

MINA'BENTE OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2006 (Second) Regular Session

Resolution No. 199 (LS)

Introduced by:

J.T. Won Pat 

Relative to requesting the Honorable Members of the U.S. House of Representatives to pass HR. 4766, To amend the Native American Languages Act to provide for the support of Native American Language survival schools, and for other purposes, and for the Honorable Members of the U.S. Senate to support the passage of HR 4766 in its entirety.

1 **BE IT RESOLVED BY I LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN:**

2 **WHEREAS, I Mina Bente Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guahan** strongly supports
3 H.R. 4766, the Esther Martinez Native American Languages Preservation Act
4 of 2006; and recognizes that this bill will be on the suspension calendar in the
5 House of Representatives the week of September 25th; and that this bill will
6 likely pass the House, thus *I Mina Bente Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guahan* urges the
7 Senate to pass the House bill by unanimous consent; and

8 **WHEREAS, I Mina Bente Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guahan** recognizes that
9 there is a crisis loss of Native languages across the country; and that it is

1 estimated that only twenty indigenous languages will remain viable by the
2 year 2050; and Our Native languages are not spoken anywhere else in the
3 world; and, if they are not preserved, they will disappear forever. *I Mina Bente*
4 *Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guahan* also recognizes that given the rapid pace of
5 deterioration of Native languages, it is a race against the clock to save Native
6 languages; and

7 **WHEREAS**, *I Mina Bente Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guahan* recognizes that
8 the key to stemming the loss of Native languages is by significantly increasing
9 support for Native American language immersion programs. It is well proven
10 that language immersion programs are one of the few effective ways to create
11 fluent speakers in Native languages. Further, data shows that Native students
12 who participate in an immersion program attain higher academic success
13 compared to their Native peers who do not participate in these programs; and

14 **WHEREAS**, *I Mina Bente Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guahan* recognizes that
15 the United States should do all that it can to preserve Native American
16 languages as these languages played a vital role in protecting our country
17 during World Wars I and II. Also, as a result of federal assimilationist policies
18 in the early and mid-1900's, many Native people stopped speaking their
19 Native languages because they were forced to attend Bureau of Indian Affairs
20 boarding schools that harshly forbid the speaking of Native languages; or
21 were severely punished while speaking their own language on their own

1 land, as is the case of the *Chamorro* people on Guam during the Naval
2 Government Regime; and

3 **WHEREAS**, *I Mina Bente Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guahan* recognizes that,
4 under existing law, the Administration for Native Americans, Health and
5 Human Services, administers a Native American languages revitalization
6 grant program under the Native American Programs Act of 1974. H.R. 4766
7 would provide for expanded uses under the current grant program to allow
8 for Native American language immersion grants. The language immersion
9 grants would assist Native communities as they work to revitalize and protect
10 their languages for generations to come; and

11 **WHEREAS**, HR 4766 also referred to as the “Native American
12 Languages Preservation Act of 2006”, seeks to encourage and support,
13 consistent with the policy of the United States as expressed in the Native
14 American Languages Act (25 U.S.C. 2901 et seq.), the revitalization of Native
15 American languages through education in Native American languages; and
16 instruction in other academic subjects using Native American languages as an
17 instructional medium; and

18 **WHEREAS**, HR 4766 seeks to demonstrate the positive effects of Native
19 American language survival schools on the academic success of Native
20 American students and the students’ mastery of standard English. And, to
21 encourage and support the involvement of families in the educational and
22 cultural survival efforts of Native American language survival schools; and

1 **WHEREAS**, HR 4766 also seeks to encourage communication,
2 cooperation, and educational exchange among Native American language
3 survival schools and the administrators of Native American language
4 survival schools. To provide support for Native American language survival
5 school facilities and endowments. And, to provide support for Native
6 American language nests—as part of Native American language survival
7 schools; or as separate programs that will be developed into more
8 comprehensive Native American language survival schools; and

9 **WHEREAS**, HR 4766 also seeks to support the development of local and
10 national models that can be disseminated to the public and made available to
11 other schools as exemplary methods of teaching Native American students.
12 And, to develop a support center system for Native American language
13 survival schools at the university level; and

14 **WHEREAS**, HR 4766 defines a ‘Native American’ to mean—an Indian; a
15 Native American Pacific Islander; a Native Hawaiian; and an Alaska Native,
16 by virtue of having been defined as Pacific Islanders, the indigenous people of
17 Guam, the *Chamorro* people, are Native Americans, moreover, the term
18 ‘Native American Pacific Islander’ means any descendant of the aboriginal
19 people of any island in the Pacific Ocean that is a territory or possession of the
20 United States; and

21 **WHEREAS**, HR 4766 defines the term ‘Native American language’ to
22 mean a historical, traditional language spoken by Native Americans;

1 *Chamorro* being the traditional language spoken by the indigenous people of
2 Guam is a Native American Language; and

3 **WHEREAS**, *I Mina Bente Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guahan*, recognizes the
4 uniqueness of the *Chamorro* language and its importance to preserving the
5 culture of the *Chamorro* people, *I Liheslaturan Guahan* moreover the importance
6 of the *Chamorro* language as a characteristic which sets apart and identifies the
7 indigenous people of the land; more importantly, *I Mina Bente Ocho Na*
8 *Liheslaturan Guahan* recognizes the importance of protecting and preserving
9 the *Chamorro* language indigenous to Guam for the sake of its people and the
10 generations to come; and

11 **WHEREAS**, *I Mina Bente Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guahan* also recognizes
12 that the survival of the *Chamorro* language continues to depend on its usage,
13 the teaching of the *Chamorro* language to our children, and more importantly
14 through educational institutions, facilities, consortias and programs in which
15 the language can be taught and transmitted to the indigenous people and
16 many others wanting to learn and preserve the *Chamorro* language; and now
17 therefore be it

18 **RESOLVED**, that *I Mina' Bente Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guahan* does hereby,
19 on behalf of the people of Guam, request the honorable members of the U.S.
20 House of Representatives to pass HR. 4766, An act to amend the Native
21 American Languages Act to provide for the support of Native American
22 Language survival schools, and for other purposes; and, for the honorable

1 Members of the U.S. Senate to support the passage of HR 4766 in its entirety,
2 and be it further

3 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker certify, and the Secretary of the
4 Legislature attests to, the adoption hereof and that copies of the same be
5 thereafter transmitted to the Honorable Representative Howard P. McKeon,
6 Chairman of the Committee on Education and the Workforce; Honorable
7 George Miller, Ranking Member of the Committee on Education and the
8 Workforce; Honorable Representative Michael N. Castle, Chairman of the
9 Subcommittee on Education and Reform; Honorable Lynn C. Woolsey,
10 Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on Education and Reform; Honorable
11 Representative Heather Wilson, Sponsor of HR 4766-An Act to Amend the
12 Native American Languages Act and to provide support of Native American
13 language survival schools; the Honorable Senator John McCain, Chairman of
14 the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs; the Honorable Senator Byron L.
15 Dorgan, Vice Chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs; the
16 Honorable Madeline Z. Bordallo, Delegate from Guam to the United States
17 House of Representatives, and to the Honorable Felix P. Camacho, *I*
18 *Maga'lahaen Guåhan*.

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DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED ON THE ___ DAY OF ___, 2006.

Mark Forbes
Speaker

Eddie Calvo
Senator and Legislative Secretary