. I look forward to the positive impact this bill will bring to our workforce and future generations.

Sincerely,


Mildred Sablan-Camacho



12/01/2025

Attention: JGL Committee Chairman: Senator Donald Mangloña



Dear Senator Donald Mangloña,

I am writing to express my strong support for CMI House Bill 24-15, which aims to bring Labor Union representation to the Department of Public Safety police officers and firefighters. This bill is crucial in ensuring that our brave first responders have the necessary resources and protections to serve our community effectively.

The proposed legislation would provide a standing contract that guarantees Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for our police officers and firefighters, enabling them to perform their duties safely and efficiently, regardless of administrative changes. This is a vital step towards prioritizing the well-being and safety of those who risk their lives to protect us.

I urge you to support this bill and advocate for the rights of our dedicated public safety officers. By doing so, we can ensure they have the support they need to continue serving the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands with excellence.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Naomi Cabrera Sablan".

Naomi Cabrera Sablan

12/01/2025

Attention: JGL Committee Chairman: Senator Donald Mangloña



Dear Senator Donald Mangloña,

I'm writing to express my wholehearted support for CNMI House Bill 24-15, a bill that recognizes the bravery and dedication of our Department of Public Safety police officers and firefighters. As a member of this community, I've seen firsthand the risks our first responders take every day to keep us safe.

This bill is more than just a labor union; it's a promise to our heroes that their voices will be heard and their safety will be prioritized. The Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) provided through this bill will give them the protection they need to do their jobs without fear of injury or harm.

The opportunity for our police officers and firefighters to have a safe space to discuss workplace concerns, free from intimidation or retaliation, is invaluable. This bill will foster a culture of respect, trust, and collaboration, leading to better outcomes for our community.

I know that our first responders are committed to serving us, but it's our turn to support them. CNMI House Bill 24-15 is a crucial step towards recognizing their sacrifices and dedication. I strongly urge you to pass this bill and give our heroes the support they deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Herman Camacho Santos Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

Herman Camacho Santos Jr.

Leilani Sablan Cepeda
Kagman III
leilanicepeda12@gmail.com; (671) 685-2221
December 1, 2025



Senator Donald Manglona
Committee Chairman

Hafa Adai and Tirow Senator Manglona,

I am writing with heartfelt support for H.B. No. 24-15 (“To establish public sector employee and public sector employer relations through organized labor within the Commonwealth; and for other purposes.”). This legislation would finally give our public-sector workers the ability to organize and advocate for themselves in a fair and structured way.

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) has always been built on the hard work of everyday people—those who show up, often quietly and without recognition, to keep our islands functioning. Whether they work in education, public safety, healthcare, maintenance, administration, or countless other essential roles, these employees give so much of themselves to serve our community. They deserve a voice equal to their commitment. For too long, many of our public workers have had no meaningful avenue to express concerns about their working conditions, safety, workload, or the basic resources they need to do their jobs well. H.B. 24-15 would change that by establishing a respectful, collaborative process that strengthens—not divides—the relationship between government and the people who serve within it.

This bill is not about creating conflict. It is about ensuring fairness, dignity, and open communication. It recognizes that when workers feel heard and supported, they serve the community more effectively, morale improves, and the quality of public services rises. In a small island community like ours, these improvements ripple outward and benefit every family.

I humbly ask for your leadership in advancing H.B. 24-15. It is a step toward a stronger, more united CNMI—one where our government employees feel valued not only in words but also through the protections and rights they deserve.

Thank you for your time, your consideration, and your continued service to the people of the CNMI. Si Yu’us Ma’ase & Ghilissow!

Respectfully,

Leilani Sablan Cepeda

Senate JGO Committee

Subject: House Bill 24-15 Public Comment

I rise in strong support of this bill because it speaks directly to the safety, dignity, and rights of the men and women who put their lives on the line every single day. Firefighters do not have the luxury of hesitation. When alarms sound, they respond—not for recognition, not for personal gain, but out of duty and commitment to the communities they serve.

This legislation ensures that these public servants have a fair voice in decisions that impact their working conditions, equipment, staffing, and overall safety. A stronger, empowered firefighter workforce means safer communities. When firefighters are protected, trained, heard, and supported, response times improve, risks decrease, and lives are saved.

