



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

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 24-71
Date: February 11, 2026
RE: House Bill No. 24-49

Honorable Karl R. King-Nabors
President of the Senate
Twenty-Third Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mister President:

Your Committee on Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications, to which was referred House Bill No. 24-49, entitled:

“To establish the CNMI Next/Gen 911 Telephone Communications System within the CNMI; and for other purposes.”

begs leave to report as follows:

I. RECOMMENDATION:

After considerable discussion and deliberation, your Committee recommends passage of House Bill No. 24-49 in its original form.

II. ANALYSIS:

A) Purpose:

The purpose of House Bill No. 24-49 is to enhance and modernize 911 services in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands by implementing the “CNMI Next Gen 911 Telephone Communications System” to further ensure residents and visitors’ rapid and direct access to emergency services.

B) Committee Findings:

Your Committee finds that the current 911 emergency communication system implemented in the CNMI lacks a clearly designated lead agency, as it is presently housed within the Department of Public Safety (DPS) without centralized statutory authority. To establish clear oversight and accountability, the proposed legislation offers to transfer all associated programs, personnel, positions, property, and appropriations from DPS and any other relevant agencies to the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS).

Your Committee further finds that the existing 911 emergency communication system has not operated at an optimal level due to insufficient staffing, funding, equipment, supplies, and coordination. To develop a fully operational and nationally compliant emergency communications system, the proposed legislation identifies the urgent need for twelve full-time dispatchers, a Section Officer in Charge within the DFEMS Division of Emergency Services, and adequate funding to support operations, training, equipment, and personnel. These improvements are intended to provide CNMI residents and visitors with dependable and efficient access to emergency services, thereby enhancing response times for police, fire, medical, and other emergencies.

Your Committee met on February 11, 2026 to discuss the provisions of the proposed legislation. The Committee raised concerns with respect to the implementation of the CNMI Next Gen 911 Telephone Communications System and how calls regarding different emergencies will be routed between DPS and DFEMS. The Committee invited Assistant Fire Chief Cody Norita forward to discuss the concerns under recess where he was able to address the concerns raised by the Committee. After discussion with the DFEMS Assistant Fire Chief Cody Norita, the Committee agreed with the provisions entailed in the proposed legislation, and no member objected to the passage of House Bill No. 24-49 in its current form.

C) Legislative History:

House Bill No. 24-49 was formally introduced by Representative Malcom J. Omar on August 11, 2025. On September 09, 2025, during the Third Day, Second Regular Session of the House of Representatives, House Bill No. 24-49 was passed on first and final reading. On September 10, 2025, House Bill No. 24-49, was transmitted to the Senate. On September 30, 2025, House Bill No. 24-49 was referred to the Senate Standing Committee on Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications for disposition.

D) Public Hearing and Comment:

1. Public Hearing. No public hearing was scheduled for House Bill No. 24-49. However, a committee meeting, which is open to the public, was held to receive written and oral testimonies on any proposed legislation appearing on the agenda. See below for further details.

2. Committee Meeting. The proposed legislation made its first appearance during the scheduled committee meeting on February 11, 2026 in which your Committee deliberated on the provisions stated in the proposed legislation and the comments provided to the Committee for review.

The respective Committee Meeting notices and agendas were officially posted on various legislative forums and social media sites in accordance with the Open Government Act to invite members of the general public to provide comments as indicated under Item No. III. Public Comment of the Committee Agenda. During the committee meeting, no public comments were provided on the proposed legislation.

3. Written Comment. To date, the status of the comments received from government and private agencies are as follows:
 - a. Juan A. Pua, Commissioner, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services
 - b. Cody Julian T. Norita, Assistant Fire Chief, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services

E) Estimated Fiscal Cost:

No fiscal impact analysis was prepared for the proposed legislation.

