

I MINA'TRENTAI DOS NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2014 (SECOND) Regular Session

Resolution No. 425-32 (COR)

Introduced by:

Judith T. Won Pat, Ed.D.
B. J.F. Cruz
T. R. Muña Barnes
R.J. Respicio
T. C. Ada
V. Anthony Ada
FRANK B. AGUON, JR.
Chris M. Dueñas
Michael T. Lintiacó
Brant T. McCreddie
Tommy Morrison
Dennis G. Rodriguez, Jr.
Michael F. Q. San Nicolas
Aline A. Yamashita, Ph.D.

Relative to recognizing, honoring, and celebrating the life of the late Honorable Speaker vicente “ben” cabrera pangelinan for his dedication and selflessness to the people of Guam, and for his unwavering commitment to truly serve and stand up for the common person; and to further expressing deepest condolences and appreciation of his life to his family on his passing.

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

3 **WHEREAS,** Speaker vicente “ben” cabrera pangelinan, affectionately known
4 as “ben” to the people of Guam, was born on October 22, 1955 in Saipan,

1 Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; and is the son of †Luisa Cabrera
2 Pangelinan and †Francisco Sablan Pangelinan; and the brother of Maria, Jesusa, and
3 Antonio; and

4 **WHEREAS, ben** moved to Guam at the age of seven (7), and grew up in the
5 village of *Barrigada*, where he attended San Vicente Catholic School; and

6 **WHEREAS, ben** was a deeply spiritual individual who carried his Catholic
7 faith with him throughout his life, which was rooted in the upbringing by his parents
8 who sacrificed to send him to a Catholic school, and emboldened him as a young man
9 to assist the Church in maintaining the facilities of the Capuchin San Fidelis Friary in
10 *Agaña* Heights on a regular basis for many years; and

11 **WHEREAS,** while volunteering his time to assist during his formative years,
12 his faith was forged to render service not only to his Church, but to his fellow
13 brethren; and

14 **WHEREAS, ben** took those values imparted by his parents and family when he
15 undertook his studies at Father Dueñas Memorial School (FDMS), where he
16 graduated in 1974 and had the ambition to be a “champion of the innocent, poor, and
17 the downtrodden, the seeker and the upholder of truth and justice”; and

18 **WHEREAS,** through the influence of the Capuchin priests of FDMS and the
19 close friendships developed with the Jesuit priests who lived near the school, **ben**
20 made the decision to further pursue post-secondary education at Georgetown
21 University in Washington, D.C., after having spent almost a year studying at the
22 University of Guam; and

23 **WHEREAS, ben’s** decision to attend Georgetown University was described as
24 “a match made in heaven,” as he was intrigued by both the academic offerings of the
25 Jesuit order, as well as government and politics; and

26 **WHEREAS,** during his time at Georgetown University, **ben** worked as an
27 intern and staff assistant to the late Congressman Antonio B. Won Pat; and as an

1 intern under Major General Carlos P. Romulo, former Philippine Ambassador to the
2 United Nations; and

3 **WHEREAS**, after graduating from Georgetown University in 1981 with a
4 Bachelor of Arts in government, **ben** worked as a delivery truck driver before he
5 began to build his career in the private and public sectors; and

6 **WHEREAS**, beginning his career in the private sector, **ben** worked at the
7 Family Health Plan/Health Maintenance Life Guam (FHP), a Health Maintenance
8 Organization (HMO) doing business in Guam, Saipan, and California, where he
9 started out as a Member Relations Officer and eventually worked his way up in the
10 company, holding various leadership positions, such as the Guam Director of
11 Government and Public Affairs, the Associate Director of Operations, and the
12 Regional General Manager at its corporate offices in Fountain Valley, California; and

13 **WHEREAS**, while **ben** was on the fast track to becoming a leading corporate
14 executive, having served as the protégé for the Chief Executive Officer of FHP, he
15 knew he could not ignore his calling to serve his island and people, and he eventually
16 committed himself to public service after heeding a call by the late Governor Ricardo
17 J. Bordallo to serve as Deputy Chief of Staff and Special Assistant for Economic
18 Development in 1985; and

19 **WHEREAS**, with **ben's** varying interests and inquisitive mind, he was a
20 natural entrepreneur, and together with several fellow cabinet members formed the
21 Fifth Wheel, Inc., dba IMAGES, which handled advertising, marketing, and public
22 relations for thousands of clients. One of the company's memorable projects was the
23 "English the Chamorro Way" publication; and

