

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

Resolution No. 182-31 (LS)

Introduced by:

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Relative to celebrating the completion of the Martin Luther King, Jr., National Memorial in Washington, D.C., a long overdue tribute to a true leader who serves as a shining example, as Guam seeks its appropriate full recognition as a member of the American family.

- 1 **BE IT RESOLVED BY *I MINA'TRENTAI UNU NA LIHESLATURAN***
2 ***GUÅHAN*:**
3 **WHEREAS**, this week marks the opening of the Martin Luther King National
4 Memorial along the Tidal Basin in our nation's capital, Washington, D.C.; and

1 **WHEREAS**, during the 1950s and '60s, as America's foremost civil rights
2 leader, the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., was able to make great strides in
3 achieving voting rights for African-American citizens, who had long been denied this
4 fundamental element of our society; and

5 **WHEREAS**, while Reverend King and his followers and supporters were able
6 to win victories for voting rights in many American states, to this day in 2011, the
7 citizens of the District of Columbia and the U.S. Territory of Guam continue to be
8 disenfranchised from national elections; and

9 **WHEREAS**, due to our failure to achieve political status on par with most of
10 the United States, American citizens residing in Guam continue to be denied the
11 fundamental right to have a say in selecting our national leaders; and

12 **WHEREAS**, although Guam has been considered as U.S. soil since it was
13 taken from the Spanish Crown by force of arms in 1898, its citizens were long
14 subjected to rule by the U.S. military, which could be, at the whim of individual
15 commanders, arbitrary and capricious, much as were many local governments in the
16 mainland United States in which persons of color were denied a say by systematic
17 disenfranchisement; and

18 **WHEREAS**, it was only after a long history of American military rule,
19 interrupted by the Japanese seizure of Guam and the harsh treatment at the hands of
20 that country during World War II, that the people of Guam were "allowed" to elect a
21 Governor and Legislature to represent them; and

22 **WHEREAS**, Guam does not enjoy the ironclad Constitutional civil rights
23 guaranteed to other American citizens; and

24 **WHEREAS**, the elements that reflect the honorable legacy of Dr. King and his
25 living teachings are seen in current events that are unfolding on Guam, including the

1 exercise of civic responsibility by our citizens in response to the present military
2 buildup; and


3 **WHEREAS**, the District of Columbia has seized upon the occasion of the new
4 Martin Luther King Memorial to press for voting rights for the residents of
5 Washington, D.C., through a change in political status, possibly statehood; and

6 **WHEREAS**, in the spirit of Reverend King, Guam will redouble its efforts to
7 capture and enjoy the civil rights enjoyed by other Americans. As Reverend King said
8 in 1969, "We shall overcome because the arc of the moral universe is long, but it
9 bends toward justice"; and as Reverend King's dream is finally realized in tangible
10 form, Guam's dream remains unrealized; now therefore, be it

11 **RESOLVED**, that *I Mina'Trentai Unu Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby,
12 on behalf of the people of Guam, join with all United States citizens in the celebration
13 of the opening of the Martin Luther King National Memorial, and Guam's parallel
14 pursuit of the continuing legacy of enhanced voter rights that is Reverend King's
15 legacy; and be it further

16 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker certify, and the Legislative Secretary attest to,
17 the adoption hereof, and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to the
18 Honorable Vincent C. Gray, Mayor of Washington, D.C.; to the Honorable Madeleine
19 Z. Bordallo, Guam Delegate to the United States Congress; and to the Honorable
20 Edward J.B. Calvo, *I Maga'lahren Guåhan*.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY *I MINA'TRENTAI UNU NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN* ON THE 23RD DAY OF AUGUST 2011.



JUDITH T. WON PAT, Ed.D.
Speaker



TINA ROSE MUÑA BARNES
Legislative Secretary