The enactment of House Bill No. 24-49 will result in additional costs to the CNMI Government as it authorizes fifteen (15) FTEs necessary to facilitate the “CNMI Next Gen 911 Telephone Communications System”. Additional costs include procurement and installation of the enhanced 911 telecommunications system, construction or renovation of a 911 Call Center facility, training and certification, national association memberships, and ongoing maintenance and connectivity expenses. However, the proposed legislation also establishes a dedicated “911 Surcharge” on landline, wireless, broadband/internet, prepaid wireless, and related services. Revenues collected will be deposited into a newly created “CNMI 911 Emergency Call Center Fund”, intended to offset operational, personnel and other expenses associated with the implementation of the “CNMI Next Gen 911 Telephone Communications System” under the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services.

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 passage in the form of House Bill No. 24-49 in its original form.

Respectfully submitted,



Senator Manny Gregory T. Castro
Chairperson

Senator Jude U. Hofschneider
Vice Chairperson

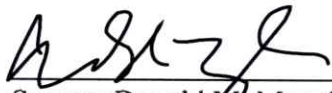


Senator Ronnie M. Calvo
Member



Senator Francisco Q. Cruz
Member

Senator Corina L. Magofna
Member



Senator Donald M. Manglona
Member

Reviewed by:



Senate Legal Counsel

Attachments:

- Juan A. Pua, Commissioner, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, *letter dated January 16, 2026*
- Cody Julian T. Norita, Assistant Fire Chief, Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, *letter dated January 21, 2026*



David M. Apatang
Governor

DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Ascension St
Capitol Hill BLDG # 1342



Dennis C. Mendiola
Lt. Governor

January 16, 2026

The Honorable Manny Gregorio Castro Senator
24th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
Third Senatorial District
Chairman, Senate Public Utilities, Transportation, and Communications Committee
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Capitol Hill
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Chairman Castro:

RE: Support for House Bill 24-49 – CNMI Next/Gen 911 Telephone Communications System

My name is Juan Pua Commissioner of Fire and EMS. On behalf of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, I am writing to express our strong support for House Bill 24-49, which seeks to establish the CNMI Next/Gen 911 Telephone Communications System within the Commonwealth.

The implementation of a Next Generation 911 system is critical to enhancing our emergency response capabilities and ensuring the safety of all CNMI residents and visitors. This modernized infrastructure will enable our emergency services to receive and process calls more efficiently, including the ability to accept text messages, images, and video, which are essential in today's digital age.

As first responders, we recognize that a robust and technologically advanced 911 system is the foundation of effective emergency services. The current system's limitations impact our ability to respond quickly and appropriately to emergencies. House Bill 24-49 represents a significant step forward in addressing these challenges and will ultimately save lives.

The CNMI Department of Fire and EMS stands ready to work collaboratively with the Senate Public Utilities, Transportation, and Communications Committee and all stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of this vital system.

We respectfully urge your committee's favorable consideration and passage of House Bill 24-49.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to improving emergency services in the Commonwealth.



David M. Apatang
Governor

**DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**
Ascencion St
Capitol Hill BLDG # 1342



Dennis C. Mendiola
Lt. Governor

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Juan".

Juan A. Pua
Commissioner



David M. Apatang
Governor

**DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**
Ascencion Ct
Capitol Hill BLDG # 1342



Dennis C. Mendiola
Lt. Governor

**LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR HB 24-49
An Act to Establish the CNMI NEXTGEN 911 System**

January 21, 2026

Honorable Members of the CNMI Senate,
CNMI Legislature
Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands

Subject: Letter of Support for House Bill 24-49 – Establishment of the CNMI NEXTGEN 911 System

Honorable Senators,

I respectfully submit this letter in strong support of House Bill 24-49, an Act to establish the CNMI NEXTGEN 911 System. As public safety professionals entrusted with protecting the lives and property of our residents and visitors, we recognize that a modern, reliable, and technologically capable emergency communication system is essential to effective emergency response.