24 **WHEREAS**, **ben** continued his work in various aspects of the private sector,
25 including partnering with friends to form a graphic printing company, Graphic Center,
26 which continues to serve businesses and consumers to this day; and

27 **WHEREAS**, inspired by the work he had done for the offices of Governor

1 Bordallo and Congressman Won Pat, **ben** further ventured into elected politics by
2 running for the United States Congress in 1988 and 1990; and

3 **WHEREAS**, although **ben** lost the Congressional elections, he came close to
4 victory in both races and earned the respect of the late Republican incumbent,
5 Brigadier General and former Congressman Ben Blaz, who subsequently proclaimed
6 **ben** as “his favorite Democrat, hands down”; and

7 **WHEREAS**, in 1992, in a successful bid for Senator of the Guam Legislature,
8 **ben** was elected by the people of Guam to serve in the 22nd Guam Legislature; and
9 thereafter, he continued to serve the people of Guam for the next two decades as a
10 Senator in the 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 29th, 30th, 31st, and 32nd Guam
11 Legislatures, serving as Speaker of the 27th Guam Legislature; and

12 **WHEREAS**, in the “Office of the People”, **ben’s** unwavering, daily
13 commitment to stand up for the common person, and his creativity in finding practical
14 solutions for individuals, the government of Guam, and the island as a whole,
15 unexpectedly grew to a lifetime of public service. **ben** spent the majority of his life
16 doing what he loved most - serving the people of Guam; and

17 **WHEREAS**, during his tenure in the Guam Legislature, **ben** authored over two
18 hundred (200) laws, encompassing a wide range of constituencies and issues
19 important to him and to the people of Guam, and which have had positive and long-
20 lasting effects on not just the island itself, but directly to thousands of individuals; and

21 **WHEREAS**, **ben** will forever be remembered for his astute attention to the
22 issue of land - how he revived the land and our connection to land by re-telling the
23 early history of the *Chamorro* Land Trust so that people could remember what
24 galvanized us as a people then and what should continue to incite us today; and he
25 would stave off through legislation or testimony any competing attempts to put
26 *Chamorro* homelands in jeopardy, or at risk of being devalued in any way; and

27 **WHEREAS**, **ben** often stood alone in the fight to ensure funds generated from

1 the leasing of *Chamorro* Land Trust properties would go back to the Trust; and
2 further, he continued his pledge for the return of ancestral lands by actively
3 participating in the Guam Ancestral Lands Commission, and by providing the
4 necessary resources needed to expedite and facilitate the return of lands, deemed as
5 excess by the U.S. federal government and the government of Guam, to its original
6 landowners; and

7 **WHEREAS**, with unwavering support to our *man'amko*, **ben** fought against
8 the executive branch's refusal to pay *man'amko* their cost of living allowances, and he
9 succeeded through a feat of combined legislation, constituent-led activism, and court
10 proceedings accomplished in a fifteen (15)-year period; and

11 **WHEREAS**, with great eloquence and stride, **ben** was one of the true
12 practitioners of the *Chamorro* language in his work with the Guam Legislature. **ben's**
13 use of the *Chamorro* language during debates on the Session Floor, and while
14 presenting before distinguished audiences and in everyday conversation, exemplified
15 his honest stewardship of *Chamorro* as one of the official languages of Guam; and

16 **WHEREAS**, **ben** sponsored several laws in support of young families,
17 including the creation of the First-Time Homeowners Assistance Program within the
18 Guam Housing Corporation (GHC) that has assisted hundreds of individuals realize
19 their dreams of owning their own home, and the establishment of other programs and
20 the expansion of authorities and opportunities within GHC, to allow more individuals
21 and families access to home loan funding; and

22 **WHEREAS**, **ben's** vibrant understanding of economics and business made him
23 the perfect legislator to assist and enhance the business community. **ben** updated laws,
24 rules, and regulations through legislation, creating the One-Stop Business License
25 Center to assist businesses in their efforts to grow the economy; creating the
26 Government of Guam Mitigation Program for Business Interruption, which was aimed
27 at assisting businesses being negatively affected by road construction activity;

