



HOUSE JOURNAL

SECOND REGULAR SESSION, 2025

8th Day, Second Regular Session

Friday, November 7, 2025

The House of Representatives of the Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature convened its Eighth Day, Second Regular Session on Friday, November 7, 2025, at 10:13 a.m. in the House Chamber on Capitol Hill, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Upon a two-thirds vote of the members present, the session was declared an emergency session in accordance with Rule III, Section 7 of the House Rules.

The Honorable Edmund Joseph Sablan Villagomez, Speaker of the House, presided.

A moment of silence was observed.

ROLL CALL

The Clerk called the roll for attendance with the following results:

Representative Roy Christopher A. Ada	Present
Representative Vincent Raymond Aldan	Present
Representative Daniel Iwashita Aquino Jr.	Present
Representative Blas Jonathan "BJ" Tenorio Attao	Present
Representative Roman Cepeda Benavente	Present
Representative Angelo Atalig Camacho	Present
Representative Diego Vincent Fejeran Camacho	Present
Representative Joel Castro Camacho	Present
Representative Joseph Arriola Flores	Present
Representative Marissa Renee Flores	Present
Representative Thomas John Dela Cruz Manglona	Present
Representative Julie Marie Atalig Ogo	Present
Representative Malcolm Jason Omar	Present
Representative Raymond Ulloa Palacios	Present
Representative Elias Jerome Malite Rangamar	Present
Representative John Paul Palacios Sablan	Present
Representative Patrick Hofschneider San Nicolas	Present
Representative Edmund Joseph Sablan Villagomez	Present
Representative Denita Kaipat Yangetmai	Present
Representative Ralph Naraja Yumul	Present

¹ Members participating electronically were connected via Microsoft Teams in accordance with Rule IV, Section 1 of the Official Rules of the House of Representatives of the Twenty-Fourth Legislature, which permits members to appear, participate, and vote electronically through telephone, video, internet, or other electronic means, provided that the member is physically present within the Commonwealth.

Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker, we have all 20 members present.

Speaker Edmund Joseph Sablan Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk. With all 20 members present, that constitutes a quorum. Before we proceed to Item No. 2, Public Comments, I recognize the Floor Leader for the proper motion.

The Floor Leader moved to suspend Rule III, Section 7.

RULE III. SESSIONS AND MEETINGS.

Section 7. Emergency Sessions.

If, by reason of typhoon, flood, or fire, or law enforcement or other bona fide legislative emergency, there is need for expedited action by the House to meet the emergency, the Speaker may provide for a meeting site other than the regular meeting site and notice requirements shall be suspended during such emergency. In the event of an emergency meeting the House:

- (a) State in writing the reasons for its finding that an emergency exists;
- (b) Take a vote whereby two-thirds (14) of all members of the House agree that an emergency exists;
- (c) File an emergency agenda and the findings on the emergency with the Clerk.

The motion was seconded; the Chair opened the floor for discussion. There being no discussion on the floor, the Chair recognized the Clerk to call the roll for vote.

The Clerk called the roll on the motion to suspend Rule III, Section 7 with the following results:

Representative Roy Christopher A. Ada	Yes
Representative Vincent Raymond Aldan	Yes
Representative Daniel Iwashita Aquino Jr.	Yes
Representative Blas Jonathan “BJ” Tenorio Attao	Yes
Representative Roman Cepeda Benavente	Yes
Representative Angelo Atalig Camacho	Yes
Representative Diego Vincent Fejeran Camacho	Yes
Representative Joel Castro Camacho	Yes
Representative Joseph Arriola Flores	Yes
Representative Marissa Renee Flores	Yes
Representative Thomas John Dela Cruz Manglona	Yes
Representative Julie Marie Atalig Ogo	Yes
Representative Malcolm Jason Omar	Yes
Representative Raymond Ulloa Palacios	Yes
Representative Elias Jerome Malite Rangamar	Yes
Representative John Paul Palacios Sablan	Yes
Representative Patrick Hofschneider San Nicolas	Yes
Representative Edmund Joseph Sablan Villagomez	Yes
Representative Denita Kaipat Yangetmai	Yes
Representative Ralph Naraja Yumul	Yes

¹ Members participating electronically were connected via Microsoft Teams in accordance with Rule IV, Section 1 of the Official Rules of the House of Representatives of the Twenty-Fourth Legislature, which permits members to appear, participate, and vote electronically through telephone, video, internet, or other electronic means, provided that the member is physically present within the Commonwealth.

Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker, all 20 members present voted “yes.”

Speaker Edmund Joseph Sablan Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk. With 20 members present voting “yes,” the motion carries. We now move down to Item No. 2, Public Comments. The podium is open to receive any comments. Please state your name and the entity you represent, you have five minutes. If you have statements, please submit them to the Sergeant-at-Arms for forwarding to the Clerk’s office.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public Comments was presented by one individual on the following item:

H. B. NO. 24-74: To appropriate funds derived from trust interest income from the Marianas Public Land Trust towards payment of household allotments of Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) benefits for November 2025.

There being no further public comments presented on the floor and no items under Item No. 3, Adoption of Journals, through Item No. 15, Resolution Calendar, the Chair proceeded to Item No. 16, Bill Calendar, and recognized the Floor Leader.

ADOPTION OF JOURNALS

None

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

House Bills:

None

House Local Bills:

None

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

House Resolutions:

None

House Joint Resolutions:

None

House Commemorative Resolutions:

None

MESSAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR

None

SENATE COMMUNICATIONS

None

HOUSE COMMUNICATIONS

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

None

COMMUNICATIONS FROM DEPARTMENTS & AGENCIES:

None

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS

None

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

None

RESOLUTION CALENDAR

None

BILL CALENDAR

The Floor Leader moved to suspend Rule VII, Section 9, and Rule IX, Sections 9 and 10.

The motion was seconded; the Chair opened the floor for discussion. There being no discussion on the floor, the motion to suspend Rule VII, Section 9, and Rule IX, Sections 9 and 10 was carried by voice vote. There was no “nay” vote.

The Chair recognized the Floor Leader.

The Floor Leader moved for the passage on First and Final Reading of H. B. No. 24-74:

H. B. NO. 24-74: To appropriate funds derived from trust interest income from the Marianas Public Land Trust towards payment of household allotments of Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) benefits for November 2025.

The motion was seconded; the Chair opened the floor for discussion and recognized Representative Blas Jonathan “BJ” Tenorio Attao.

Representative Blas Jonathan “BJ” Tenorio Attao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under Item No. 2, Public Comments, Secretary Rabauliman had mentioned that the numbers from the USDA, what was half is now 65%. So, members, if you can refer to page 1, line 10. And Mr. Speaker, if we can consider this a technical amendment, with the understanding of the new information that we just got from Secretary Rabauliman. With no objections, I move to change the term “half” and put “65% of the full benefits” and consider that a technical amendment.

There being no objection and no further discussion on the floor, the Chair recognized the Clerk to call the roll for vote.

The Clerk called the roll on the motion for the passage of H. B. No. 24-74, First and Final Reading, with the following results:

Representative Roy Christopher A. Ada	Yes
Representative Vincent Raymond Aldan	Yes
Representative Daniel Iwashita Aquino Jr.	Yes
Representative Blas Jonathan “BJ” Tenorio Attao	Yes
Representative Roman Cepeda Benavente	Yes
Representative Angelo Atalig Camacho	Yes
Representative Diego Vincent Fejeran Camacho	Yes
Representative Joel Castro Camacho	Yes
Representative Joseph Arriola Flores	Yes
Representative Marissa Renee Flores	Yes
Representative Thomas John Dela Cruz Manglona	Yes
Representative Julie Marie Atalig Ogo	Yes
Representative Malcolm Jason Omar	Yes
Representative Raymond Ulloa Palacios	Yes
Representative Elias Jerome Malite Rangamar	Yes
Representative John Paul Palacios Sablan	Yes
Representative Patrick Hofschneider San Nicolas	Yes
Representative Edmund Joseph Sablan Villagomez	Yes
Representative Denita Kaipat Yangetmai	Yes
Representative Ralph Naraja Yumul	Yes

¹ Members participating electronically were connected via Microsoft Teams in accordance with Rule IV, Section 1 of the Official Rules of the House of Representatives of the Twenty-Fourth Legislature, which permits members to

appear, participate, and vote electronically through telephone, video, internet, or other electronic means, provided that the member is physically present within the Commonwealth.

Clerk Linda B. Muña: Mr. Speaker, all 20 members present voted “yes.”