The current 911 infrastructure in the Commonwealth has served its purpose for many years; however, it is limited in capability and no longer meets the evolving needs of today's emergency environment. The NEXTGEN 911 system will modernize emergency communications by enabling advanced call routing, improved caller location accuracy, enhanced interoperability among response agencies, and the ability to receive text messages, images, and data. These improvements will significantly reduce response times, increase situational awareness for first responders, and ultimately save lives.

In the Fire and Emergency Services community, seconds matter. Accurate information and rapid communication directly impact operational effectiveness and responder safety. NEXTGEN 911 will allow dispatchers to better assess emergencies, deploy appropriate resources, and maintain continuity of communications during large-scale incidents or natural disasters—events for which our islands are particularly vulnerable.

Furthermore, establishing the CNMI NEXTGEN 911 system demonstrates a commitment to aligning the Commonwealth with national emergency communication standards and best practices. This investment strengthens public confidence in our emergency services and ensures we are better prepared for future challenges.



David M. Apatang
Governor

**DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**
Ascencion Ct
Capitol Hill BLDG # 1342



Dennis C. Mendiola
Lt. Governor

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Honorable Members of the Senate to support and pass House Bill 24-49. The safety of our community, our responders, and our visitors depends on a modern and resilient emergency communication system.

Thank you for your consideration and continued dedication to public safety in the Commonwealth.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Cody Julian T. Norita".

Cody Julian T. Norita
Assistant Fire Chief
Department of Fire and EMS
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
(670) 783-2779



Hse. Comm. No. 2479

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH
LEGISLATURE

Vice Speaker Jesus P. Mafnas Memorial Building
Capitol Hill
Saipan, MP 96950
cnmileg.net

September 10, 2025

The Honorable Karl R. King-Nabors
President
The Senate
Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Capitol Hill
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Senate President King-Nabors:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith for Senate *action* H. B. No. 24-49, entitled: "To establish the CNMI Next/Gen 911 Telephone Communications System within the CNMI; and for other purposes.", which was passed by the House of Representatives on First and Final Reading, by the majority vote of the members present, a quorum being present, during its Third Day, Second Regular Session on September 9, 2025.

Sincerely yours,


Linda B. Muña, MPA
House Clerk

Attachment

TRANSMITTAL TO THE SENATE

Received by: 

Date: 9/10/25

Time: 1:37 pm

TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH
LEGISLATURE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 15, 2025

Second Regular Session, 2025

H. B. 24-49

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To establish the CNMI Next/Gen 911 Telephone Communications System within the CNMI; and for other purposes.

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

1 **Section 1. Title.** This Act shall be known and may be cited as the "CNMI
2 Next/Gen 911 Communications Systems Act of 2025."

3 **Section 2. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that there is no
4 single governmental agency designated with the authority to establish, administer,
5 and maintain the existing emergency "911" telephone communication system that
6 is presently stationed at the Department of Public Safety. It is the intent of the
7 Legislature to transfer all programs, positions, personnel, property, and
8 appropriations which are currently under the direction of DPS or any other
9 government agency to the Department of Fire & EMS.

10 The Legislature finds that the emergency "911" system has not been
11 effectively and efficiently operational due to lack of personnel, funding, supplies
12 and equipment, and above all, coordinated efforts. The Legislature finds that twelve

1 full-time 911 Dispatchers, a Section Officer in Charge under the DFEMS division
2 of Emergency Services, funding for operations, equipment, personnel, training are
3 critically needed in order to establish a fully functional and national compliant
4 Emergency "911" communication system. Such a system will provide the residents
5 and visitors of the CNMI with rapid and direct access to emergency agencies with
6 the intent of reducing the response time to situations requiring police, fire, medical
7 and other emergency services.

8 The Legislature finds that there is a critical need for unified direction and
9 administration to resolve the current fragmented, referral type service, for training
10 of the Emergency 911 call takers. and a need for funding to include training,
11 additional personnel, and compliant emergency 911 communications equipment.

