

A SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

To express strong support for H.R. 9787, the “Northern Mariana Islands Labor Stabilization Act,” introduced by the Honorable Kimberlyn King-Hinds in the 119th United States Congress, and to urge the United States Congress to enact legislation that provides the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands with a stable, predictable, locally responsive, and sustainable labor framework.

1 **WHEREAS**, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) is a
2 self-governing commonwealth in political union with the United States pursuant to the
3 Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union
4 with the United States of America; and

5 **WHEREAS**, the economic vitality and continued development of the CNMI
6 depend upon the availability of a lawful, stable, and adequately regulated workforce
7 capable of meeting the needs of businesses, industries, government services, and the
8 broader Commonwealth community; and

9 **WHEREAS**, U.S. Congress established a transitional labor program for the CNMI
10 recognizing the unique economic, geographic, demographic, and labor circumstances of
11 the Commonwealth and its continuing need for a legal foreign workforce; and

12 **WHEREAS**, the current CNMI-Only Transitional Worker (“CW-1”) program is
13 presently scheduled to terminate on December 31, 2029, creating significant uncertainty
14 for employers, workers, families, investors, and the Commonwealth economy; and

15 **WHEREAS**, uncertainty regarding the future availability of a lawful workforce
16 has made long-term economic planning increasingly difficult and has the potential to
17 adversely affect critical sectors of the CNMI economy, including construction, hospitality,
18 tourism, retail, healthcare, and other industries that rely upon a sufficient and dependable
19 workforce; and

1 **WHEREAS**, on July 20, 2026, the Honorable Kimberlyn King-Hinds, CNMI
2 Delegate to the United States House of Representatives, introduced H.R. 9787, entitled the
3 “Northern Mariana Islands Labor Stabilization Act,” in the 119th Congress; and

4 **WHEREAS**, H.R. 9787 proposes to replace the existing concept of a temporary
5 transition period with a labor stabilization program that recognizes the continuing labor
6 needs of the Commonwealth while maintaining federal oversight, enforcement, and worker
7 protections; and

8 **WHEREAS**, H.R. 9787 would extend the current labor stabilization framework
9 through at least December 31, 2039, thereby providing employers, workers, families, and
10 the Commonwealth with greater certainty and predictability for long-term planning; and

11 **WHEREAS**, H.R. 9787 would establish a process under which the Secretary of
12 Labor, in consultation with the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Interior and the
13 Governor of the CNMI, would evaluate the Commonwealth’s labor needs and determine
14 whether additional extensions of the labor stabilization program are necessary to ensure an
15 adequate workforce for legitimate businesses in the Commonwealth; and

16 **WHEREAS**, H.R. 9787 would provide for the Secretary of Homeland Security to
17 establish annual permit limitations in consultation with the Governor of the CNMI, while
18 providing an annual ceiling and supplemental allocation for construction and extraction
19 occupations to address demonstrated workforce needs; and

20 **WHEREAS**, H.R. 9787 would apply temporary labor certification procedures
21 utilized for Guam to the CNMI, while appropriately recognizing the role of the Governor
22 of the Commonwealth in the administration of the program; and

23 **WHEREAS**, H.R. 9787 would provide greater certainty for long-term workers by
24 permitting qualified individuals who have established a history of employment in the
25 Commonwealth to receive longer periods of authorization; and

26 **WHEREAS**, H.R. 9787 would further strengthen the Commonwealth’s labor and
27 immigration framework by addressing prevailing wage requirements, enforcement
28 resources, immigration and naturalization fees, eligibility for certain federal benefits,
29 unlawful presence provisions, and related matters; and

1 **WHEREAS**, H.R. 9787 recognizes that the labor needs of the CNMI are distinct
2 from those of the continental United States and require a policy framework informed by
3 the Commonwealth's unique economic and geographic circumstances; and

4 **WHEREAS**, the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature recognizes that
5 CNMI labor policy must balance the interests of U.S. and foreign workers, employers,
6 families, and the broader community while ensuring access to a lawful workforce sufficient
7 to sustain and diversify the economy; and

8 **WHEREAS**, the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature further
9 recognizes that a stable labor framework promotes economic certainty, encourages
10 investment, supports infrastructure and construction activity, protects legitimate
11 businesses, and strengthens the long-term economic resilience of the Commonwealth; and

12 **WHEREAS**, the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature believes that H.R.
13 9787 represents an important step toward a sustainable labor policy for the CNMI and
14 reflects the Commonwealth's ongoing efforts to address its unique workforce needs in
15 partnership with the federal government; and

16 **WHEREAS**, the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature believes that a
17 unified Commonwealth voice is essential to communicating CNMI priorities to the United
18 States Congress and the Administration and advancing legislation that serves the long-term
19 interests of the people of the Commonwealth;

20 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Senate of the Twenty-Fourth
21 Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature, the House concurring, that the Twenty-
22 Fourth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature hereby expresses its strong support
23 for H.R. 9787, the "Northern Mariana Islands Labor Stabilization Act," introduced by the
24 Honorable Kimberlyn King-Hinds in the 119th United States Congress; and

25 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas
26 Commonwealth Legislature urges the United States Congress to give H.R. 9787 prompt
27 and favorable consideration and to enact legislation establishing a stable, predictable,
28 sustainable, and locally responsive labor stabilization framework for the Commonwealth
29 of the Northern Mariana Islands; and

1 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas
2 Commonwealth Legislature respectfully requests that the United States House of
3 Representatives and the United States Senate support and advance legislation addressing
4 the CNMI's unique workforce needs and recognize the importance of ensuring continued
5 access to a lawful workforce necessary for the Commonwealth's economic stability and
6 future prosperity; and

7 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the President of the Senate and the Speaker
8 of the House of Representatives shall certify, and the Senate Legislative Secretary and the
9 House Clerk shall attest to the adoption of this joint resolution, and thereafter the Senate
10 Clerk shall transmit a certified copy to the Honorable David M. Apatang, Governor,
11 Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; the Honorable Kimberlyn King-Hinds,
12 Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Delegate to the United States House of
13 Representatives, 119th United States Congress; the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President
14 of the United States of America; the Honorable JD Vance, Vice President of the United
15 States of America; the Honorable Chuck Grassley, President Pro Tempore, Senate, 119th
16 United States Congress; the Honorable John Thune, Senate Majority Leader, 119th United
17 States Congress; the Honorable Charles E. Schumer, Senate Minority Leader, 119th United
18 States Congress; the Honorable Mike Johnson, Speaker, House of Representatives, 119th
19 United States Congress; the Honorable Steve Scalise, House Majority Leader, 119th United
20 States Congress; the Honorable Hakeem Jeffries, House Minority Leader, 119th United
21 States Congress; the Honorable Jim Jordan, Chairperson, House Committee on Judiciary,
22 119th United States Congress; the Honorable Bruce Westerman, Chairperson, House
23 Committee on Natural Resources, 119th United States Congress.

Date:

8/13/2024

Introduced By:


Senator Jude U. Hofschneider