Passing this bill is not about politics—it is about people. It is about ensuring that those who protect us have the support and representation they need to continue protecting others. A union is not an obstacle; it is a tool that strengthens accountability, communication, and collaboration between firefighters and the government they serve under.

Today, we have the chance to stand with our first responders and affirm that their wellbeing matters. I urge my fellow Senators to vote yes, and to move this critical bill forward. Our firefighters show up for us every day—let us show up for them today.

Thank you

FF1 DIANOAH REYES

CPA - ARFF

Senate JGO Committee
RECEIVED
DATE: 12/22/25 

Senate JGO Committee

Subject: House Bill 24-15 Public Comment

I am writing in full support of Union 5335 and the passage of this important labor bill. As firefighters and first responders, we operate in environments that demand constant readiness, sacrifice, and professionalism. Every shift carries risk, and every response requires full trust in our training, leadership, and protection under the law.

This bill is essential because it strengthens the voice of the men and women who serve on the front lines. When firefighters are fairly represented, properly equipped, and supported through strong labor protections, the entire community benefits. Safer working conditions lead to better performance, faster response times, and ultimately, saved lives.

Union 5335 is not about division—it is about unity, accountability, and ensuring that those who dedicate their lives to protecting others are also protected in return. This legislation supports transparency, communication, and fairness between firefighters and those who oversee public safety operations.

I strongly urge our leaders to vote in favor of this bill. Supporting this legislation means supporting the people who answer the call without hesitation, day or night. We show up for our communities every day—now we ask that our leaders show up for us.

Respectfully,

[Jonathan Mirefel]

FF / ARFF

Union 5335

Senate JGO Committee
RECEIVED
DATE: 12/22/25 *JA*

Senate JGO Committee

Subject: House Bill 24-15 Public Comment

Good Morning, Senators,

We need this bill to pass for our hours not to be touched, also for better pay scale and also to give us extra PPE for all firefighters. We also need the bill for us to have a laundry room so we dont have to bring our contaminated gear home with us. This bill ensures we get a chance to ensure that can happen.

Thank you.

Lionel Sanchez

Local 5335 - Northern Marianas Professional Fire Fighters Union

Senate JAL Committee
RECEIVED
DATE: 12/02/25 *AS*



Northern Marianas Professional Firefighters Union

IAFF - Local 5335

P.O. Box 5763 CHR

Saipan, MP 96950



Name	23rd CNMI Legislature	Do you support organized Labor in the CNMI, AKA Unions, as well as the rights of all public sector employees to collectively bargain?				
		Yes	No	No Comm	Date	Initial
Edmund Sablan Villagomez	House of Representatives	✓			10/16	ED/PS
Joel Castro Camacho	House of Representatives	✓			10/24	JS
Edwin Kenneth Propst	House of Representatives	✓			10/24	JL
Roy Christopher Ada	House of Representatives	✓			10/24	CR
Vincent Seman Aldan	House of Representatives	✓			10/18	PS
Blas Jonathan "BJ" Tenorio Attao	House of Representatives				10/15	PS/AL II
Roman Cepeda Benavente	House of Representatives	✓			10/23/24	RB
Angelo Atalig Camacho	House of Representatives	✓			10/23	AC
Diego Vincent Fejeran Camacho	House of Representatives	✓			10/24	DC
Vincent Castro Camcho	House of Representatives	✓			10/15	BC
Manny Gregory Tenorio Camacho	House of Representatives	✓			10/16	PS/10/16
Joseph Arriola Flores	House of Representatives					
Marissa Arriola Flores	House of Representatives					
Thomas John Dela Cruz Manglona	House of Representatives	✓			10/16	TS/PS/10
Julie Marie Atalig Ogo	House of Representatives	✓				
Malcolm Jason Omar	House of Representatives	✓			10/23	JS/PS
John Paul Palacios Sablan	House of Representatives	✓			10/23	PS
Patrick Hofschneider San Nicolas	House of Representatives					
Denita Kaipat Yangetmai	House of Representatives	✓			10/25/24	KB
Ralph Naraja Yumul	House of Representatives	✓			10/23/24	Y
Edith E. Deleon Guerrero	Senate					
Donald Manalang Manglona	Senate	✓			10/16	ED/PS/JS
Corina Lorraine Magofna	Senate					JS
Celina Roberto Babauta	Senate	✓			24 Oct 24	CB
Francisco Quichuchu Cruz	Senate	✓			10/10	ED/PS/PS
Jude Untalan Hofschneider	Senate	✓			10/16	ED/TS/PS
Karl Rosario King-Nabors	Senate	✓				PS
Paul Atalig Manglona	Senate	✓			10/16	ED/PS/PS
Dennis James Camacho	Senate	✓			10/23	ED/JS
Mendiola		✓			200m	ED/JS

