



**THE SENATE
TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE**

SIXTH DAY, SECOND REGULAR SESSION, 2025

SENATE COMMEMORATIVE RESOLUTION NO. 24-04

Introduced by: Senator Jude U. Hofschneider

A SENATE COMMEMORATIVE RESOLUTION

To recognize and honor the Late Noboru Hirayama for his unwavering dedication and contributions to strengthening the bond between the people of Saipan and Japan on the occasion of the 111th year anniversary of the establishment of the Saipan Katori Shrine.

1 **WHEREAS**, this Legislative Body is pleased to acknowledge and commend esteemed
2 foreign dignitaries that have offered long-standing contributions to preserve peace and cultural
3 unity within the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands through the construction of
4 temples and sanctuaries that portray historical and cultural significance; and

5 **WHEREAS**, Noboru Hirayama was born on October 7, 1932 in Japan and
6 successfully completed his general education at Omigawa High School in Chiba Prefecture
7 in March 1945; and

8 **WHEREAS**, Noboru Hirayama began his dedicated career at Matsumotoya
9 Corporation working in the Building Materials Department from April 1957 to March 1968.
10 He ultimately rose to the distinguished position of a Section Chief, a title he performed
11 diligently up until his resignation; and

12 **WHEREAS**, Noboru Hirayama subsequently transitioned to public service, utilizing
13 his skills in a new capacity by serving as a secretary to Kiyoshi Mizuno, a respected member
14 of the House of Representatives (former Minister of Construction) from October 1969 to
15 October 1971; and

SENATE COMMEMORATIVE RESOLUTION NO. 24-04

1 **WHEREAS**, Noboru Hirayama seamlessly moved back to the private sector, applying
2 his leadership experience as the Sales Manager for Mizuno Construction Co. Ltd. starting
3 in October 1971; and

4 **WHEREAS**, Noboru Hirayama’s corporate leadership continued to flourish with his
5 appointment as a Director of Kyowa Construction Industry Co., Ltd. in September 1982,
6 demonstrating his expertise and commitment to the construction industry; and

7 **WHEREAS**, in a testament to his exceptional leadership, business insight, and
8 unwavering devotion to the industry, Noboru Hirayama was further appointed as
9 the Representative Director of Kyowa Construction Industry Co. Ltd. in February 1987; and

10 **WHEREAS**, Noboru Hirayama played a vital role in re-establishing the *Saipan Katori*
11 *Shrine* located at the Sugar King Park on Saipan, which holds significant historical and
12 cultural value, and its restoration was an important act of preserving cultural heritage and
13 promoting international goodwill; and

14 **WHEREAS**, the mountain range bordering the Sugar King Park in central Saipan is
15 historically known as Mount Katori, deriving its name from the revered Katori Shrine that was
16 once located against its rocky face. The Katori Shrine was originally established in 1914 and
17 later became the spiritual center of the entire island, being renamed the Saipan Shrine to
18 symbolize its role as the guardian deity of Saipan; and

19 **WHEREAS**, during this period, the island experienced great prosperity, known as
20 the “Paradise of the Pacific,” where islanders and Japanese worked together to develop
21 thriving industries such as agriculture and fishing, leading to exports in 1931 reportedly more
22 than twice the number of imports; and

23 **WHEREAS**, the grounds near the Katori Shrine, which included a nearby public
24 school where many islanders received their education, served as a crucial place of spiritual
25 exchange and community for both the islanders and the Japanese, creating fond memories for
26 many older islanders today; and

27 **WHEREAS**, during World War II, the Katori Shrine was the site of a battle between
28 Japanese and U.S. forces. Resulting shellfire caused the Saipan Jinja to burn to the ground in
29 1944; and

SENATE COMMEMORATIVE RESOLUTION NO. 24-04

1 **WHEREAS**, while recognizing the sad history of the Pacific War cannot be erased,
2 the focus should shift to the proud and positive history where the islanders and the Japanese
3 worked hand in hand to build a Pacific paradise, an important legacy to convey to future
4 generations of islanders on Saipan; and

5 **WHEREAS**, with the hope that ties between Saipan and Japan will become stronger,
6 Noboru Hirayama envisioned a plan to link the future development of Saipan, Commonwealth
7 of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) with the desire for perpetual goodwill with Japan by
8 honoring the Katori Shrine in Saipan, a historically significant site, with plans as expressed by
9 Kyowa Construction Industry Co. to develop the site of the Katori Shrine with the installation
10 of a memorial structure and the construction of a Torii Gate; and

