

**TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH**  
**LEGISLATURE**  
**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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**Regular Session, 2025**

**H. J. R. 24-6**

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**A HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION**

Commending the distinguished life and extraordinary contributions of the late Honorable Governor Arnold Indalecio Palacios to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and its people and to acknowledge his enduring legacy as a genuine statesman.

1           **WHEREAS**, the Legislature recognizes that the quality and character of  
2 life in the Commonwealth are profoundly shaped by rare individuals like the late  
3 Honorable Governor Arnold Indalecio Palacios, whose unwavering dedication,  
4 principled leadership, and deep love for the Commonwealth and its people defined  
5 a career in public service that spanned across four decades;

6           **WHEREAS**, the Honorable Governor Arnold I. Palacios was born on  
7 Saipan on August 22, 1955, to † Dr. Francisco Taman Palacios and † Maria “Tan  
8 Yako” Indalecio Palacios, and was a devoted husband to First Lady Maria “Wella”  
9 Cabrera Sablan Palacios, with whom he shared a life of love, family, and faith,  
10 raising four children—Arnold Gerard “AG,” Nicole, Tiana, and Eric—and  
11 cherishing their grandchildren Naiyah, Michael, Rogelio, Audibella, Hilda, Carter,  
12 Capri, Calista, Aleiyah, and Eli;

13           **WHEREAS**, the Honorable Governor Arnold I. Palacios attended Father  
14 Dueñas Memorial School on Guam before graduating from Mount Carmel High  
15 School in Saipan in 1974, and went on to earn a Bachelor of Science in Business

1 Administration and Management from Portland State University, laying the  
2 academic foundation for a lifetime of principled public service; and

3 **WHEREAS**, the Honorable Governor Arnold I. Palacios served in multiple  
4 executive capacities, including as Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife in  
5 the 1990s and as Secretary of the Department of Lands and Natural Resources from  
6 2012 to 2015, where he advanced the sustainability, protection, and responsible  
7 stewardship of the Commonwealth’s natural, historic, and cultural resources—  
8 efforts that reflected his education, experience, and enduring commitment to serve;  
9 and

10 **WHEREAS**, the Honorable Governor Arnold I. Palacios was first elected  
11 to public office by the people of Precinct III, Saipan, serving in the House of  
12 Representatives beginning with the 13th Northern Marianas Commonwealth  
13 Legislature, where he quickly demonstrated an innate ability to lead and a deep  
14 commitment to representative governance; and

15 **WHEREAS**, during Governor Palacios’ first term, he was appointed  
16 Chairman of the House Standing Committee on Natural Resources, where he  
17 championed policies that advanced environmental conservation and cultural  
18 preservation, and skillfully balanced his legislative responsibilities while striving  
19 to improve the well-being of his constituents and the broader Commonwealth; and

20 **WHEREAS**, Governor Palacios served four consecutive terms in the House  
21 of Representatives—spanning the 13th through 16th Legislatures—and was elected

1 Speaker of the House during the 16th Northern Marianas Commonwealth  
2 Legislature from January 2008 to January 2010; and

3           **WHEREAS**, continuing his legislative service, Governor Palacios was  
4 elected to the Senate, where he served as Vice President during the 19th Northern  
5 Marianas Commonwealth Legislature and as Senate President during the 20th  
6 Legislature, demonstrating unwavering dedication, an instinctive ability to inspire,  
7 and a keen intellect; and

8           **WHEREAS**, throughout his twelve years in the Legislature, Governor  
9 Palacios championed critical legislation and policy on natural resources,  
10 environmental stewardship, economic development, and federal relations; he  
11 notably served on the Governor’s Section 902 Consultation team in 2016—  
12 advocating the CNMI’s position on labor, immigration, and U.S. military  
13 proposals—and, as Senate President, created the Office of Planning and  
14 Development to establish coherent land use policies across the Commonwealth; and

15           **WHEREAS**, the Honorable Governor Arnold I. Palacios, previously served  
16 as the 12<sup>th</sup> Lieutenant Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana  
17 Islands, serving alongside Governor Ralph DLG. Torres from January 2019 to  
18 January 2023; and