Speaker Edmund Joseph Sablan Villagomez: Thank you, Clerk. With 20 members present voting “yes,” House Bill No. 24-74 hereby passes the House. We now proceed to Item No. 17, Miscellaneous Business, and I recognize Representative Daniel Aquino.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Representative Daniel Iwashita Aquino, Jr.: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank Representative Attao for introducing this important piece of legislation. I want to thank the Governor. My deepest gratitude to him, Governor Apatang, for his leadership and his steadfast commitment supporting the families of the Nutrition Assistance Program. He used to ask me almost every day, “Did the Legislature get my letter? What is the position right now? Are they going to act on it? When is the House of Representatives having a House session?” So, I thank God that this situation is already over. I am also thankful that the courts rule that the President has to fund the Nutrition Assistance Program by this Friday. It helps many people. It helps single mothers, those who are working two jobs – like my mom. But we could not avail to the Nutrition Assistance Program. But it helps these families who are in need. And I am always that kind of person that sympathizes with people like that. I just hope that we can continue to support this program, not just on an emergency base, but on a continued base. Whether we can find additional funding to support and bridge the gap for those people that fall through the cracks. I am very thankful, and I am really happy that we passed this bill today. Thank you. I yield.

The Chair recognized Representative John Paul Palacios Sablan.

Representative John Paul Palacios Sablan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also do wish to extend my appreciation to the main author, Representative BJ Attao, for being the main author of this legislation. It is an honor to co-sponsor this piece of legislation. I also do want to thank Governor Apatang and his administration for working with the Legislature on this appropriation. A body that needs to be extended appreciation is the Marianas Pacific Land Trust members. As we all know, this \$1 million funding is coming from the interest bearing, derived from the investments that they in their corpus. So, I want to thank the Nutritional Assistance Program staff who are here Secretary Rabauliman, who had provided oral testimony on their public comments. I want to express my appreciation to them as well. As they look forward to work with the administration as soon as this legislation gets signed into law and we get these vouchers to our beneficiaries here at the tune of 14,000 of our citizens here in the Commonwealth. With that, I want to express my appreciation, again, to the main author, Representative BJ Attao. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Chair recognized Representative Blas Jonathan “BJ” Tenorio Attao.

Representative Blas Jonathan “BJ” Tenorio Attao: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the colleagues for supporting the legislation. Not just supporting the legislation but also putting your name and signing onto this legislation. And I know it is an emergency legislation, but what we mentioned yesterday, we bonded together so that we can address the pressing issue here in the

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Unfortunately, a lot of these things are out of our hands. But we make things right for our people, at the very least. To the administration and to the Marianas Pacific Land Trust, for sitting on the table and allowing this \$1 million to be transferred rather than using it as a source of our payment towards the \$29 million potential loan that we are working on with them. Especially to you, Mr. Speaker, for making sure that the House members are a part in all these meetings. If it is not you, at least, a couple of members will be present in the meeting representing this body. So, I thank you for your leadership to making sure that we have the information that we need to make these decisions and to move forward with these types of emergency legislation. So, I thank you for that, and to our colleagues. Obviously, our Chairman of Ways and Means get a lot of the phone calls, but every single member in Ways and Means, and in the House, have stepped up to participate and partake in these negotiations and discussions with the administration along with our Senate counterparts, and the Marianas Pacific Land Trust. To the fruits of those discussions, this \$1 million was able to be transferred over. And I just got a message from the Marianas Pacific Land Trust that the check is printed and ready to be submitted to finance for distribution to help with our Nutrition Assistance Program. With that, thank you, again, colleagues. We look forward to working on better conditions, not emergency conditions. I know that the budget is up next, the revised budget is up next. I believe with these two weeks of killing a lot of fires that are facing the people of the Commonwealth. I think that the budget process, or revised budget process will be so much easier to get through. With that, I thank you all. And to the general public, we thank you for your patience and hopefully we can get the stores flooded with people, so they can get their food and start cooking for the table. Thank you, again, Mr. Speaker.

The Chair recognized Vice Speaker Diego Vincent Fejeran Camacho.

Vice Speaker Diego Vincent Fejeran Camacho: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and colleagues. First, I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker, for calling this emergency session to address this urgent matter. Also, to the Marianas Pacific Land Trust and the administration for remitting these funds. And Representative Attao for expediting this legislation. Obviously, this is an emergency session, and although we do not know how soon these funds will be dispersed to the recipients, we can be assured that the month of November will be taken care of. In the meantime, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the schools, and the nonprofit and private charities for organizing food drives along with its distribution. This is how we can help. For anyone willing, please give what you can. A couple of months ago, I had introduced House Bill No. 24-38, which proposes to establish a dedicated emergency reserve fund or a rainy-day fund. Which was unanimously passed by this body. And our current situation is unfortunate, but it is a perfect example of why I strongly urge our friends in the upper House to consider its adoption. So that any future crisis should be remedied in a timelier manner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker and colleagues. Thank you all for your vote on this important legislation.