1 providing on-street, oceanside parking along Route 1 in East *Agaña* Bay to facilitate
2 jet ski launching, and the expansion of swimming and other recreational activities and
3 facilities; adopting and updating the Uniform Commercial Code relative to dealing
4 with secured transactions; establishing the Secure and Fair Enforcement for Mortgage
5 Licensing Act; authorizing the licensing of service contracts sold on Guam;
6 establishing the Collective Investment Funds Act; establishing a new Guam Business
7 Corporation Act; providing funding to the Pacific Islands Development Bank for
8 extensions of loans to Guam-based small businesses; and numerous other public laws;
9 and

10 **WHEREAS**, having spent his formative years reading the majority of the
11 books at the library, and appreciating the value of education early on, **ben** advocated
12 for public education through his continuous, overwhelming support for funding and
13 prioritizing education in the annual budgets of the government of Guam, and through
14 legislation that resulted in: the creation of the Education Financial Supervisory
15 Commission, which has increased collaboration, transparency, and accountability in
16 the finances of the Guam Department of Education; the creation of the Territorial
17 Education Facilities Fund, which segregates the collection of Real Property Taxes for
18 the sole purpose of educational funding; the creation of the University of Guam
19 Endowment Fund and the Guam Community College Endowment Fund to assist in
20 the funding of higher education on Guam; and greater flexibility to the Guam
21 Community College Administration and Board of Trustees to access the GCC
22 Endowment Fund in order to support its educational mission and needed capital
23 improvement projects; and

24 **WHEREAS**, envisioning a green and viable future for the people and
25 environment of Guam, **ben** established the Renewable Portfolio Standards for the
26 Guam Power Authority that continue to lead Guam in the direction of a more self-
27 sustainable energy future; and he led the creation of policy that would assist in

1 promoting the use of renewable energy at the residential and consumer levels through
2 net metering; and

3 **WHEREAS**, in the face of years of unpaid tax refunds, **ben** created and
4 maintained, despite the objection of every Governor, the Income Tax Refund Efficient
5 Payment Trust Fund, which mandated that a certain percentage of income taxes
6 collected by the government of Guam be set aside for the sole purpose of ensuring the
7 government is able to pay income tax refunds in a timely manner; and

8 **WHEREAS**, in a historic 2014 decision, the Supreme Court of Guam ruled in
9 favor of **ben**'s Declaratory Judgment request and upheld the intent and purpose of the
10 Income Tax Refund Efficient Payment Trust Fund, prohibiting any withdrawal of
11 funds for any other purpose, to ensure that the taxpayers of Guam are paid their
12 income tax refunds in a timely manner pursuant to Guam law and court order; and

13 **WHEREAS**, having an in-depth understanding of governmental structure, **ben**
14 worked towards streamlining funds received from the federal government by
15 establishing the Guam State Clearinghouse under the Lieutenant Governor's Office as
16 the single centralized office within the government of Guam to oversee all federal aid
17 programs, grants, loans, contracts, contributions, appropriations, advances, direct
18 federal development, and other federal funding sources for Guam; and establishing
19 and re-establishing the Guam Community Police Review Commission as a way to
20 maintain professional standards among Guam Police Officers, while protecting their
21 rights and dignity, and to provide a uniform platform for island residents to process
22 official complaints against any Guam Police Officer and ensured the protection of
23 confidential Guam Crime Stoppers information without compromising its services;
24 and

25 **WHEREAS**, having faithfully served the people of Guam for decades and
26 recognizing the importance and value of supporting the community through service,
27 **ben** played an instrumental role in pushing for such public laws which created certain

1 protections for volunteers of governmental entities, non-profit organizations, and other
2 entities in lawsuits; and he also sought to increase participation in non-profit and
3 public and private organizations by amending the Guam Code Annotated to provide
4 protection from liability abuses related to their service; and

5 **WHEREAS**, recognizing the needs of indigent off-island medical care, **ben**
6 created the medical referral mileage bank account wherein all mileage from
7 government-paid travel is deposited into said account for use by Guam's medically
8 indigent; and established the Guam Social Work Practice Act to promote, preserve
9 and protect public health, safety, and welfare by and through the effective control and
10 regulation of the practice of social work; the licensure of social workers; and the
11 licensure control and regulation of persons in or out of Guam that practice social work
12 within the island of Guam; and

13 **WHEREAS**, cognizant of consumer protection, **ben** required all petroleum
14 companies to utilize a meter or device that compensates for temperature and thermo-
15 expansion of petroleum, to ensure responsible sales of petroleum products to Guam
16 consumers; and also required that all retail gasoline dispensing pumps implement
17 temperature compensation calibration, which was deficient up until that point as the
18 temperature of the petroleum product was not in sync with temperature compensation
19 calibration by the time consumers paid for the gasoline at the pump; and