19           **WHEREAS**, as Lt. Governor, he oversaw the Office of Planning and  
20 Development, the Office of Grants Management, and the CNMI’s permitting  
21 agencies and led policy initiatives on government efficiency, business permitting  
22 processes, and regulatory functions; He also played an active role in the CNMI’s

1 relationship with the Federal Government with discussions on labor viability and  
2 proposed military projects in the Marianas; and

3           **WHEREAS**, the Honorable Governor Arnold I. Palacios was elected the  
4 10th Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in the  
5 November 2022 general election and served until his untimely passing on July 23,  
6 2025, in Guam, answering the highest call to public service with dignity and  
7 resolve; and

8           **WHEREAS**, Governor Palacios made history as the first independent  
9 candidate to win a gubernatorial election in the CNMI, running alongside  
10 Lieutenant Governor David M. Apatang, and demonstrated a commitment to unity  
11 by appointing a cabinet inclusive of diverse political affiliations, fostering  
12 bipartisan collaboration to restore trust in government; and

13           **WHEREAS**, after his administration inherited a \$580 million government  
14 deficit, Governor Palacios responded with prudent cash management, strategic  
15 fiscal discipline, and a redirection away from unsustainable economic practices,  
16 while also championing environmental stewardship and advocating for the long-  
17 term well-being of the Commonwealth's people; and

18           **WHEREAS**, Governor Palacios exemplified the qualities of a genuine  
19 statesman—marked by intelligence, determination, humility, compassion, and  
20 vision—and worked tirelessly to confront challenges, build consensus among  
21 leaders, safeguard public pensions, and guide the Commonwealth toward economic  
22 recovery and institutional renewal; and

1           **WHEREAS**, throughout his tenure as Governor, he served the people with  
2 integrity and honor, championed their rights, and remained steadfast in protecting  
3 the lands and values that define the Commonwealth, standing as a pillar of  
4 leadership and a resolute believer in the potential of the CNMI and its people; and

5           **WHEREAS**, the passing of Governor Arnold I. Palacios has been mourned  
6 throughout the Marianas and beyond, a testament to his enduring legacy as a  
7 regional leader and steadfast advocate for island territories; and

8           **WHEREAS**, the Legislature extends its profound gratitude to the  
9 Honorable Arnold I. Palacios—a native son of the Commonwealth—whose  
10 unwavering commitment, principled service, and lifelong devotion to the people of  
11 the CNMI defined a legacy of leadership worthy of the highest respect and  
12 remembrance; and

13           **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the House of  
14 Representatives of the Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas Commonwealth  
15 Legislature, the Senate concurring, that the Legislature hereby joins the people of  
16 the Commonwealth in expressing its deepest condolences and heartfelt sympathies  
17 to First Lady Wella Sablan Palacios, their children, grandchildren, and extended  
18 family for their profound loss, and in honoring and commending the life and legacy  
19 of the Honorable Governor Arnold Indalecio Palacios for his lifelong dedication  
20 and service to the Commonwealth as a devoted public servant, genuine statesman,  
21 and accomplished Governor; and


1           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Speaker of the House of  
2 Representatives and the President of the Senate shall certify and the House Clerk  
3 and the Senate Legislative Secretary shall attest to the adoption of this joint  
4 resolution and thereafter the House Clerk shall transmit a certified copy to the First  
5 Lady Maria “Wella” Sablan Palacios; Honorable David M. Apatang, Governor of  
6 the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; Honorable Karl K. King-  
7 Nabors, Acting President of the Senate, Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas  
8 Commonwealth Legislature; Honorable Aubry M. Hocog, Mayor of the  
9 Municipality of Rota; Honorable Edwin P. Aldan, Mayor of the Municipality of  
10 Tinian and Aguiguan; Honorable Ramon “RB” B. Camacho, Mayor of the  
11 Municipality of Saipan; Honorable Valentino N. Taisacan, Jr., Mayor of the  
12 Northern Islands; and Honorable Kimberlyn K. King-Hinds, CNMI Delegate to the  
13 119<sup>th</sup> United States Congress.

Prefiled: 7/28/2025

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Introduced By: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Rep. John Paul P. Sablan

  
Rep. Blas Jonathan “BJ” T. Attao

  
Rep. Edmund S. Villagomez

Reviewed for legal sufficiency by:

  
House Legal Counsel

Date: 7-28-25