

I Mina' Trentai Dos Na Liheslaturan Guåhan
Resolutions Log Sheet

Resolution No.	Sponsor	Title	Date Intro	Date of Presentation	Date Referred	Committee / Ofc Referred	Date Adopted
89-32 (LS)	Vicente (ben) C. Pangelinan	RELATIVE TO RECOGNIZING, HONORING AND COMMENDS ROBERT N. CELESTIAL FOR HIS DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT TO THE PEOPLE OF GUAM AND ALL THOSE WHO SUFFER FROM CANCERS ATTRIBUTED TO RADIATION EXPOSURE.	03/28/13	04/09/13			3/28/2013

I MINA'TRENTAI DOS NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2013 (FIRST) Regular Session

Resolution No. 89-32 (LS)

Introduced by:

Vicente (ben) C. Pangelinan
T. C. Ada
V. Anthony Ada
Frank B. Aguon, Jr.
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Chris M. Dueñas
Michael T. Limtiaco
T. R. Muña Barnes
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Tommy Morrison
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Aline A. Yamashita, Ph.D.
Judith T. Won Pat, Ed.D.

Relative to recognizing, honoring and commending Robert N. Celestial for his dedication and commitment to the people of Guam, and all those who suffer from cancers attributed to radiation exposure.

1 **BE IT RESOLVED BY *I MINA'TRENTAI DOS NA LIHESLATURAN***
2 ***GUÅHAN*:**
3 **WHEREAS**, as a young man, Mr. Robert N. Celestial served in the United
4 States Army from 1975 to 1983, and was assigned to the 84th Engineers Battalion
5 in Hawaii; and

1 **WHEREAS**, in 1977, Robert and his batallion were assigned to Runit Island
2 on Enewetak Atoll in the Republic of the Marshall Islands to clean up post-war
3 debris and build a large concrete dome to entomb contaminated soil and debris
4 from nuclear weapons testings conducted by the United States; and

5 **WHEREAS**, unbeknownst to them at the time, this assignment exposed
6 Robert and his battalion to ionizing radiation due to their exposure to the
7 contaminants of the uranium filled bombs that were detonated on and around the
8 islands during the nuclear weapons testing, and;

9 **WHEREAS**, these contaminants stem from the United States conducting
10 nuclear weapons testing in 1946-1962 where 67 thermonuclear weapons were
11 detonated in the Pacific region to include Johnston Island, Christmas Island and the
12 Marshall Islands;

13 **WHEREAS**, of the 67 detonations, 43 of them were detonated in the
14 Enewetok Atoll of the Marshall Islands; and

15 **WHEREAS**, ionizing radiation is unstable and only takes a moment to
16 damage cells, yet it may take years for cancer to develop; thyroid cancers and
17 leukemia are particularly sensitive to ionizing radiation, and the onset of these
18 particular cancers can occur in as little as a few years; other cancers that have been
19 attributed to the exposure of ionizing radiation are lung, skin, breast, and stomach
20 cancer, along with multiple myeloma, and;

21 **WHEREAS**, by participating in the clean up of Runit Island, Robert and his
22 batallion comrades were subjected to the same atrocious health effects as the
23 inhabitants of the Marshall Islands and the other onsite participants as well as what
24 the stateside millers and miners had experienced; and

25 **WHEREAS**, unlike his battalion comrades, Robert's health issues were not
26 immediately present, but he has experienced over 20 years of debilitating physical
27 pain and disability; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Robert did in-depth research on the serious health issues that
2 befell his comrades and himself, and his findings revealed that nuclear
3 contamination wasn't confined to the Marshall Islands, and that it is widespread in
4 the region due to exposure to ionizing radiation from nuclear fallout caused by the
5 nuclear weapons testings conducted in the Marshall Islands; and

6 **WHEREAS**, Robert compiled compelling evidence that Guam and its
7 inhabitants not only received exposure to nuclear fallout due to the multiple
8 nuclear bomb testings in the Marshall Islands, but also due to the decontamination
9 of U.S. Naval vessels in Guam's waters off Apra Harbor and Cocos Island Lagoon,
10 from 1946 to 1958; and

11 **WHEREAS**, in 1990, the United States government established the
12 Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990 (RECA) to compensate those in the
13 continental United States who have been exposed to ionizing radiation due to the
14 uranium mining and milling, or due to onsite participation in the detonation and
15 clean up of the nuclear weapons testings, and those who were downwind of these
16 tests in the Pacific and the continental United States; and

17 **WHEREAS**, Robert advocated and fought for the inclusion of Guam as
18 downwinders in the RECA, based on the declassification of documents and the
19 sworn testimony of United States Navy (Retired) Lt. Charles Bert Schreiber, who
20 was the Atomic, Biological, and Chemical Warfare Defense Officer at that time,
21 that Guam was significantly exposed to radiation fallout from Operation Ivy Mike,
22 which was a 10.4 megaton hydrogen bomb that was detonated on October 31,
23 1952, on the Enewetak Atoll in the Marshall Islands; and

24 **WHEREAS**, Guam is located approximately one thousand two hundred
25 (1,200) miles directly west of the nuclear weapons test sites in the Marshall
26 Islands; and

1 **WHERAS**, oceanic circulation patterns off of Guam are primarily
2 dominated by northeasterly trade winds along the westward flowing North Pacific
3 Equatorial Current, placing Guam directly and indirectly in the line of exposure to
4 nuclear fallout; and

5 **WHEREAS**, nuclear fallout is the effect of the detonation of a nuclear
6 bomb, where radioactive particles and earth debris are released into the atmosphere
7 and fall back down to earth contaminating the air, water and lands thousands of
8 miles from the detonation site; and