12 **Section 3. Amendment.** Title 1, Division 2, Part 1, Chapter 18, Article 4 of
13 the Commonwealth Code is hereby amended by adding a new section 28034 to read
14 as follows:

15 " § 28034. CNMI 911 Communications Systems.

16 **101. Definitions.**

17 (1) *Call Routing* shall mean the reception of emergency calls where the
18 purpose of it is to only determine the course of direction of routing (police,
19 fire, and medical) resulting in rapid transfer of medical emergency callers to
20 the Department of Fire & EMS.

1 (2) *Compliance to Protocol* shall mean the adherence to the written text
2 or scripts and other dispatch protocol reference system.

3 (3) *Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Program* shall mean a
4 program administered by the Department of Fire and EMS for the purpose of
5 insuring safe, efficient, and effective performance of dispatchers in regard to
6 their use of the dispatch protocol reference system.

7 (4) *Dispatch Lite Support (DLS)* shall mean the knowledge, procedures,
8 and skills used by trained Emergency Dispatchers in providing care and
9 advice through pre-arrival instructions and post-dispatch instructions to
10 callers requesting emergency medical assistance.

11 (5) *Emergency Dispatcher* shall mean a person trained and certified to
12 provide emergency dispatch services in accordance with guidelines approved
13 by the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services and is employed
14 by the Department of Fire and EMS.

15 (6) *Emergency Dispatching* shall mean the reception, evaluation,
16 processing, and provision of dispatch, management of requests for emergency
17 assistance, and participation on ongoing evaluation and improvement of the
18 emergency dispatch process. This process includes identifying the nature of
19 the request and prioritizing the severity of the request.

20 (7) *911 Call Center* shall mean a section of the CNMI Department of
21 Fire & EMS under the Division of Emergency Services that is tasked to

1 administer, maintain and operate all 911 emergency calls for police, fire and
2 medical dispatch services within the Commonwealth.

3 (8) *Emergency Dispatch Services* shall mean the process for taking
4 requests for emergency assistance from the public, identifying the nature of
5 the request, prioritizing the severity of the request based on policies and
6 procedures, dispatching the necessary resources, providing medical aid and
7 safety instructions to the callers, and coordinating the responding resources
8 as needed.

9 (9) *Next/Gen-911* shall mean the telephone, wireless, Voice Over IP
10 (VOIP), satellite and radio communications system specifically designated
11 for handling the police, fire, medical and public safety communications needs
12 of the CNMI. The system must automatically identify the caller's telephone
13 number, location with capabilities to receive and transmit SMS, Video
14 Message and Access for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities.

15 (10) *Quality Assurance and Improvement Program* shall mean a
16 program approved by the Department of Fire and EMS for the purpose of
17 insuring safe, efficient, and effective performance of emergency dispatchers.

18 (11) *Vehicle Response Configuration* shall mean the specific vehicle(s)
19 of varied types, capabilities, and numbers responding to render assistance.

1 (12) *Vehicle Response Mode* shall mean the use of emergency driving
2 techniques, such as warning lights-and-siren or routine driving response as
3 assigned by the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services.

4 **102. Certification.**

5 (1) No person may represent himself/herself as a dispatcher unless
6 certified in the CNMI by the Department of Fire and EMS.

7 (2) No business, organization, or government agency may represent
8 itself as an emergency dispatch agency unless the business, organization, or
9 government agency is certified by the Department of Fire and EMS.

10 **103. National Standards Required.**

11 The Department of Fire and EMS shall use applicable national
12 standards when developing the rules and regulations for emergency
13 dispatchers and emergency dispatch agencies.

14 **104. Authority and Responsibilities.**

15 Pursuant to this Act, the Department of Fire and EMS through its
16 Commissioner shall have the authority and responsibility to establish rules
17 and regulations, set standards, fees and collect fees for the following:

18 (1) All Emergency Dispatch Protocols, Reporting, Standards, All
19 Emergency Dispatcher Training, Curriculum, Certification and Re-
20 Certification.

