

TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH

LEGISLATURE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Session, 2026

H. B. 24- 94

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To amend the punishment for the crime of vandalism to include the option of confinement.

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

1 **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that incidents of
2 vandalism continue to occur throughout the Commonwealth of the Northern
3 Mariana Islands, resulting in damage to both public and private property. Between
4 February 2024 and January 2026, there were at least nine reported incidents of
5 vandalism documented by law enforcement, including but not limited to the cutting
6 of residential surveillance camera lines, damage to solar-powered lighting at beach
7 pavilions, vandalism of newly constructed playgrounds, automated teller machines,
8 residential murals, and the deliberate cutting of electrical power lines at public park
9 facilities.

10 The Legislature further finds that, through Public Law 21-18, the offense of
11 vandalism was established to address the proliferation of crimes involving the
12 destruction of public and private property. Prior to the enactment of Public Law 21-

1 18, such conduct was prosecuted as criminal mischief, an offense that included
2 confinement as potential form of punishment. However, the new law left out
3 punishment ranges for confinement.

4 The Legislature finds that the absence of confinement as a sentencing option
5 limits the courts' ability to impose appropriate penalties in cases where the nature
6 of the offense, the extent of the damage, or a defendant's noncompliance with
7 probation conditions would otherwise warrant confinement.

8 The purpose of the Act is to restore confinement as an optional form of
9 punishment for the offense of vandalism. This Act establishes graduated
10 confinement options based on the value of the pecuniary loss resulting from the
11 vandalism, while preserving judicial discretion to impose a sentence that is
12 proportional, appropriate, and consistent with the interests of justice.

13 **Section 2. Amendment.** 6 CMC §1805 of the Commonwealth Code is
14 hereby amended to read as follows:

15 "§ 1805. Vandalism

16 (a) It shall be unlawful for any person and/or persons to knowingly
17 or intentionally vandalize any public or private property.

18 (b) Any person and/or persons in violation of subsection (a) shall be
19 punished as follows:

20 (1) If the pecuniary loss from the property vandalized is valued at
21 \$20,000 or more, by imprisonment for not more than 10 years.

1 (2) If the pecuniary loss from the property vandalized is valued at at
2 least \$2500 but less than \$20,000, by imprisonment for not more than five
3 years.

4 (3) If the pecuniary loss from the property vandalized is valued at
5 less than \$2500, or where the pecuniary loss cannot reasonably be
6 determined, by imprisonment for not more than one year. For purposes of
7 this section, pecuniary loss means the reasonable cost of repair or
8 replacement of the items or property damaged.

9 (c) The court shall, in addition to any term of imprisonment, impose
10 the following fines and community service penalties as follows:

11 (1) First Offense: A fine of ~~not less than \$250~~ but not more than
12 \$1,000 and not more than 40 hours of community service.

13 (2) Second Offense: A fine of ~~not less than \$1,000~~ but not more than
14 \$5,000 and not more than 80 hours of community service.

15 (3) Third and any subsequent offense: A fine of ~~not less than \$5,000~~
16 ~~but not more than \$10,000~~ and not more than 120 hours of community
17 ~~service after time served."~~

18 **Section 3. Severability.** If any provisions of this Act or the application of
19 any such provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court
20 of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its

1 provisions to persons or circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid
2 shall not be affected thereby.

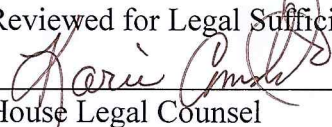
3 **Section 4. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein
4 shall not be construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or
5 acquired under statutes repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted
6 under the statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall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

10 **Section 5. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by
11 the Governor, or it becoming law without such approval.

Prefiled: 2/5/2026

Date: _____

Introduced by: _____
Rep. Marissa R. Flores

Reviewed for Legal Sufficiency by:

House Legal Counsel

2-5-26
Date