

I MINA'BENTE NUEBI NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN  
2007 (FIRST) Regular Session

Resolution No. 96 (EC)

Introduced by:

T.R. Muna-Barnes

J.T. Won Pat, Ed.D.

A.B. Palacios

E.B. Calvo

J. Espaldon

RELATIVE TO REQUESTING THE GUAM  
PRESERVATION TRUST TO RESTORE, RENOVATE  
AND REHABILITATE THE GUAM CONGRESS  
BUILDING COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE GUAM  
LEGISLATURE BUILDING IN HAGATNA

2007 OCT 13 PM 4:5

1 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF I  
2 MINA'BENTE NUEBI NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN:

3 WHEREAS, the construction of the Guam Congress Building began  
4 with the groundbreaking on September 2, 1947 and signaled the official start  
5 of the reconstruction of the City of New Agana, which was completely  
6 destroyed during the recapture of Guam; and

7 WHEREAS, the laying of the cornerstone took place on Saturday,  
8 October 4, 1947 during a recess of the October session of the 8<sup>th</sup> Guam  
9 Congress. Present at the ceremony were the Honorable E.T. Calvo, Chairman  
10 of the House of Assembly who presided over the formal ceremony; the

1 the Honorable Baltazar J. Bordallo, Chairman of the House of Council; Judge  
2 Jose C. Manibusan, Senior Judge, Island Court; Ben U. Zafra, Chief  
3 Commissioner; Albert Carbuillido, acting post commander of the American  
4 Legion Mid-Pacific Post; Monsignor Calvo, who delivered the invocation; and  
5 many other dignitaries; and

6       **WHEREAS**, the Guam Congress building was completed on July 8, 1948  
7 and was dedicated to the “highest ideals of Democracy and Justice” in a  
8 ceremony on July 21, 1948 when it was presented to the people of Guam by  
9 then Governor Charles Pownall; and

10       **WHEREAS**, the relationship between the Guam Congress and Governor  
11 Pownall was tumultuous at best often resulting in confrontation between  
12 Pownall’s naval rule of law and the Chamorro leader’s struggle for political  
13 rights. These confrontations intensified as events and issues worsen on  
14 matters of military land-taking, security clearances, and oppressed legislative  
15 powers of the Guam Congress. Throughout all of these contentious  
16 developments, the Guam Congress Building was constructed and would  
17 become the center of political disobedience; and

18       **WHEREAS**, on March 5, 1949, one of the most significant political  
19 events in the history of Guam took place at the Guam Congress Building  
20 when the Guam Assembly walked out en masse, through a motion by  
21 Assemblyman Antonio C. Cruz, to protest what was seen as a lack of respect  
22 and authority by Governor Pownall in his intervention of the proper

1 execution of an Assembly arrest warrant for a contempt charge against a U.S.  
2 Navy civil service employee; and

3 **WHEREAS**, the resulting political fallout received national press  
4 coverage, arranged by Assemblyman Carlos P. Taitano, and generated  
5 tremendous support for self-governance and U.S. citizenship for the people of  
6 Guam and on October 3, 1949, the House Public Lands Committee of the  
7 United States Congress reported that H.R. 4499, containing provisions that  
8 later became known as the Organic Act of Guam, would be enacted; and

9 **WHEREAS**, in December 2000, while visiting Guam, former Guam  
10 Assemblyman Carlos P. Taitano, Mr. Taitano explained in his words the  
11 importance of the Guam Congress Building, stating,

12 *“The Guam Legislature Building is of historical, political, and cultural*  
13 *important because it was in the House of Assembly of the Guam*  
14 *Congress where Chamoros staged the first revolt against colonial*  
15 *administration on March 5, 1949 since the Spanish-Chamorro Wars in*  
16 *the late 1600s. The last Guam Congress met in this building. The First*  
17 *Guam Legislature met in this building.”; and*

18 **WHEREAS**, in the quest for political freedom, the Guam Congress  
19 Building became the center of strength and courage in the face of fear of arrest  
20 and imprisonment for acts of defiance against the arbitrary rule of the U.S.  
21 Naval Military Government, it has become a symbol of the struggle of the

1 Chamorro people to survive the events and circumstances that they have no  
2 control of or choice; and

3 **WHEREAS**, the Guam Congress Building was deemed unsafe for use  
4 and occupation by an engineering study in 1989, which facilitated the move of  
5 the Legislature to its current temporary location; and

6 **WHEREAS**, the Guam Congress Building was listed in the National  
7 Register of Historic Places on February 1, 2007; and

8 **WHEREAS**, the continued deterioration of the Guam Congress Building  
9 may lead to its eventual destruction, depriving the future generations of  
10 Guam access to one of its most significant historical local treasures; and

11 **WHEREAS**, it is in the best interest of the people of Guam that the  
12 Guam Congress Building be fully restored for use by the Guam Legislature  
13 and the people of Guam; and

14 **WHEREAS**, one of the mandates of the Guam Preservation Trust is the  
15 protection of historic structures and sites through stabilization, rehabilitation,  
16 reconstruction, or restoration; and

17 **WHEREAS**, the Guam Congress Building, with its significant historic  
18 value to the people of Guam, would make a perfect candidate for restoration  
19 by the Guam Preservation Trust; now, therefore, be it

20 **RESOLVED**, that *I Mina'Bente Nuebi Na Liheslaturan Guahan* officially  
21 request the Guam Preservation Trust to restore, rehabilitate, and renovate the  
22 Guam Congress Building; and

1           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that *I Liheslaturan Guahan* appoint  
2 representatives who will communicate directly with the Guam Preservation  
3 Trust on the progress of the restoration, renovation, and rehabilitation project.  
4 The Speaker of *I Liheslaturan Guahan* or a designee and the Minority Leader of  
5 *I Liheslaturan Guahan* or a designee, shall serve as the representatives of *I*  
6 *Liheslaturan Guahan*; and

7           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a Subcommittee on Legislative  
8 Building be established under the Committee on Education, General and  
9 Omnibus Affairs, whose sole purpose is to oversee the project of restoration,  
10 renovation and rehabilitation of the Guam Congress Building; and

11           **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Speaker and the Chairman of  
12 the Executive Committee certify, and the Secretary of *I Liheslatura* attest to, the  
13 adoption hereof, and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to the  
14 Guam Preservation Trust and the Honorable Felix P. Camacho, *I Maga'lahen*  
15 *Guahan*.

**DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY I MINA'BENTE NUEBI NA  
LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN ON THE \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_  
2007.**

---

**MARK FORBES**  
Speaker

---

**RAY TENORIO**  
Senator and  
Secretary of the Legislature