

I MINA'TRENTAI TRES NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2016 (SECOND) Regular Session

Bill No. 398-43 (COR)

Introduced By:

T.R. MUNA BARNES

**AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FROM FISCAL YEAR
2016 FUND BALANCE OF THE TOURIST ATTRACTION
FUND TO GUAM VISITORS BUREAU FOR THE HURÃO
ACADEMY CHAMORU LANGUAGE "IMMERSION" PRE-
SCHOOL PROGRAM.**

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1 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF GUAM:**

2 **Section 1. Legislative Findings and Intent.** *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* finds
3 that the number of Chamoru speakers continues to decline and is under immediate
4 threat of extinction. The average number of "proficient" Chamoru speaker is over
5 the age of 55 years old. Furthermore, with the average life expectancy of Guam's
6 Chamoru people at 65-70 years, it is conceivable that the language will be extinct
7 by 2025.

8 *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* further finds that efforts must be made to preserve
9 and protect the Chamoru language by encouraging young children to use the
10 Chamoru language in their daily lives. Language immersion methodologies have
11 proven to be successful for language restoration in a number of communities
12 around the world. One model is the Aha Punana Leo Pre-School in Hawaii, which
13 surrounds pre-school age children in an environment conducive to learning their
14 native language.

15 *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* further finds that the Hurão, Inc., dba Hurão
16 Academy is building on the Aha Punana Leo Pre-School's model to teach the
17 Chamoru language to the next generation of Chamoru speakers. Established in

1 2005, Huråo Academy is the first “full-immersion” Chamoru language program to
2 meet the needs of a community struggling to preserve their language by continuing
3 their mission, “to promote and perpetuate the Chamoru language and culture in
4 honor of the past, for present and future generations; through community
5 immersion education and other programs in support of this mission.” The Huråo
6 Academy has served over 4000 students in their short history, and has a wait list of
7 parents wanting their children to participate in this program. The Huråo Academy
8 sees that in order to provide an effective language program, consistent exposure to
9 and practice of the Chamoru language should be integrated in every subject in class
10 starting at the pre-school level.

11 *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* further finds the increase in fluency of the Chamoru
12 language creates a greater awareness of Chamoru culture. This will further develop
13 and enhance our tourism industry, filling a growing trend in a type of traveler
14 called the “experiential traveler” who visits destinations to experience the unique
15 culture of the native people.

16 It is, therefore, the intent of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* to support the Huråo
17 Academy’s development of a language “immersion” pre-school program.

18 **Section 2. Appropriation.** Notwithstanding any provision of law, the sum
19 of One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) is hereby appropriated from
20 the unappropriated, unallocated fund balance of the fiscal year 2016 Tourist
21 Attraction Fund to the Guam Visitor’s Bureau for the Huråo Academy’s
22 development of a language “immersion” pre-school program.

23 **Section 3. Effective Date.** The provisions contained herein shall be
24 effective upon enactment of this Act.

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