11 **WHEREAS**, the initiative for the reconstruction of the Katori Shrine began in May
12 1984 with a courtesy call to Mr. J.M. Guerrero, Director of The Marianas Visitors Bureau
13 (MVB) followed by consultations with the MVB Managing Director and the CNMI
14 government. This vital project received remarkable cooperation, culminating in official
15 government approval in just 165 days from the initial consultation; and

16 **WHEREAS**, the groundbreaking ceremony took place on September 7, 1985, marking
17 the official start of the construction which was attended by key dignitaries including Governor
18 Pedro P. Tenorio, MVB Director J.M. Guerrero, Katori Shrine Chief Priest Nukaga Hironari,
19 and Noboru Hirayama & other construction personnel from Kyowa Construction Co., Ltd.;
20 and

21 **WHEREAS**, the reconstruction effort was characterized by swift and effective
22 execution, achieving completion in July 1985 which a testament to the efficient collaboration
23 and commitment of all parties involved including the understanding and cooperation of
24 Governor Tenorio, Director Guerrero, and other government officials; and

25 **WHEREAS**, the successful restoration was formally recognized at the Katori Shrine
26 Restoration Celebration on November 19, 1985. This celebration was a major community
27 event attended more than 100 people including Governor Pedro P. Tenorio, representatives
28 from various Government Departments Heads, Japanese Consul Mr. Kamagata, Mr. Sasaki,

SENATE COMMEMORATIVE RESOLUTION NO. 24-04

1 President of the Japanese Society, and Noboru Hirayama & representatives from the Kyowa
2 Construction Co., Ltd.; and

3 **WHEREAS**, since the restoration of the Katori Shrine in Saipan, Noboru Hirayama
4 has been coming to Saipan annually to visit the Katori Shrine and bring donations and gifts to
5 the people of Saipan. He has dedicated and contributed his personal time in organizing and
6 bringing thousands of Japanese to Saipan to take part in the annual October Katori Shrine
7 Ceremony and Japanese Autumn Festival; and

8 **WHEREAS**, Noboru Hirayama’s devotion to the history of the Katori Shrine and
9 affection for Saipan, CNMI and its people extended beyond his annual visit to the Katori
10 Shrine on Saipan. Noboru Hirayama wanted to see the two municipalities, Katori City and
11 Saipan, establish a relationship that can bring our two cultures together. The Katori Jingu in
12 Katori, Japan, has historically held ceremonies at the Katori Shrine in the Sugar King Park;
13 and

14 **WHEREAS**, Noboru Hirayama persistently encouraged the Mayors Katori City and
15 Saipan to consider a sister city relationship in 2019. The discussions, negotiations, and visits
16 culminated on October 29, 2021 when Katori City Mayor Seiichi Ui alongside Noboru
17 Hirayama, and Saipan Mayor David M. Apatang concluded and virtually signed the sister-city
18 agreement between Katori City, Japan and the Municipality of Saipan. Then Mayor Apatang
19 stated that the objective of the sister-city agreement will be to ensure a perpetual connection
20 between Katori City and Saipan and the preservation and teaching of the vital history of that
21 connection; and

22 **WHEREAS**, Noboru Hirayama, who was 90 years old, devotedly traveled to Saipan
23 to attend the annual Japanese Autumn Festival and the Katori Shrine Ceremony for the last
24 time in October 2022; and

25 **WHEREAS**, Noboru Hirayama passed away in March 2025. He will always be
26 remembered for his unwavering dedication and commitment to strengthening the bonds
27 between the people of Saipan and Japan. He hoped that the perpetual ties between the two
28 countries will bring peace and happiness to both our peoples; and

SENATE COMMEMORATIVE RESOLUTION NO. 24-04

1 **NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Senate of the Twenty-Fourth
2 Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature that the Senate hereby joins the people in
3 recognizing Noboru Hirayama and his considerable contributions to re-establish and maintain
4 the Katori Shrine in Saipan and strengthen the bonds between Saipan, Commonwealth of the
5 Northern Mariana Islands and Japan, as well as for his exemplary record of leadership and
6 service; and

