

I MINA'TRENTAI SIETTE NA LIHESLATURAN GUÁHAN
RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No.	Sponsor	Title	Date Intro	Date of Presentation	Date Adopted	Date Referred	Referred to	PUBLIC HEARING DATE	DATE AUTHORS REPORT FILED	NOTES
586-37 (COR)	Therese M. Terlaje	Relative to honoring the life and legacy of †Toni “Malia” Ramirez for her lifelong dedication and extraordinary contributions to preserving <i>CHamoru</i> heritage, her profound impact as a cultural advocate, and her dedicated service to the people of Guam as a historian, genealogist, and cultural practitioner.	11/8/24 1:47 p.m.	11/11/24						

I MINA'TRENTAI SIETTE NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2024 (SECOND) Regular Session

Resolution No. 586-37 (COR)

Introduced by:

Therese M. Terlaje *TMT*

Relative to honoring the life and legacy of †Toni “Malia” Ramirez for her lifelong dedication and extraordinary contributions to preserving *CHamoru* heritage, her profound impact as a cultural advocate, and her dedicated service to the people of Guam as a historian, genealogist, and cultural practitioner.

1 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES OF *I***
2 ***MINA'TRENTAI SIETTE NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN*:**

3 **WHEREAS, *I Liheslaturan Guåhan*** seeks to honor and respect those
4 distinguished individuals who have selflessly devoted their lives to serving and uplifting
5 our island community, faithfully preserving our shared heritage, and fostering the well-
6 being of our people; and

7 **WHEREAS,** among such devoted citizens was †Toni “Malia” Ramirez, born
8 into a family with a deep commitment to Guam’s community and cultural heritage. As
9 one of ten (10) children of the late former Speaker †Florencio Torres “Larry” Ramirez
10 Jr. and †Josephine Sablan Leon Guerrero Ramirez, familial “*Te*” and “*Binu,*” *Saina*
11 Malia grew up with siblings Virginia Teresita (1939), Juan Pablo (1940), Florencio
12 (1942), Jose Antonio (1943), Naomi Maria (1945), Jesus (1948), Josephine Barbara
13 (1948), Elizabeth Ann (1949), and Jessica Linda (1958). This upbringing within such
14 an esteemed family instilled in her a profound sense of duty to cultural preservation and

1 public service, leading her to a life dedicated to honoring the traditions, values, and
2 resilience of the *CHamoru* people; and

3 **WHEREAS**, *Saina Malia*'s family has long contributed to Guam's public life,
4 with her father's legacy in the Guam Legislature and her extended family's ownership
5 of historic land known as *Hâtdin* ~ Garden, located near the Guam Museum and the
6 Guam Congress Building in *Hagåtña*. The land was inherited by her grandmother
7 †Joaquina de Torres Sablan after World War II, following the acquisition of ownership
8 from the Naval Government and subsequently the Government of Guam, symbolizing
9 a vital connection to Guam's heritage and resilience in the face of historical challenges;
10 and

11 **WHEREAS**, *Saina Malia* has made significant contributions to preserving and
12 sharing *CHamoru* heritage through her work in genealogy, oral history, and cultural
13 preservation. She began her research in the 1960s, conducting interviews with
14 *Manâmkô'* (*CHamoru* elders) to collect oral histories and genealogical data. Her work
15 has been instrumental in documenting and sharing the history of the *CHamoru* people,
16 particularly through publications and her involvement in initiatives like the "My History
17 is Guam's History" program, which helped focus attention on family history within the
18 community; and

19 **WHEREAS**, *Saina Malia* has also contributed to Guampedia, where her research
20 has helped enrich the island's understanding of its cultural and familial roots. Her work
21 is especially valued in the context of genealogical studies in Guam, where historical
22 records were lost or destroyed during significant events like World War II. As part of
23 her dedication to preserving *CHamoru* culture, her efforts in genealogy have been key
24 in advancing local knowledge of ancestral connections; and

25 **WHEREAS**, *Saina Malia* dedicated over three decades to the Government of
26 Guam, including twenty-three (23) years with the Department of Parks and Recreation,
27 where she used her expertise in history and genealogy to preserve and document

1 significant aspects of *CHamoru* cultural heritage, often working to identify and protect
2 Guam’s historical sites and to share the rich narratives of *CHamoru* ancestry; and