Senate JFIL Committee
RECEIVED
 DATE: 12/23/25

December 1, 2025

Senate JHL Committee
RECEIVED
DATE: 120225 *R*

Senator Donald M. Manglona
Chairman – Judiciary, Government, and Law
24th Northern Marianas Legislature

Senate President Karl King Nabors

Senator Paul A. Manglona
Senator Ronnie M. Calvo

Senator Jude Hofschneider
Senator Francisco Q. Cruz

Senator Celina R. Babauta
Senator Corina Magofna
Senator Manny T. Castro

Paul B. Sasamoto
President
Northern Marianas Professional Firefighters Union Local 5335
Affiliated with International Association of Fire Fighters

Hafa Adai,

As officers and agents of the only organized labor union within the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Government, the **Northern Marianas Professional Firefighters Union (NMPFU) – IAFF Local 5335** and the **CNMI Order of Professional Policing (OPP)** has joined forces and combined our efforts to strongly support and advocate for the swift passage of **CNMI House Bill No. 24-15** “to establish public sector employee and public sector employer relations through organized labor within the Commonwealth; and for other purpose”.

Both of our organizations represent key and emergency essential employees who are firefighters from the CNMI **Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS)** and the **Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) – Aircraft and Rescue Fire Fighting (ARFF)** and **Police Officers from the CNMI Department of Public Safety (DPS)** and other law

enforcement agencies who are vital to the safety, security, health and well-being of all citizens within the Commonwealth.

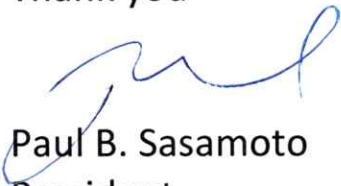
Our “founding fathers” of the CNMI realized this fundamental right when they passed the **“Minimum Wages and Hour Act”** which became **Public Law 1-20 in 1979** and essentially gave CNMI Government employees the right of collective bargaining protected that stated **“nothing shall interfere with, impede or in any way diminish the right of employees to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing”**. As simple insignificant as it was, our “founding fathers” may had not realize that a time will come when in 46 years that history is in the making and is about to unfold where employees proudly come together in a unified voice to represent themselves on all matters of employer-employee relations pertaining to salaries, wages, hours and terms and condition of employment.

We truly appreciate the CNMI House of Representatives for realizing the importance of this matter and passed the bill unanimously back in May 2025 but more importantly provided some specificity on how this process works where all CNMI Government employees an benefit from and practice a true form of democracy. This bill is intended to work with management in addressing specific labor and employee relations to improve the workforce based on industry standards and ensure a better quality of life for all employees. The collective bargaining agreements will also address requirements needed to provide resources such as training and equipment to support their specific missions. It will ensure a fair and competitive merit process for promotions that only the most qualified individual will be chosen without fear of political interference or

other influential factors. It will also allow an employee to have proper representation when faced with disciplinary action and cannot afforded due process. **Some only ask for Job protection and security, fair treatment, and benefits.**

We ask for the support of the CNMI Senate in this committee and as a whole to pass this bill and send it expeditiously to Governor David M. Apatang for his signature into law.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul B. Sasamoto', written in a cursive style.

Paul B. Sasamoto
President

NMPFU-L5335

TITLE 4: ECONOMIC RESOURCES
DIVISION 9: LABOR

§ 9237. Right of Collective Bargaining Protected.

Nothing in this chapter shall be deemed to interfere with, impede or in any way diminish the right of employees to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing in order to establish wages in excess of the applicable minimum under this chapter or to establish hours of work shorter than the applicable maximum under this chapter.

Source: PL 1-20, § 14.

TITLE 4: ECONOMIC RESOURCES
DIVISION 9: LABOR

§ 9407. Deduction of Labor Organization Membership Dues From Wages.

Nothing in this chapter shall preclude any employer from deducting from the wages of the employees and paying over to any labor organization, or its authorized representative, membership dues in a labor organization; provided, that the employer has received from each employee whose account such deductions are made, a written assignment which shall not be irrevocable for a period of more than one year, or beyond the termination date of any applicable collective agreement or assignment, whichever occurs sooner.