9 **WHEREAS**, coupled with the declassified information and his extensive
10 research, in 2002 Robert was able to garner the assistance of then Senators Angel
11 L.G. Santos, Carmen Fernandez, and Mark Forbes to execute the Legislature's
12 Blue Ribbon Panel Committee, composed of Robert Celestial and 11 other citizens
13 of Guam, and chaired by Dr. Chris Perez, which conducted research and adopted
14 findings on Guam's exposure to radiation; and

15 **WHEREAS**, from the work and the results produced by Robert and the Blue
16 Ribbon Panel, the Members of the 27th Guam Legislature moved to pass a
17 resolution that petitioned the United States government to include Guam in the
18 RECA for the just compensation of the unethical bereavement of the island health
19 issues; and

20 **WHEREAS**, in 2004 a Guam delegation, composed of Delegate Bordallo, Senator
21 Carmen Fernandez, and Mr. Robert Celestial presented oral testimony and submitted
22 documented evidence of radiation exposure on Guam, before the Committee to Assess the
23 Scientific Information for the Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program,
24 under the auspices of the National Research Council and mandated by Congress; and

25 **WHEREAS**, the assessment of the scientific information for the Radiation
26 Exposure Screening and Education Program (RESEP) book (2005) reports that
27 Guam did receive measurable fallout from the atmospheric testing of nuclear

1 weapons in the Pacific, and that the residents of Guam during that period should be
2 eligible for compensation under RECA as a “downwinder”; and

3 **WHEREAS**, a RECA “downwinder” is someone who was exposed to
4 radiation fallout from nuclear weapons testing, and suffer from any of the
5 following illnesses: larynx, thyroid, breast (female/male), small intestines,
6 pancreas, ovary, salivary gland, lung, esophagus, stomach, brain, urinary bladder,
7 bile ducts, liver, colon, and gall bladder cancers, leukemia (other than chronic
8 lymphocytic leukemia), and multiple myeloma lymphomas (other than Hodgkin’s
9 disease); and

10 **WHEREAS**, Dr. Robert Haddock, an epidemiologist with the University of
11 Guam, and the Guam Cancer Registry have done extensive research regarding
12 cancer in Micronesia, and report that the most common cancers afflicted by island
13 residents are breast, colorectal, lung, prostate, and

14 **WHEREAS**, Senator Tom Udall (D) of New Mexico, along with
15 Congressman Ben Lujan (D) of New Mexico, introduced legislation in 2010 and
16 2011 to amend RECA in order to expand compensation and to include Guam as a
17 “downwinder”; and

18 **WHEREAS**, these measures did not move past their respective committees
19 and died at the end of their respective terms; and

20 **WHEREAS**, Robert, along with the people of Guam, continue to wait for
21 fair inclusion in the RECA; and

22 **WHEREAS**, over the course of his research and advocacy, Robert has
23 gathered and organized the Pacific Association for Radiation Survivors (PARS), an
24 organization on Guam consisting of island residents and their families who suffer
25 from known cancers related to radiation exposure, and;

26 **WHEREAS**, Robert with the support of his family, friends, peers and PARS
27 continue to dedicate his time and resources to educating students, families, and

1 elected leaders, on Guam, the region, and States, and to advocate for Guam's
2 inclusion in the RECA; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Robert continues to urge the island and nation leaders to
4 recognize that certain cancers that plague the people of Guam are directly related
5 to exposure to ionizing radiation, and that inclusion in RECA is a form of social
6 justice and just compensation for the unethical bereavement of the health of island
7 residents; and

8 **WHEREAS**, *I Liheslaturan Guåhan*, in support of Robert and the findings of the
9 Blue Ribbon Panel have submitted Resolution 73 (2005), Resolution 5 (2007), and
10 Resolution 30-62 (2009), and Resolution 171-31 (2011) to the U.S. Congress and the
11 President of the United States and will continue to petition the United States to extend
12 inclusion of Guam into RECA; and now therefore, be it

13 **RESOLVED**, that *I Mina'Trentai Dos Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* does
14 hereby, on behalf of the people of Guam, recognize, honor and commend Robert
15 N. Celestial for his dedication, commitment and undaunting service to the island of
16 Guam; and does further extend *Un Dångkolo Na Si Yu'os Ma'åse'* to him for being
17 an inspiration to the people of Guam, and especially to those fighting cancer; and
18 be it further

19 **RESOLVED**, that *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* does further specifically
20 commend and thank Mr. Celestial for his unprecedented research and advocacy
21 work in petitioning the United States government for the social justice that is due
22 to the island; and be it further

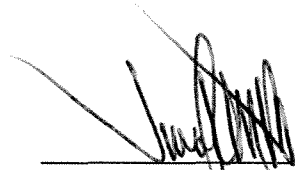
23 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker certify, and the Legislative Secretary attest
24 to, the adoption hereof, and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to Mr.
25 Robert N. Celestial; to the Pacific Association for Radiation Survivors (PARS); to
26 the Guam Cancer Research Center; to the Guam Cancer Trust Fund; the Honorable

- 1 Congresswoman Madeline Bordallo; and to the Honorable Edward J.B. Calvo, *I*
- 2 *Maga'låhen Guåhan.*

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY *I MINA'TRENTAI DOS NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN* ON THE 28th DAY OF MARCH 2013



BENJAMIN J.F. CRUZ
Acting Speaker



TINA ROSE MUÑA BARNES
Legislative Secretary