

I MINA'TRENTAI UNU NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2011 (FIRST) Regular Session

Resolution No. 160-31 (COR)

Introduced by:

Aline A. Yamashita, Ph.D.

R. J. Respicio

T. C. Ada

V. Anthony Ada

F. F. Blas, Jr.

B. J.F. Cruz

Chris M. Dueñas

Sam Mabini, Ph.D.

Judith P. Guthertz, DPA

T. R. Muña Barnes

Adolpho B. Palacios, Sr.

v. c. pangelinan

Dennis G. Rodriguez, Jr.

M. Silva Taijeron

Judith T. Won Pat, Ed.D.

Relative to recognizing, commending and thanking Dr. Nerissa Bretania Underwood for her dedication and leadership in the building of our island's future through the Guam public education system.

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

3 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Nerissa Bretania Underwood was born in the Philippines and
4 raised on Guam, where she attended Mount Carmel School and Notre Dame High
5 School; and she then attended Sacred Heart Forrest Ridge High School in
6 Washington, where she received her high school diploma in 1973; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Bretania Underwood earned a Bachelor's Degree in
2 Elementary and Special Education from the University of Guam; and a Master of
3 Science Degree in Education and a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of
4 Oregon; and

5 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Bretania Underwood had served as a Guam Department of
6 Education (DOE) special education teacher; as a school program consultant for
7 teacher evaluation; as a research, planning and evaluation administrator; and as an
8 assistant superintendent of special education; and

9 **WHEREAS**, in July 2008, Dr. Bretania Underwood was selected as the Guam
10 Department of Education's eleventh (11th) Superintendent of the Guam Public School
11 System, which has thirty-one thousand (31,000) students, four thousand (4,000)
12 employees at forty-one (41) school sites and the central office, and a budget of One
13 Hundred Ninety-six Million Dollars (\$196,000,000) in local funds, and One Million
14 Ninety Thousand Dollars (\$1,090,000) in federal funds; and

15 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Bretania Underwood was the first Superintendent to institute
16 compliance with Public Law 29-102, which allowed her to select her management
17 team, which included Doreen Crisostomo, Geri James and Eva San Nicolas; and later
18 Taling Taitano and Arlene Unpingco; and which began a term where the
19 Superintendent exemplified performance accountability as high profile resignations
20 and reassignments resonated towards the beginning and continues through today; and

21 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Bretania Underwood touted student progress as the graduation
22 rate steadily increased to sixty-eight percent (68%); and emphasized student
23 achievement opportunities as students were encouraged to pursue post-secondary
24 education through the Dual Enrollment Program, the pilot year beginning with ten
25 (10) students, and growing to forty-eight (48) students the following year; and

1 **WHEREAS**, during her tenure, Dr. Bretania Underwood had supported
2 learning opportunities, such as the JROTC Marine Corps and Lodging Management
3 Programs at Okkodo High School, where both student groups took first place in the
4 2011 national competitions; and the promising Science Technology Engineering Math
5 (STEM) Academy being developed at George Washington High School; and

6 **WHEREAS**, also during her tenure, SAT 10 scores showed a marked
7 improvement with first (1st) graders at F.Q. Sanchez, Wettengel, Merizo, B.P.
8 Carbullido, LBJ, and Inarajan Elementary Schools scoring at ninety percent (90%) of
9 the national average in reading, and John F. Kennedy High School students scoring at
10 the national average in science and social studies; and

11 **WHEREAS**, Direct Instruction was previously required for all schools; and
12 now schools are allowed to choose instructional programs, and today in the *Metgot*
13 Schools (those without a federal reform program), the growth rate ranges from a low
14 of five (5) points to a high of sixty-one (61) points in math; and

15 **WHEREAS**, to ensure expectations are relevant and meaningful, student
16 performance standards have been reviewed and updated to meet the challenges and
17 opportunities of the 21st Century; as well, standards-based assessment through
18 criterion reference tests will be launched; and the inclusion of learning opportunities
19 through E-Books and laptops for all students ; and during her tenure, leadership was a
20 critical outcome providing for an improved financial system based on a strengthened
21 and open-information system; and

22 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Bretania Underwood understood that a critical component
23 was school facilities, and as her career as Superintendent began, an initial challenge
24 for her was the maintenance of facilities, which had too few personnel and insufficient
25 resources; and now there are standard operating procedures and a maintenance
26 database, a full assessment of the conditions of our schools by Sodexo, and Public

1 Law 31-29 was enacted, which will identify a public-private partnership that will
2 finally provide the needed training and resources, and systemic shifts that will allow
3 the maintenance crew to succeed; and

4 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Bretania Underwood offered professional training
5 opportunities for all levels of employees, whether it was the Pacific Education
6 Conference or quarterly professional development days; and

7 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Bretania Underwood's belief that High Risk meant High
8 Visibility and High Standards set a constructive tone that helped the school system
9 succeed as it understood that external assistance was needed to turn the tide; and

10 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Bretania Underwood's strength and focus kept the public
11 school system moving forward as it encountered food poisoning, bullying, school
12 closures, and money challenges; and

13 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Bretania Underwood's confidence in the teachers, school
14 staff, school leaders, and central office staff provided an environment where schools
15 were encouraged and expected to grow and learn; and

16 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Bretania Underwood's basic belief in the goodness of all
17 students and their families kept the public school system as a trusted guardian where
18 the vision to prepare all students for life, promote excellence, and provide support is
19 healthy and energized; now therefore, be it

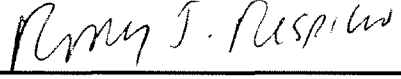
20 **RESOLVED**, that the Committee on Rules of *I Mina'trentai Unu Na*
21 *Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby, on behalf of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* and the people
22 of Guam, recognize, commend and thank Dr. Nerissa Bretania Underwood for her
23 dedication to the education of our children and families; and does further wish the best
24 of health and happiness to Dr. Nerissa Bretania Underwood and her family for the rest
25 of their lives; and be it further

1 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker and the Chairperson of the Committee on Rules
2 certify, and the Legislative Secretary attest to, the adoption hereof, and that copies of
3 the same be thereafter transmitted to Dr Nerissa Bretania Underwood; and to the
4 Honorable Edward J.B. Calvo, *I Maga'lahaen Guåhan*.


**DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES OF
I MINA'TRENTAI UNU NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN ON THE 12TH DAY
OF JULY 2011.**



RORY J. RESPICIO
Acting Speaker



RORY J. RESPICIO
Chairperson, Committee on Rules



ADOLPHO B. PALACIOS, SR.
Acting Legislative Secretary