1 (2) Land Based Mobile Dispatching:

2 (a) Land Based Mobile Radio System (Smart-Net);

3 (b) Rota, Tinian and Saipan in Interconnectivity.

4 Towers/Repeaters on each island; and

5 (c) Interoperability means upgrading Rota and Tinian to
6 SmartNet and away from VHF.

7 (3) Access for individuals with hearing and speech disabilities will be
8 implemented in current and all future upgrades:

9 (a) The CNMI Department of Fire & EMS's Emergency 911
10 Telephone Communications System shall be accessible to individuals
11 with hearing and speech disabilities.

12 (b) The means for such accessibility shall primarily be mobile and
13 landline telephones, but nothing herein shall be construed as to limit the
14 CNMI Department of Fire & EMS from providing access to the
15 Emergency 911 Telephone Communications System through other
16 modes of communication.

17 (4) Violations and Penalties.

18 (a) Any person guilty of willfully violating or failing to comply
19 with any provisions of this Act or regulations set forth by the
20 Department of Fire and EMS shall be fined not more than two hundred

1 fifty dollars (\$250), or imprisoned not more than three months, or both,
2 per incident.

3 (b) Any agency or organization guilty of willfully violating or
4 failing to comply with any provision of this Act or regulations set forth
5 by the Department of Fire and EMS shall be fined not more than one
6 thousand dollars (\$1,000) or imprisoned not more than six months or
7 be both fined and imprisoned per incident.

8 **105. Authorization to Establish 911 Surcharge.**

9 (1) The Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission ("PUC") shall
10 establish and amend, as required, a monthly surcharge to be known as the
11 "911 Surcharge" to be paid by Local Exchange Telephone,
12 Broadband/Internet Providers and Commercial Mobile Radio Service
13 subscribers.

14 (2) If the PUC is not formalized then the rates listed in Section 105 shall
15 be in effect within 90 days upon enactment of this legislation.

16 (3) The "911 Surcharge" shall be established at a rate not less than the
17 listed amount per month.

18 **Monthly 911 Designated Fee**

| | |
|-------------------------|--------|
| 19 Individual landline | \$1.50 |
| 20 Individual Extension | \$.50 |
| 21 Individual Wireless | \$1.50 |

| | | |
|---|--|-------------------------|
| 1 | Individual Data in Wireless | \$1.00 |
| 2 | Individual Broadband/Internet subscription | \$1.00 |
| 3 | Radio/telephone | \$1.00 |
| 4 | Individual Prepaid Wireless | \$.50 |
| 5 | Prepaid Reload Card | 3% value of reload card |

6 (4) The purpose of the "911 Surcharge" is to fund the just and
7 reasonable expenses of operating and maintaining the enhanced "911"
8 emergency system.

9 **106. Collection of "911 Surcharge".**

10 (1) Each Local Exchange Carrier (LEC), Voice Over Internet Protocol
11 (VOIP) provider, Internet/broadband and Commercial Mobile Radio Service
12 (CMRS) provider shall collect the surcharge as established by the
13 Commission, and identify such as a separate line item on its invoice.

14 (2) Each LEC, VOIP, Internet/Broadband or CMRS provider shall
15 remit the amounts collected to the Department of Finance designated "911
16 Surcharge" account no later than forty-five (45) days of each monthly billing.

17 (3) Each LEC, VOIP, Internet/Broadband or CMRS provider shall
18 charge for "administrative fees" to cover actual expenses incurred for
19 collection services, maintaining the PSAP database, and for reports and audits
20 as may be required by the Commission. These "administrative fees" shall
21 NOT be charged to the monthly "911 Surcharge". The "administrative fees"

1 shall be a separate charge and designated separately as “administrative fee for
2 911” and identify such as a separate line item on each customer billing. Each
3 LEC, VOIP, Internet/Broadband or CMRS provider must ensure that the
4 “administrative fees” are consistent with a Commission-approved budget for
5 such expenses.