The Chair recognized Representative Thomas John Dela Cruz Manglona.

Representative Thomas John Dela Cruz Manglona: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to express my gratitude, again, to the author of the bill, Chairman Attao, and our Chairman of Ways and Means for acting swiftly on this situation. We know that every day that passes is crucial for our people. I hope that our counterparts in the Senate are ready to move as soon as we pass this

legislation, and it is transmitted. Hopefully, we can get an answer for our people as soon as this monies will be in. That is all I wanted to say, and I hope you all have a very good weekend. Thank you.

The Chair recognized Representative Roman Cepeda Benavente.

Representative Roman Cepeda Benavente: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to congratulate Representative Attao for putting this bill together. I thank him for the effort that he has put in, and also the Chairman and the members of Ways and Means for making sure that we have enough funds to accommodate the needed communities here in the Commonwealth. And just to let everybody know there is still a challenge ahead of us. Even though we try to resolve this issue today, we are still facing, in the future, the challenges ahead of us. Because of the fact of our economic standpoint. And with that, I would like to let the people know that we are struggling, we are all struggling. We have to figure out how we can navigate ourselves to come into a good working community that does not affect the Public School System and all the other different departments that are responsible for all the services. For example, the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, the childcare, and all other departments. This is really a starting point to make amends ahead, as far as what we need to do, and just to that extent. I wish everybody the best and all the members including you, Mr. Speaker and the members here. I would also like to ask the Senate that they go through all the process and get these things through. So, we can move ahead with what we are doing, even the Governor and the administration. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There being no further discussion on the floor, the Chair proceeded to Item No. 18, Announcements, and recognized Representative Daniel Iwashita Aquino, Jr.

Representative Daniel Iwashita Aquino, Jr.: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to invite the entire House to the Veterans Day. If you are out there eating at a restaurant and see a Veteran, especially me, go ahead and take care of the bill. Thank you and have a good weekend.

The Chair recognized Representative Ralph Naraja Yumul.

Representative Ralph Naraja Yumul: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The House Committee on Gaming will be conducting the first meeting sometime next week to address the proposed amendments to Public Law 18-56. So, I am letting the members of Gaming know that we are going to review it. And to the public, too, you are welcome to start submitting comments with regards to the proposed amendment. I expect all the members of Gaming to be there. Thank you.

Speaker Edmund Joseph Sablan Villagomez: Chairman, where can they submit their comments to?

Representative Ralph Naraja Yumul: They can submit their comments to my email, rep.yumul@gmail.com, or the Office of Ralph N. Yumul.

The Chair recognized Representative Vincent Raymond Aldan.

Representative Vincent Raymond Aldan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I had mentioned yesterday, we are having the 24th sponsored OSHA construction class training at Koblerville from 06:00 p.m. to 09:00 p.m., until the class is done. The Class is free. To the listening public, maybe you can come in and join, and get out of the government to work in the private sector. I hope that every one of you can chip in to feed these people. They most likely do not have a job. Thank you.

There being no further discussion on the floor, the Chair proceeded to Adjournment and recognized the Floor Leader.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Floor Leader Marissa Renee Flores: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hereby move to adjourn subject to the call of the Chair. So move.

The motion was seconded; the Chair opened the floor for discussion. There being no discussion on the floor, the motion to adjournment was carried by voice vote. There was no "nay" vote.

The House adjourned at 10:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Brenalyn T. Santos
House Journal Clerk

APPEARANCE OF LOCAL BILLS

FIRST LEGISLATIVE DAY: 1st Legislative appearance of a local bill is on the day it is introduced.

SECOND LEGISLATIVE DAY:

THIRD LEGISLATIVE DAY:

H. L. B. NO. 24-34: To establish the "Saipan Economic Incentive Zone" within the Third Senatorial District, and to authorize the Commonwealth Economic Incentive Authority and other relevant agencies to administer and regulate investment activities within the designated zone. Introduced by REPS. ANGELO A. CAMACHO and REP. VINCENT R. ALDAN (*for themselves, Representatives Blas Jonathan "BJ" T. Attao, Joel C. Camacho, Marissa R. Flores, and John Paul P. Sablan*) on October 24, 2025.