

I MINA'BENTE NUEBI NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2008 (SECOND) Regular Session

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Resolution No. 171 (EC)

Introduced by:

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Relative to endorsing and supporting the Department of Chamorro Affairs and the Council on the Arts and Humanities in their efforts to secure Guam's bid to host the 12th Festival of Pacific Arts in 2016.

1 BE IT RESOLVED BY I MINA'BENTE NUEBI NA LIHESLATURAN
2 GUÅHAN:

3 WHEREAS, the Festival of Pacific Arts (FESTPAC), which is the
4 equivalent of the Olympics of Cultural Arts, was conceived by the Conference
5 of the South Pacific Commission, (now the Pacific Community) in an attempt
6 to combat the erosion of traditional customary practices. The Festival of
7 Pacific Arts grew out of the desire, expressed by Pacific Island leaders, for the
8 peoples of the region to share their cultures and establish deeper
9 understanding and friendship between countries; and

10 WHEREAS, beginning in 1972, delegations from the various Pacific
11 Island Countries and territories have come together every four years to share
12 and exchange their culture at the Festival of Pacific Arts. Today's 27
13 participating countries and territories include: American Samoa, Australia,
14 Cook Islands, Easter Island, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji Islands,

1 French Polynesia, Hawaii, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia,
2 New Zealand, Niue, Norfolk Island, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua
3 New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga,
4 Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Wallis and Futuna, and Guam with the number of
5 participants exceeding more than 2000 people; and

6 **WHEREAS**, the Festival of Pacific Arts is recognized as a major
7 international cultural event, and is the largest gathering in which Pacific
8 peoples unite to gain respect for and appreciation of one another within the
9 context of the changing Pacific; and

10 **WHEREAS**, trade, social visits and exchanges of dance, music, food and
11 crafts have served as opportunities for islanders to learn from one another,
12 and have assisted in the dynamic transformation of culture. Today, the
13 Festival of Pacific Arts helps maintain a sense of place among island
14 communities: awareness that, although a group of people may reside on tiny
15 atolls far from island neighbors, they are part of a greater Pacific-wide culture.
16 Recognition of a common Pacific identity can be a strong motivating force for
17 individual communities to revive and cherish their own traditional forms of
18 cultural expression; and

19 **WHEREAS**, Pacific Islanders were traditionally raised in an
20 environment that taught them their local language, history and traditional
21 knowledge and skills, but many ways of passing on these traditions and skills
22 are disappearing. A realization of what has been missing in the more
23 Westernized island cultures is one of the reasons young islanders train long
24 and hard for each Festival, seeking to uncover the secrets of ancient music and
25 chants, costumes, body art and language. To be selected as part of an island's
26 delegation to the Festival is a great honor. The Festivals have no competitions,
27 and performers do not seek to compete with one another, but the Festival has
28 stimulated a new sense of cultural pride among islanders young and old,
29 generating excitement, pride and promise for the arts and cultures in the
30 region. It enables young contemporary artists and performers to express
31 themselves and their talent and helps to bridge the gap between traditional
32 cultural expressions and the aspirations of our youth; and

1 **WHEREAS**, the Festival of Pacific Arts makes a significant contribution
2 to the evolution of Pacific Island identities. For the region, the Festival of
3 Pacific Arts promotes unity by encouraging mutual appreciation and respect
4 for one another's cultures. It also improves political and economic stability by
5 developing a deeper sense of solidarity and unites the geographically isolated
6 Pacific Island countries and territories, facilitating inter-regional
7 communication; and

8 **WHEREAS**, the Festival is also an important instrument in the
9 preservation of the performing and production skills underlying the broad
10 variety of cultural expressions in the Pacific. Expertise and skills in crafts have
11 been rediscovered and revitalized, while traditional and ceremonial
12 performances have been rediscovered, revived and in some cases updated.
13 Tourism and related industries have also benefited, with the proceeds often
14 going to local communities; and

15 **WHEREAS**, each Festival attracts increasing numbers of spectators and
16 visitors from within the region itself, and it also draws the attention of the
17 global community, to the point that the Festival has become a major tourist
18 attraction. Today the Festival is the principal platform for collective
19 participation in expressions of traditional and contemporary culture in the
20 Pacific region; and

21 **WHEREAS**, hosting the 12th Festival of Pacific Arts will be one of
22 Guam's major cultural, technical, and economic challenges, requiring broad
23 community participation and cooperation. The Festival will also provide
24 tremendous opportunities for social and cultural exchanges especially with
25 the exposure of local products, all of which can be used to enhance tourism
26 within the host country; and

27 **WHEREAS**, the Chamorro people have seen a cultural revival over the
28 past decade, as evidenced by the many organizations involved in the
29 performing arts. The *Dinana Minagof* competition is a prime example of an
30 annual island-wide competition and display of Guam's performing artists that
31 have help to foster the Chamorro cultural revival. Additionally, the number of
32 Chamorro visual artists has also grown, with more and more young men and
33 women learning the arts of carving, *galaide* building, weaving, etc.; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Guam will see an increase in its population in excess of
2 25,000 new residents by 2015, primarily due to the movement of Marines and
3 their dependents to Guam. Hosting the 12th Festival of Pacific Arts will
4 provide an opportunity to educate newcomers of the significance of the
5 Pacific region's cultures especially that of the *Chamorros*; now, therefore, be it

6 **RESOLVED**, that in the history of the Festival of Pacific Arts, Guam has
7 yet to serve as a host nation. By hosting the 12th Festival of Pacific Arts in 2016,
8 it will be an opportune time for the people of Guam to involve and educate
9 the thousands of newcomers to our island about who we are as Chamorros
10 coupled with the uniqueness of our culture as Pacific Islanders and the
11 importance of maintaining, perpetuating and respecting our cultural identity;
12 and be it

13 **RESOLVED**, that *I Mina'Bente Nuebi Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* does
14 hereby, on behalf of the people of Guam, petition the Secretariat of the Pacific
15 Community to grant Guam the rights to host the 12th Festival of Pacific Arts,
16 in 2016; and be it further

17 **RESOLVED**, that upon acceptance of Guam's invitation to host the 12th
18 Festival of Pacific Arts, in 2016, *I Maga'lahaen Guåhan*, the Governor of Guam,
19 shall convene the Festival Organizing Committee for the 2016 Festival of
20 Pacific Arts. The Organizing Committee will bring together Guam's Artists
21 Association, the Chamber of Commerce, civic and professional groups who
22 will be dedicated to the organization of such an event; and be it further

23 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker and the Chairman of the Executive
24 Committee certify, and the Secretary of the Legislature attest to, the adoption
25 hereof and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to the Secretariat
26 of the Pacific Community, Dr Jimmie Rodgers, Senior Deputy Director-
27 General; to Mr. Yves Corbel, Deputy Director-General, Secretariat of the
28 Pacific Community; to the President of the Guam Chamber of Commerce; to
29 the President of the Department of Chamorro Affairs; to the Executive
30 Director of the Guam Council on the Arts and Humanities; to the Honorable
31 Jose T. Terlaje, President of the Mayors Council of Guam; to the Honorable
32 Madeleine Z. Bordallo, Guam's Delegate to the United States Congress; and to
33 the Honorable Felix P. Camacho, *I Maga'lahaen Guåhan*.