6 (4) The surcharges collected pursuant to this Act are not subject to any
7 tax, fee or assessment, nor are they considered revenue of the LEC, VOIP,
8 Internet/Broadband or CMRS provider.

9 (5) For purposes of this Act, a CMRS provider means a provider of
10 wireless cellular, telephone service, or wireless personal communications
11 service.

12 (6) Subscriber lines are the lines that Incumbent Local Exchange
13 Carriers (I-LEC) use to connect to, and that Competitive Local Exchange
14 Carriers (C-LEC) and Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) carriers use to
15 interconnect to, the local (CNMI) telephone exchange.

16 (7) For purposes of this Act, a VOIP provider means a provider of
17 telephone service over the internet, and within the 670 area code.

18 **107. Creation of CNMI 911 Emergency Special Fund.**

19 There is hereby created, separate and apart from all other funds of the
20 government, the CNMI 911 Emergency Call Center Fund. The Secretary of

1 Finance shall create this fund account within 60 days of the enactment into
2 law.

3 All the 911 surcharges collected by each LEC, VOIP,
4 Internet/Broadband or CMRS provider shall be deposited in the CNMI 911
5 Emergency Call Center Fund. The money collected and the interest earned
6 shall be used by the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services
7 solely for CNMI 911 Emergency Call Center. The Commissioner of the
8 Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services is the expenditure
9 authority of the CNMI 911 Emergency Call Center Fund.

10 The Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Service shall only use
11 the funds for the following:

12 (1) Costs associated in the procurement of land, design,
13 construction and maintenance of the CNMI 911 Emergency Call
14 Center.

15 (2) Purchase or lease of Next/Gen 911 or latest hardware,
16 software and radio dispatching equipment for CNMI 911 Emergency
17 Call Center System.

18 (3) Costs associated in the installation, maintenance and upgrade
19 of the Next/Gen 911 System.

20 (4) Associated monthly recurring costs related to the Next/Gen
21 911 system, operations and connectivity.

1 (5) All costs associated in hiring and staffing of the CNMI 911
2 Emergency Call Center System facility and operations.

3 (6) All training costs associated to the CNMI 911 Emergency Call
4 Center System.

5 (7) All costs for consulting services associated with promulgating
6 regulations, creating policy and procedures in the operations and
7 enhancement of the CNMI 911 Emergency Call Center.

8 (8) All costs related to membership in the National Emergency
9 Number Association (NENA), National Association of State 911
10 Administrators (NASNA), Association of Public Safety
11 Communication Officials (APCO), and other 911 related associations,
12 National Emergency Management Administrators (NEMA), the
13 International Association of Chief of Police (IACP), International
14 Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC), National Sheriffs Association
15 (NSA) and sub-divisions of these national association.

16 (9) All costs associated in attending national meetings,
17 conferences and expos to further enhance the CNMI 911 Emergency
18 Call Center.

19 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the CNMI 911 Emergency
20 Call Center Fund shall be available to the Department of Fire and Emergency
21 Medical Services without further appropriation. No monies in the CNMI 911

1 Emergency Call Center Fund shall be expended for purposes other than
2 provided for in this Section, without the expressed approval of the legislature.

3 **108. Exemptions from Surcharge.**

4 Recipients of life-line rates for local exchange telephone service, and
5 telecommunication services that are incapable of "911" access, including, but
6 not limited to, interstate and international interconnections, are exempted
7 from the "911 Surcharge".

8 **109. Uncollectible Surcharges.**

9 Each LEC, VOIP, Internet/Broadband or CMRS provider collecting the
10 surcharges shall be responsible for collection of surcharges.

