

TWENTY-FOURTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

THIRD REGULAR SESSION, 2026

S. L.I. NO. 24-06

---

**A SENATE LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVE**

To Amend Article II, Section 11 of the Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands to Permit Commonwealth Government Employees to Serve in the Legislature.

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

1           **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.**

2           The Senate finds that the Constitution of the Northern Mariana Islands currently  
3 prohibits members of the Legislature from holding other Commonwealth government  
4 employment. This prohibition was originally intended to prevent conflicts of interest and  
5 ensure separation between legislative authority and executive branch employment. Over  
6 time, this restriction has also had the unintended effect of preventing many experienced  
7 public servants, including teachers, nurses, first responders, and other civil servants, from  
8 seeking legislative office.

9           The Legislature recognizes that many democratic jurisdictions allow public  
10 employees to serve as legislators, provided that appropriate disclosure, ethical safeguards,  
11 and conflict-of-interest protections are maintained. Allowing government employees to  
12 serve in the Legislature may expand the pool of qualified candidates, increase  
13 representation of working public servants, and strengthen policymaking with practical  
14 governmental experience. Transparency and disclosure requirements can ensure that the  
15 public remains informed of any employment relationships that may present potential  
16 conflicts.

1                   **Section 2. Legislative Initiative.** The Twenty-Fourth Northern Marianas  
2 Commonwealth Legislature, by the affirmative vote of three-fourths of the members of  
3 each house present and voting, hereby proposes the following amendment to Article II,  
4 Section 11, of the Constitution to be placed before the people for ratification:

5                   **“PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT”**

6                   To amend Article II of the Northern Mariana Islands Constitution by amending  
7 Section 11 as follows:

8                   ‘**Section 11: Other Government Employment.**  
9 A member of the legislature may not serve in any other Commonwealth government  
10 position ~~including other elective office or an independent board, agency, authority or~~  
11 ~~commission established by this Constitution or by Commonwealth law.~~ A person, having  
12 been a member of the legislature, may not serve in any elective or appointive  
13 Commonwealth Government position created by statute during the term for which he or  
14 she was elected, for a period of one year following the expiration of the term during which  
15 the position was created.’”

16                   **Section 3. Adoption and Transmittal.** The President of the Senate and the  
17 Speaker of the House shall certify, and the Senate Legislative Secretary and House Clerk  
18 shall attest to the adoption of this Legislative Initiative. The Senate Clerk shall then cause  
19 the Initiative to be transmitted to the Governor and the Board of Elections with instructions  
20 that the Board places it before the people of the Commonwealth for a ratification vote, in  
21 conformance with Article XVIII, Section 5 of the Commonwealth Constitution.

Dated: 3/17/20

Introduced By:   
Sen. Manny Gregory T. Castro

Reviewed for Legal Sufficiency by:

  
Senate Legal Counsel