

A BILL FOR AN ACT

To enact a “Castle Doctrine” law for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, affirming the right of individuals to defend themselves, their families, and their property against intruders and attackers; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:

1 **Section 1. Title.** This Act shall be known and may be cited as the “CNMI Castle
2 Doctrine Act of 2025”.

3 **Section 2. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that every individual has
4 a fundamental right to defend themselves and their families against harm or the threat of
5 harm in their homes, on their property, and in other lawful settings such as their businesses
6 and vehicles. The purpose of this Act is to codify the principle of the Castle Doctrine,
7 ensuring that law-abiding citizens have the legal authority to protect themselves without
8 fear of prosecution when acting in self-defense against an intruder or attacker.

9 **Section 3. Repealer.** 6 CMC § 10210 is hereby repealed in its entirety.

10 **Section 4. Amendment.** Title 6, General Provisions, Chapter 2 of the
11 Commonwealth Code is hereby amended by adding a new article 3 to read as follows:

12 **“Article 3. Castle Doctrine.**

13 **§ 101. Definitions.** For the purposes of this article:

14 (a) “Dwelling” means any building or structure, including a tent, that is designed
15 to be occupied as a residence by one or more persons.

16 (b) “Force” means physical action or threat of action to defend against unlawful
17 entry, attack, or imminent danger.

18 (c) “Unlawful Entry” means the act of entering a dwelling, business, vehicle, or
19 property without authorization or legal right.

1 (d) "Vehicle" means any motorized transportation device, including cars, trucks,
2 motorcycles, and boats.

3 (e) "Business" means any property or establishment legally used for commercial
4 purposes.

5 **§ 102. Use of Force in Defense of a Dwelling, Business, or Vehicle.**

6 (a) An individual who is lawfully present in their dwelling, business, or vehicle has
7 the right to use reasonable force, including deadly force, to protect themselves, their family,
8 or other occupants from unlawful entry or an imminent threat of harm.

9 (b) There shall be no duty to retreat when an individual is in their dwelling,
10 business, or vehicle and acting to prevent harm to themselves or others.

11 **§ 103. Presumption of Fear or Death or Great Bodily Harm.**

12 (a) It shall be presumed that an individual had a reasonable fear of death or great
13 bodily harm to themselves or others when using defensive force if:

14 (1) The person against whom the force was used was unlawfully and
15 forcibly entering, or had unlawfully and forcibly entered, a dwelling, business, or
16 vehicle; or

17 (2) The person against whom the force was used was attempting to remove
18 another person against their will from the dwelling, business, or vehicle.

19 (b) This presumption does not apply if:

20 (1) The individual against whom force was used had a legal right to be in
21 the dwelling, business, or vehicle; or

22 (2) The individual using defensive force was engaged in unlawful activity.

23 **§ 104. Protection for Other Persons Acting in Self-Defense.**

24 (a) Individuals who are permitted or allowed to be present on a property, including
25 dwellings, businesses, and vehicles, are protected under this Act when acting in lawful self-
26 defense.

27 (b) Such individuals shall have the same rights to use reasonable force, including
28 deadly force, to protect themselves and others as provided under this Act.

1 **§ 105. Immunity from Criminal Prosecution and Civil Action.**

2 (a) An individual who uses force as permitted under this Act shall be immune from
3 criminal prosecution for such use of force.


4 (b) An individual who uses force as permitted under this Act shall be immune from
5 civil action for damages resulting from the use of force unless the force was determined to
6 be unlawful.”

7 **Section 5. Severability.** If any provision of this Act or the application of any such
8 provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent
9 jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to persons or
10 circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

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

18 **Section 7. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the
19 Governor or upon its becoming law without such approval.

Date: 25-06-25

Introduced By: 
Senator Francisco Q. Cruz

Reviewed for Legal Sufficiency by:


Senate Legal Counsel