20 **WHEREAS**, recognizing a deficiency in our public system to protect the
21 interests of the elderly and other individuals, **ben** created the Office of the Public
22 Guardian within the Supreme Court of Guam to furnish guardianship services to the
23 elderly, and those individuals who are mentally disabled, at no cost or reduced cost so
24 as to promote their general welfare, and to allow participation as fully as possible in
25 all decisions that affect them; and

26 **WHEREAS**, **ben** crafted public laws to increase transparency and
27 accountability in government by reestablishing the Guam Ethics Commission;

1 requiring health insurance companies to submit data for the government of Guam
2 health insurance program, which has increased the government's ability to negotiate
3 and has potentially helped save taxpayers and government of Guam employees and
4 retirees millions of dollars, requiring any public notice, advertisement, or message
5 issued by a government agency using government funds to include a disclosure
6 statement, and prohibiting the sealing of settlements of claims against the government;
7 and

8 **WHEREAS**, in honor of the brave men and women who have proudly served
9 in the U.S. military and who have paid the ultimate sacrifice in the defense of the
10 nation, and the protection of the pursuit of liberty and democracy, **ben** established an
11 award entitled, *I Milåyan Mås Takhilo' Na Sakrufisu*, to further convey the unending
12 and never forgotten gratitude and great respect from the people of Guam to the
13 daughters and sons of Guam who, as members of the military, lost their lives in battle
14 while defending the island and nation we love and the freedom we hold so dearly,
15 with the presentation of a Legislative Resolution accompanied by the Guam Flag, and
16 their names listed in the *I Milåyan Mås Takhilo' Na Sakrufisu* roll displayed at the
17 main building of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan*; and

18 **WHEREAS**, **ben** was committed over the duration of his career to maintaining
19 traditional and sustainable cultural practices and economic independence, providing
20 funding for both the Guam Fisherman's Cooperative Association Facility and the
21 Guam Farmer's Cooperative Association Facility, and designating lands for the
22 cultivation of traditional herbal medicinal plants and the establishment of the *Hatdin*
23 *Åmot Chamorro*; and

24 **WHEREAS**, **ben** ensured that Guam's precious resources remain in the control
25 of the people of Guam and are protected from contamination, over-consumption and
26 invasive species by funding the Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle Eradication Program, and
27 declaring the use of all water, at any time, in a stream, river, or other surface source,

1 including water located beneath the ground and in the aquifer, vested in the
2 government of Guam; and

3 **WHEREAS, ben** sought recognition and remedy for the injustices suffered by
4 our people as a result of war and military contamination, including war claims
5 compensation; he fought alongside Mr. Robert Celestial of the Pacific Association of
6 Radiation Survivors (PARS), who petitioned the U.S. Congress to amend the
7 Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990 to include several additional
8 geographic areas, including Guam; he authorized the lease of government of Guam
9 land to the *Manenggon* Memorial Foundation to establish a memorial remembering
10 those who were detained at the World War II *Manenggon* Retention camps; and he
11 authorized the Military Order of the Purple Heart to use a portion of Skinner's Plaza
12 to establish a memorial monument to honor all of Guam's wounded combat soldiers;
13 and

14 **WHEREAS,** an avid supporter of families, ben extended paternity leave;
15 encouraged the development of soccer as an integral and popular sport on Guam,
16 through the identification of a matching funds program and land area designation for
17 the development of soccer fields at the Northern and Southern Sports Complex
18 Facilities; and increased the membership of the Guam Wrestling and Boxing
19 Commission to meet quorum and allow the commission to better serve its respective
20 sports; provided creative funding solutions for public school sports facilities; and
21 mandated bicycle lanes and pedestrian walkways on primary and secondary roads on
22 Guam, prioritizing the safety of cyclists on our roadways and encouraging the sport of
23 cycling; and

24 **WHEREAS, ben** was Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations for three
25 legislative terms, wherein his acumen for budgeting and finance allowed for one of the
26 most streamlined and efficient legislative budget processes in government of Guam
27 history; and

