


I MINA'TRENTAI UNU NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2011 (FIRST) REGULAR SESSION

Resolution No. 160-31 (cor)

Introduced by:

A.A. Yamashita, PhD 

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

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

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

WHEREAS, Dr. Bretania Underwood earned an Elementary and Special Education bachelor's degree from the University of Guam; a Master's of Science in Education and a Doctor of Philosophy from the University of Oregon; and

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

WHEREAS, in July 2008, Dr. Bretania Underwood was selected as Guam's Department of Education's 11th superintendent of the Guam Public School System of 31,000 students, 4,000 work force at 41 school sites

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1 and central office, with a budget of 196 million local funds and 190 million
2 federal funds; and

3 **WHEREAS**, was the first to apply P.L. 29-102 allowing her to select
4 her management team: Doreen Crisostomo, Geri James, and Eva San
5 Nicolas; then, TalingTaitano, Arlene Unpingco; which began a term where
6 the superintendent exemplified performance accountability as high profile
7 resignations and reassignments resonated towards the beginning and
8 continues through today; and

9 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Bretania Underwood touted student progress as
10 the graduation rate steadily increased to 68% and emphasized student
11 achievement opportunities as students were encouraged to pursue post-
12 secondary education through the Dual Enrollment Program, the pilot year
13 beginning with 10 students and then growing to 48 students the following
14 year; and

15 **WHEREAS**, **during her tenure, she has** supported learning
16 opportunities such as the JROTC Marine Corps and Lodging Management
17 Program at Okkudo High where both student groups took first place in
18 2011 national competition and the promising Science Technology
19 Engineering Math (STEM) Academy being developed at GWHS; and

20 **WHEREAS**, SAT 10 scores showed a marked improvement with 1st
21 graders at FQ Sanchez, Wettengel, Merizo, BP Carbullido, LBJ, Inarajan
22 scoring at 90% of the national average in reading, and JFK High School
23 students scoring at the national average in science and social science; and

24 **WHEREAS**, Direct Instruction was previously required for all
25 schools; now schools are allowed to choose instructional programs and
26 today, the *Metgot* Schools – those without a federal reform program –

growth rate ranges from a low of 5 points to a high of 61 points in math;
and

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

WHEREAS, Dr. Bretania Underwood understood that a critical
component was school facilities, and an initial challenge as her career began
as Superintendent was maintenance of facilities – too few men and too
few resources --now, we have Standard Operating Procedures and a
maintenance database, a full assessment of the conditions of our schools
by Sodexo and, P.L. 31-29 that will identify a public private partnership
that will finally provide the needed training and resources and systemic
shifts that will allow the maintenance crew to succeed; and

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

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

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

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

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

12 **RESOLVED**, that the Committee on Rules, of *I Mina'trentai Unu Na*
13 *Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby, on behalf of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* and
14 the people of Guam, recognize, commend and thank Dr. Nerissa Bretania
15 Underwood for her dedication to the education of our children and our
16 families; and be it further

17 **RESOLVED**, that the Committee on Rules wishes the best of health
18 and happiness to Dr. Nerissa Bretania Underwood and her family for the
19 rest of their lives; and be it further

20 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker and the Chairperson of the
21 Committee on Rules certify, and the Legislative Secretary attests to, the
22 adoption hereof, and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to
23 Dr Nerissa Bretania Underwood ; and to the Honorable Edward Baza
24 Calvo, *I Maga'lahren Guåhan*.

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

JUDITH T. WON PAT, ED.D.
Speaker

RORY J. RESPICIO
Chairperson, Committee on Rules

TINA ROSE MUÑA BARNES
Legislative Secretary