11 **110. Establishment/Authorization of Positions.**

12 There is hereby authorized the creation of thirteen (15) new positions
13 within the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS)
14 Emergency Medical Dispatch Division, as follows:

15 (1) Twelve (12) Emergency Medical Dispatchers, to be classified
16 under the following ranks:

- 17 (a) Emergency Medical Dispatcher I;
18 (b) Emergency Medical Dispatcher II; and
19 (c) Emergency Medical Dispatcher III.

20 (2) One (1) Dispatch Office in Charge, who shall oversee the
21 operations of the Emergency Medical Division.

1 (3) One (1) IT Systems Administrator.

2 (4) One (1) IT Support Specialist.

3 (5) Duties and Responsibilities.

4 (a) Emergency Medical Dispatcher I (EMD-I): Entry-level
5 position responsible for answering emergency calls, dispatching
6 emergency units, and providing pre-arrival instructions to callers
7 under supervision.

8 (b) Emergency Medical Dispatcher II (EMD-II): Intermediate-
9 level dispatcher responsible for performing advanced call-taking and
10 dispatch duties, mentoring EMD-I personnel, and assisting with
11 quality assurance.

12 (c) Emergency Medical Dispatcher III (EMD-III): Senior-
13 level dispatcher with supervisory responsibilities over EMD-I and
14 EMD-II personnel, overseeing complex dispatch operations, and
15 assisting in training and evaluation.

16 (d) Dispatch Officer in Charge (DOIC): Division head
17 responsible for the management, administration, scheduling, and
18 operational oversight of the Emergency Medical Dispatch Division.

19 (e) IT Systems Administrator: Responsible for overseeing the
20 maintenance, security, and performance of all IT systems used in the

1 911 Call Center, including dispatch software, servers, network
2 infrastructure, and communications technology.

3 (f) IT Support Specialist: Responsible for providing day-to-
4 day technical support to 911 operations staff, ensuring software and
5 hardware functionality, assisting with troubleshooting, and
6 supporting cybersecurity protocols.

7 (4) Compensation.

8 The starting salary and schedule shall be determined by the
9 Commissioner of Fire and the Office of Personnel Management in
10 accordance with the Government Classification and Pay Plan and shall
11 be equal as such:

12 (a) Firefighter I- Emergency Medical Dispatcher I

13 (b) Firefighter II- Emergency Medical Dispatcher II

14 (c) Firefighter III- Emergency Medical Dispatcher III

15 (d) Fire Captain- Dispatch Section Officer in charge

16 (5) Regulations.

17 (a) The Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services,
18 in consultation with the Office of Personnel Management, shall
19 promulgate rules and regulations to implement the provisions of this
20 section, including but not limited to qualifications, training

1 requirements, and promotion criteria for the ranks established
2 herein.

3 (b) The Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services
4 shall establish minimum qualifications and job descriptions for the
5 IT Systems Administrator and IT Support Specialist positions in
6 accordance with civil service rules and applicable CNMI hiring
7 standards.”

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

13 **Section 5. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein
14 shall not be construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or
15 acquired under statutes repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted
16 under the statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding
17 instituted under or pursuant to prior law. The enactment of the Act shall not have
18 the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal,
19 which shall already be in existence on the date this Act becomes effective.

HOUSE BILL 24-49

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

Prefiled: 8/11/2025

Date: _____ Introduced by: /s/ Rep. Malcom J. Omar

Reviewed for Legal Sufficiency by:

/s/ Joseph L.G. Tajeron, Jr.
House Legal Counsel

Date: 8/11/2025



TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND
GOVERNMENTAL OPERATIONS
 P.O. BOX 500586 SAIPAN, MP 96950

JOEL C. CAMACHO
 CHAIRPERSON

Adopted - 9/19/2025
STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT NO. 24-34
DATE: August 21, 2025
RE: HOUSE BILL No. 24-49

The Honorable Edmund S. Villagomez
 Speaker of the House of Representatives
 Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas
 Commonwealth Legislature
 Capitol Hill
 Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. Speaker:

Your Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations to which was referred:

House Bill No. 24-49: "To establish the CNMI Next/Gen 911 Telephone Communications System within the CNMI; and for other purposes."

begs leave to report as follows:

I. RECOMMENDATION:

After considerable discussion, your Committee recommends that House Bill No. 24-49, be passed by the House in its current form.