1 **WHEREAS, ben** was an advocate for the protection of the *Chamorro* culture,
2 the preservation and return of ancestral lands, and the safeguarding of the way of life
3 for the people of Guam, and he actively participated during the Draft Environmental
4 Impact Statement (DEIS) and the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact
5 Statement (DSEIS) for the military realignment to Guam, and other federal actions
6 such as the Mariana Islands Training and Testing (MITT), providing oral comments
7 during each scoping meeting and submitting numerous written comments,
8 encompassing every impact that would directly and indirectly affect the people,
9 wildlife and natural resources of Guam; and

10 **WHEREAS, ben** was committed to pushing for *Chamorro* Self-Determination
11 and the Decolonization Registry, and he remained steadfast in the quest for political
12 self-determination, courageously presenting testimony to the United Nations to
13 advocate for Guam's inalienable right to self-determination; and his office was the
14 only place, aside from the Guam Election Commission, to register eligible persons for
15 the Decolonization Registry today; and

16 **WHEREAS, ben**, through public law, renamed the *Adelup* Complex after the
17 second elected Governor of Guam, Ricardo J. Bordallo, who served as Governor for
18 two terms; and renamed the Retirement Fund Building after Jesus R. Quinene, who
19 was a Member of the 1st and 2nd Guam Legislatures, and whose work created the
20 Government of Guam Retirement Fund; and

21 **WHEREAS,** gifted with words, in speech and script, **ben** wrote a column for
22 the local newspaper, and was described by one senatorial colleague as one of the best
23 orators of his generation; and he was often invited to deliver inspirational speeches to
24 small and large gatherings, including being a keynote speaker for the graduating class
25 of Fall 2011 at the University of Guam; and

26 **WHEREAS, ben** was known for cautious spending of the people's money, and
27 often spent the least among his colleagues from senatorial budgets; and he was so

1 practical in his election spending that in the term he became Speaker in the 27th Guam
2 Legislature, **ben** ranked number seven (7) in the legislative race, having won twenty-
3 three thousand four hundred forty-six (23,446) votes; and he was bestowed with the
4 title of “lowest-spending winner,” paying out only \$8,579 for campaign expenses,
5 which equates to approximately \$0.37 per vote; and

6 **WHEREAS**, without exception, everyone was welcome at “The Office of the
7 People”; **ben**’s unwavering, daily commitment to stand up for the common person,
8 and his creativity in finding practical solutions for individuals, the government of
9 Guam, and the island as a whole, unexpectedly grew to a lifetime of public service.
10 **ben** spent the majority of his life doing what he loved most—serving the People of
11 Guam; and

12 **WHEREAS**, before being diagnosed with cancer, **ben** had an almost perfect
13 attendance and voting record; he was diligent in reading everything relevant to the
14 bills being discussed, and being fully prepared for public hearings and sessions; and
15 he was a patient senatorial colleague with an extraordinary memory, often taking the
16 time to explain to newer senators and younger members of the public, the
17 undocumented history of various issues and efforts on Guam; and

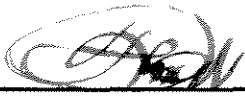
18 **WHEREAS**, **ben** was diagnosed with cancer in 2010, and immediately
19 underwent surgery to remove the tumors as a preventative measure. However, he was
20 subsequently required to battle the aggressive cancer with chemotherapy and radiation
21 treatment, but he ultimately continued to selflessly serve the people of Guam with
22 courage and resolve claiming, “I do not live with cancer; cancer lives with me”; now
23 therefore, be it

24 **RESOLVED**, that the Committee on Rules of *I Mina’Trentai Dos Na*
25 *Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby, on behalf of the people of Guam, recognize, honor,
26 and celebrate the life of the late Honorable Speaker vicente “**ben**” cabrera pangelinan;
27 and does further extend its sincerest condolences to his family on his untimely

1 passing; and be it further

2 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker and the Chairperson of the Committee on Rule
3 certify, and the Legislative Secretary attest to, the adoption hereof, and that copies of
4 the same be thereafter transmitted to the family of the late Vicente “ben” Cabrera
5 Pangelinan, Senator and former Speaker; and to the Honorable Edward J.B. Calvo, *I*
6 *Maga'låhen Guåhan*.

**DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES
OF I MINA'TRENTAI DOS NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN ON THE 16TH
DAY OF JULY 2014.**



JUDITH T. WON PAT, Ed.D.

Speaker



THOMAS C. ADA

Acting Chairperson, Committee on Rules



TINA ROSE MUNA BARNES

Legislative Secretary