7 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Senate congratulates the Representatives
8 from the Katori Jingu and Katori City, Japan and the Japan Society of Saipan on the occasion
9 of the 111th year anniversary of the establishment of the Saipan Katori Shrine; and

10 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the President of the Senate shall certify, and the
11 Senate Legislative Secretary shall attest to the adoption of this resolution and thereafter the
12 Senate Clerk shall transmit a certified copy to Mr. Hitoshi Hirayama, President for Kyowa
13 Construction Industry Co. Ltd.; the Honorable David M. Apatang, Governor of the
14 Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; the Honorable Edmund S. Villagomez,
15 Speaker of the House of Representatives, Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas Commonwealth
16 Legislature; the Honorable Kimberlyn King-Hinds, CNMI Delegate to the House of
17 Representatives Washington, 119th United States Congress; and the Honorable Ramon B.
18 Camacho, Mayor of the Municipality of Saipan.

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE ON NOVEMBER 14, 2025.

CERTIFIED BY:



KARL R. KING-NABORS
President of the Senate

ATTESTED BY:



FRANCISCO Q. CRUZ
Senate Legislative Secretary



THE SENATE
Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
P. O. Box 500129
Saipan, MP 96950

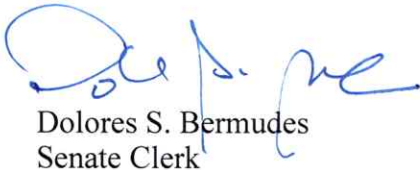
November 20, 2025

Honorable David M. Apatang
Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Governor Apatang:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith a certified copy of Senate Commemorative Resolution No. 24-04, entitled, "To recognize and honor the Late Noboru Hirayama for his unwavering dedication and contributions to strengthening the bond between the people of Saipan and Japan on the occasion of the 111th year anniversary of the establishment of the Saipan Katori Shrine," which was adopted by the Senate of the Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Sincerely,



Dolores S. Bermudes
Senate Clerk

Attachment



THE SENATE

Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
P. O. Box 500129
Saipan, MP 96950

November 20, 2025

Honorable Edmund S. Villagomez
Speaker
House of Representatives
24th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Speaker Villagomez:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith a certified copy of Senate Commemorative Resolution No. 24-04, entitled, "To recognize and honor the Late Noboru Hirayama for his unwavering dedication and contributions to strengthening the bond between the people of Saipan and Japan on the occasion of the 111th year anniversary of the establishment of the Saipan Katori Shrine," which was adopted by the Senate of the Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Sincerely,



Dolores S. Bermudes
Senate Clerk

Attachment



THE SENATE

Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
P. O. Box 500129
Saipan, MP 96950

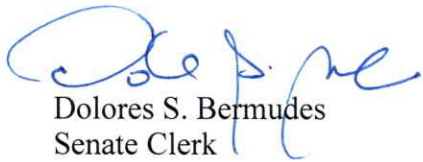
November 20, 2025

Honorable Kimberlyn King-Hinds
CNMI Delegate to the U.S. Congress
Saipan Office
P. O. Box 504879
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Representative King-Hinds:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith a certified copy of Senate Commemorative Resolution No. 24-04, entitled, "To recognize and honor the Late Noboru Hirayama for his unwavering dedication and contributions to strengthening the bond between the people of Saipan and Japan on the occasion of the 111th year anniversary of the establishment of the Saipan Katori Shrine," which was adopted by the Senate of the Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Sincerely,



Dolores S. Bermudes
Senate Clerk

Attachment



THE SENATE

Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature
P. O. Box 500129
Saipan, MP 96950

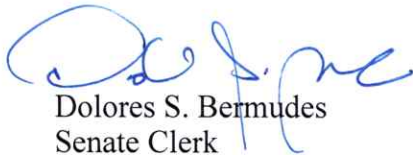
November 20, 2025

Honorable Ramon "RB" B. Camacho
Mayor of Saipan
P. O. Box 501457
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mayor Camacho:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith a certified copy of Senate Commemorative Resolution No. 24-04, entitled, "To recognize and honor the Late Noboru Hirayama for his unwavering dedication and contributions to strengthening the bond between the people of Saipan and Japan on the occasion of the 111th year anniversary of the establishment of the Saipan Katori Shrine," which was adopted by the Senate of the Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Sincerely,



Dolores S. Bermudes
Senate Clerk

Attachment