Source: PL 9-48, § 8.



RAYMOND M. MUNA
Chairman, CSC

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

P.O. BOX 5153 CHRIB, SAIPAN, MP 96950-5153
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OPM TEL. NO: (670) 234-6925/6958 / FAX NO: (670) 234-1013
CSC website: <http://www.cnmicsc.net> / OPM website: <http://www.cnmiopm.net>



JOSEPH M. PANGELINAN
Director of Personnel

TO : Juan A. Pua
Commissioner, DFEMS

DATE: July 29, 2025

FROM : Director of Personnel

SUBJECT : Compliance with Public Law 21-09 – Firefighter Work Hours


Following our recent discussions regarding the work schedules of your Fire Crew Supervisors, Fire Captains, and Assistant Fire Chiefs, I have reviewed the Enterprise Employee Resource Planning (EERP) data system and noted that, for pay periods 14 and 15, these personnel continue to be scheduled and compensated for 106 regular hours. This practice persists despite our mutual agreement to begin adjusting their schedules to ensure compliance with Public Law 21-09.

Please be reminded that while Public Law 18-73 authorizes you to schedule firefighters for up to 106 regular hours per pay period, it does not mandate this as a requirement. The Regular Work Schedule Guide I previously provided is not optional—it is a directive intended to ensure that high-ranking firefighters do not exceed the salary limits established by law by year-end.

I have briefed our legal counsel at the Office of the Attorney General regarding the continued scheduling of 106 regular hours. Based on their guidance, I am formally reminding you in writing of the need to comply with Public Law 21-09. I remain committed to working collaboratively with you and our legal counsel to ensure full compliance with all applicable statutes. Please be advised that failure to adhere to these legal requirements may result in avoidable legal consequences.

Let us continue to work together to ensure that all firefighters are scheduled appropriately and compensated in accordance with the law. I will also be coordinating with other departments and agencies to ensure compliance with Public Law 21-09 across the board.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support.


Respectfully,
Joseph M. Pangelinan

xc: Civil Service Commission
Attorney General
Chief, C&C, OPM

Senate JGO Committee

Subject: House Bill 24-15 Public Comment

Good Morning, Senators,

Thank you for allowing me to speak today. I'm here not just as a firefighter, but as someone who believes deeply in the power of collective bargaining and the vital role that public sector employees play in protecting our communities and our profession.

Firefighters serve in one of the most dangerous professions. Because of this, the people making decisions about firefighter safety, staffing, benefits, equipment, and training must understand exactly why collective bargaining matters.

Collective bargaining is not a privilege. It is a lifeline.

It ensures that firefighters—those who stand on the front lines of public safety—have a seat at the table when decisions are made. It gives us the ability to advocate for what we know is necessary to keep our citizens safe. Nobody understands risk better than the firefighter who has felt the heat through the gear, or the medics who perform CPR on a stranger in an intersection at 3 a.m. And that is why lawmakers should care deeply about preserving and strengthening collective bargaining rights.

Strong unions lead to safer communities.

Through collective bargaining, we push for adequate staffing levels, safe response times, updated equipment, and proper training standards. These aren't luxuries—these are life-saving essentials. They directly impact survival rates in medical emergencies, fire containment, and firefighter injury prevention.

Collective bargaining protects firefighter health—both physical and mental.

Lawmakers should support unions because firefighter issues are community issues.

When we push for improved equipment, we are advocating for safer rescues in your neighbourhood.

When we fight for mental health resources, we are ensuring the firefighter who responds to your family's emergency is healthy, capable, and supported.

Our mission is simple: protect the people who protect the public.

Collective bargaining gives firefighters the tools to do exactly that.

I urge lawmakers to recognize that unions are not an obstacle—they are a partner. A partner committed to public safety, fiscal responsibility, and the well-being of every citizen

we serve. When we strengthen firefighter rights, we strengthen the resilience, preparedness, and safety of our entire community.

Firefighters stand ready every day to serve. All we ask is that lawmakers stand with us—support collective bargaining, support unions, and support the men and women who risk everything to keep our communities safe.



Thank you.

Edward S. Dela Cruz Jr
Vice President

Local 5335 - Northern Marianas Professional Fire Fighters Union