3 **WHEREAS**, *Saina* Malia actively participated in numerous cultural and
4 educational organizations bringing her extensive expertise as a recognized historian of
5 *CHamoru* culture, her specialization in *CHamoru* genealogy, and her fluency in the
6 *CHamoru* language to this important role. Through her service, *Saina* Malia contributed
7 invaluable cultural insights, helped preserve *CHamoru* heritage, and promoted
8 initiatives that fostered greater understanding and appreciation of *CHamoru* traditions
9 within the organization and the broader community; and

10 **WHEREAS**, *Saina* Malia authored significant works that captured the wisdom,
11 values, and cultural depth of her people, including a collection of *CHamoru* proverbs
12 that preserved traditional insights and a personal exploration of her genealogical
13 journey; and

14 **WHEREAS**, as a respected and published historian of Guam’s past, *Saina* Malia
15 was frequently sought after for her unparalleled knowledge and expertise in validating
16 cultural truths, historical interpretations, and linguistic practices connected to *CHamoru*
17 culture, locations, and customs, making invaluable contributions to the preservation and
18 authenticity of Guam’s historical record; and

19 **WHEREAS**, *Saina* Malia served as a cultural advisor and *CHamoru* language
20 expert on “*Maisa ~ The Chamorro Girl who Saves Guåhan*,” a widely celebrated
21 animated film. She shared a special chant she recorded at *Pago* Bay, Guam, which
22 opened the film and evoked the power of Guam’s natural landscapes and the resilience
23 of the *CHamoru* spirit; and

24 **WHEREAS**, *Saina* Malia’s latest cultural work included her participation in the
25 30-minute film *Promesa*, which depicted the cultural significance of the *CHamoru*
26 *novena* or devotional praying, portraying how these practices foster deep-rooted
27 spiritual and community connections; and

28 **WHEREAS**, *Saina* Malia has played an instrumental role in representing Guam
29 at multiple Festivals of the Pacific Arts (FestPac), where her expertise in *CHamoru*

1 heritage and history was highly valued. Notably, she contributed to the 2016 FestPac,
2 where she helped host a workshop titled "Memorializing Our Family Roots"~
3 "*Manmemorialisa i Hinenggen i Familian-ta.*" This event focused on genealogical
4 preservation and cultural heritage, emphasizing the importance of *CHamoru* family
5 history and lineage. In addition to her workshop, *Saina Malia*'s broader participation at
6 FestPac events has consistently enriched Guam's representation by providing an
7 authentic voice on Guam's cultural and historical narratives; and

8 **WHEREAS**, her role in performing traditional *CHamoru* dedications and rituals
9 at sites of ancestral significance, including her dedication at the *Sabãnan Fadang* burial
10 site, emphasized the sacred connection between the *CHamoru* people and their lands,
11 and her efforts helped to protect and honor these cultural sites for future generations;
12 and

13 **WHEREAS**, *Saina Malia* was a valued mentor and cultural leader who guided
14 the younger generation in understanding and appreciating their heritage, serving as a
15 cornerstone in the community's efforts to preserve and celebrate *CHamoru* identity in
16 the face of modern challenges, while her work has profoundly enriched the island's
17 collective understanding of its history and people; and

18 **WHEREAS**, *Saina Malia*'s work included the creation of educational programs,
19 preservation initiatives, and countless public presentations, through which she
20 disseminated vital knowledge of *CHamoru* culture, history, and language to the broader
21 community. Her commitment ensured that traditional practices and ancestral stories
22 were passed on, enriching the lives of future generations she will be remembered and
23 embedded in Guam's history as a guardian of *CHamoru* heritage; now therefore, be it

24 **RESOLVED**, that the Committee on Rules of *I Mina'trentai Siette Na*
25 *Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby, on behalf of the people of Guam honor the life and
26 legacy of †Toni "Malia" Ramirez for her lifelong dedication and extraordinary
27 contributions to preserving *CHamoru* heritage, her profound impact as a cultural

1 advocate, and her dedicated service to the people of Guam as a historian, genealogist,
2 and cultural practitioner; and be it further

3 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker and the Chairperson of the Committee on Rules
4 certify, and the Legislative Secretary attest to, the adoption hereof, and that copies of
5 the same be thereafter transmitted to the family of the late †Toni “Malia” Ramirez; and
6 to the Honorable Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero, *I Maga'hågan Guåhan*.

**DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES OF
I MINA'TRENTAI SIETTE NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN ON THE DAY OF
NOVEMBER 2024.**