IN L U L E K ' S O
 RECEIVED BY *[Signature]*
 9/5/2025
 DATE TIME: 11:02 AM

II. ANALYSIS:

A. Purpose:

The purpose of the proposed legislation is to establish and fund a unified, efficient, and fully operational CNMI Next/Gen 911 Emergency Communications System within the Department of Fire and EMS, including personnel, infrastructure, and funding mechanisms, to improve rapid emergency response and public safety across the CNMI.

B. Committee Findings:

Your Committee finds that the CNMI currently lacks a single designated agency responsible for establishing, operating, and maintaining the emergency "911" telephone system. The existing system at the Department of Public Safety has been ineffective due to insufficient personnel, funding, supplies, and coordination. To address these issues, the legislation proposes transferring all related programs, personnel, and assets to the Department of Fire and EMS, creating a unified authority to manage the emergency communications system.

Your Committee finds that there is an urgent need to develop a modern Next/Gen 911 system capable of handling police, fire, medical, and public safety calls across the CNMI. This system must include advanced features such as automatic caller identification, location services, SMS, video messaging, and accessibility for individuals with hearing and speech disabilities. Establishing this system will significantly improve response times and emergency services, thereby enhancing public safety throughout the territory.

Your Committee also finds that implementing the new system requires substantial investment in infrastructure, personnel, and technology. This includes hiring and training dispatchers at various levels, acquiring advanced hardware and software, and establishing operational protocols and policies. The legislation also authorizes the collection of surcharges from telecommunication providers to fund these costs, along with the creation of a dedicated Emergency Call Center Fund to ensure sustainable financial management for the enhanced emergency communication system.

E. Public Comments/Public Hearing:

No public comments were solicited, and none were submitted.

E. Legislative History:

On August 15, 2025, Representative Malcolm J. Omar introduced House Bill No. 24-49, which

was subsequently referred to the House Standing Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations for disposition on August 21, 2025.


F. Cost Benefit Analysis:

The enactment of House Bill No. 24-49 will likely lead to additional costs for the CNMI Government due to the need to establish new infrastructure, hire and train personnel such as dispatchers and IT staff, and procure advanced Next/Gen 911 technology. These expenses include salaries, equipment, training, and ongoing operational costs for the upgraded emergency communication system. While these costs will increase initial government spending, they are expected to be offset over time by improved efficiency, faster emergency response, and funding from the established 911 surcharge and related fees. Overall, the investment is justified by the enhanced public safety and emergency management capabilities across the CNMI.


III. CONCLUSION:

Your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of House Bill No. 24-49, and recommends its passage.

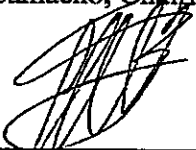
Respectfully submitted,



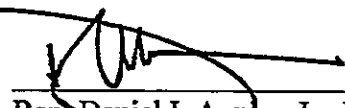
Rep. Joe Camacho, Chairman
Chairman



Rep. Blas Jonathan "BJ" T. Attao
Vice Chairman



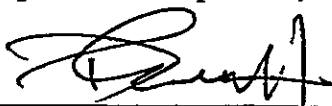
Rep. Vincent S. Aldan, Member



Rep. Daniel L. Aquino Jr., Member



Rep. Angelo A. Camacho, Member



Rep. Diego V.F. Camacho, Member


Rep. Marissa R. Flores, Member

Rep. Joseph A. Flores, Member

Rep. Julie A. Ogo, Member



Rep. John Paul P. Sablan, Member



Rep. Ralph N. Yumul, Member

Reviewed by:



House Legal Counsel

Date: 8-26-25