


**MINA BENTE OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUAHAN
2006 (SECOND) Regular Session**

Resolution No. 205 (LS)

Introduced by:

B.J.F. Cruz 

R.J. Respicio 

R. Klitzkie 

Relative to congratulating and commending the Honorable Frances Marie Tydingco-Gatewood, Associate Justice of the Guam Supreme Court and a true pioneer for Chamorro women in the legal profession, for her more than 23 years of service to the people as a prosecutor, Superior Court Judge and Supreme Court Justice, on the occasion of her swearing in as the first Chamorro woman to hold the position of Chief Judge of the District Court of Guam and investiture as Chief Judge.

1 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PEOPLE OF GUAM:**

2 **WHEREAS**, receiving her Juris Doctorate at the University of
3 Missouri-Kansas City School of Law in 1983, Frances Marie Tydingco-
4 Gatewood has achieved a number of personal and professional milestones
5 that have made the people of Guam proud of her achievements, while
6 providing an example for all of the women of Guam; and

7 **WHEREAS**, her achievements are all the more remarkable
8 considering that over the past 25-plus years she has been adroitly balancing

1 many roles including wife, law student, mother of three sons, assistant
2 attorney general, prosecutor, chief prosecutor, jurist and justice; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Frances Tydingco-Gatewood's roots are in the Pacific
4 islands: she was born in Hawaii of Chamorro and Pohnpeian lineage and
5 grew up in Guam, graduating from George Washington High School in
6 1976 and receiving her BA in Political Science at Marquette University in
7 Milwaukee, Wisconsin on a Guam Pro-Tech Scholarship; and

8 **WHEREAS**, she began her career in law as a clerk for the Honorable
9 Forest W. Hanna, Presiding Judge of the Jackson County Circuit Courts in
10 Kansas City, Missouri, until 1984 when she became the first Chamorro
11 woman to become an assistant attorney general in Guam, earning a
12 reputation for being tough and fair in her prosecution of many major
13 felonies, and concurrently serving as a designated Federal Prosecutor at the
14 United States Attorney's offices in Guam; and

15 **WHEREAS**, Frances returned to Missouri in 1988 to become an
16 assistant prosecutor with the Jackson County Prosecutor's Office, handling
17 major felony cases and serving as the Trial Team Leader for the Sex Crimes
18 Unit, supervising several attorneys and staff members and concurrently
19 serving as a designated Federal Prosecutor; and

20 **WHEREAS**, In 1990, Frances came home to stay, becoming the first
21 Chamorro woman to serve as Chief Prosecutor, a position she held until
22 1994, supervising many lawyers and staff members while also handling a
23 substantial felony case load and once again concurrently serving as a

1 designated Federal Prosecutor; and

2 **WHEREAS**, then-Governor Joseph F. Ada, in 1994, appointed, and
3 the Guam Legislature unanimously confirmed Frances Tydingco-
4 Gatewood to the Superior Court, recognizing her fairness and tireless
5 dedication in seeking justice as Guam’s Chief Prosecuting Attorney, her
6 selection being a source of pride as the first female of Chamorro ancestry to
7 be appointed to the bench; and

8 **WHEREAS**, serving more than seven years in the trial courts, Judge
9 Tydingco-Gatewood authored hundreds of decisions and orders, presided
10 over family court, juvenile court, traffic court, and handled numerous cases
11 including high profile criminal cases, probate matters, and the Royal Palm
12 Resort case, often called the most complex civil litigation trial in the Pacific
13 rim, and was concurrently appointed to serve as a designated federal judge
14 for the District Court of Guam; and

15 **WHEREAS**, Frances was also concurrently serving as a designated
16 associate Guam Supreme Court Justice, a position she held for three years,
17 and as a designated Associate Justice for the CNMI appointed by the
18 Honorable Chief Justice Miguel Demapan; and

19 **WHEREAS**, in 2001, then-Governor Carl T.C. Gutierrez appointed
20 Judge Tydingco-Gatewood to the position of Associate Supreme Court
21 Justice, Governor Gutierrez recognizing her dedication to jurisprudence,
22 his confidence in her abilities echoing the overwhelming support from her
23 peers in the legal community, those attributes, including her civic and

1 community contributions, as key in her selection to serve on the Supreme
2 Court bench as well as in her unanimous confirmation by the 26th Guam
3 Legislature; and

4 **WHEREAS**, serving with fellow justice the Honorable Robert J.
5 Torres, and the Chief Justice of Guam the Honorable F. Philip Carbullido,
6 Justice Tydingco-Gatewood has authored numerous opinions while also
7 chairing important sub-committees to which she was appointed by Chief
8 Justice Carbullido, aiding in the development of initiatives for the
9 improvement of the administration of justice including on Proposed
10 Criminal Jury Instructions, Criminal Indigent Defense, Pro Se Litigation,
11 Crime Victim and Witness Protection, Board of Law Examiners Drafting
12 and Grading, Alternative Dispute Resolution-Mediation for contested child
13 custody cases; and Judicial, Attorney, and Community Education; and

14 **WHEREAS**, in addition to her many duties, Justice Tydingco-
15 Gatewood also serves as co-chairperson for the Pacific Judicial Council
16 Education Committee, dedicated to improving the education of all justices,
17 judges and courts staff for Guam, the CNMI, Palau, American Samoa,
18 Republic of the Marshall Islands and the FSM; and

19 **WHEREAS**, Frances' belief in the importance of strong family values,
20 together with the love of her family including her husband Dr. Robert
21 Gatewood, a practicing periodontist; children Daniel, Michael and Stephen;
22 siblings and in-laws Attorney Phil Tydingco and wife Karen; Juliana Borja

1 and husband Michael; Daniel Tydingco and wife Lory, have been a
2 blessing and significant source of support for her successful career; and

3 **WHEREAS**, in July 2005, Governor Felix P. Camacho recommended
4 Justice Tydingco-Gatewood to be nominated as Chief Judge for the District
5 Court of Guam and she was nominated by President George W. Bush in
6 April 2006 and she was confirmed on August 4, 2006 as Chief Judge for the
7 District Court of Guam, a position she will assume on October 30, 2006 in
8 an investiture ceremony; now therefore, be it

9 **RESOLVED**, that *I Mina'Bente Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* does
10 hereby, on behalf of the people of Guam, commend the Honorable Frances
11 Marie Tydingco-Gatewood, a true pioneer for Chamorro women in the
12 legal profession, for her years of exemplary service to our island
13 community as a prosecutor, Superior Court Judge and Supreme Court
14 Justice, and be it further

15 **RESOLVED**, that *I Mina'Bente Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* does
16 hereby, on behalf of the people of Guam congratulate the Honorable
17 Frances Marie Tydingco-Gatewood on the occasion of her swearing in as
18 the first Chamorro woman to hold the position of Chief Judge of the
19 District Court of Guam and on her investiture as Chief Judge; and be it
20 further

21 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker certify, and the Secretary of the
22 Legislature attest to the adoption hereof and that copies of the same be
23 thereafter transmitted to the Honorable Frances Marie Tydingco-

1 Gatewood; to the Honorable George W. Bush, President of the United
2 States; the Honorable F. Philip Carbullido, Chief Justice of Guam; to the
3 Honorable Mary Schroeder, Chief Judge of the 9th Circuit Court of
4 Appeals; and to the Honorable Felix P. Camacho, *I Maga'lahen Guåhan*.