

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

Resolution No. 96 (EC)

As amended.

Introduced by:

Tina Rose Muña Barnes
J. T. Won Pat
A. B. Palacios, Sr.
Edward J.B. Calvo
James V. Espaldon
Frank F. Blas, Jr.
Mark Forbes
Judith Paulette Guthertz
Frank T. Ishizaki
J. A. Lujan
v. c. pangelinan
R. J. Respicio
David L.G. Shimizu
Ray Tenorio

Relative to requesting the Guam Preservation Trust to restore, renovate and rehabilitate the Guam Congress Building commonly known as the "Guam Legislature Building" in *Hagatña*.

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

3 **WHEREAS,** the construction of the Guam Congress Building began
4 with the groundbreaking on September 2, 1947 and signaled the official start

1 of the reconstruction of the City of New Agana, which was completely
2 destroyed during the liberation of Guam; and

3 **WHEREAS**, the laying of the cornerstone took place on Saturday,
4 October 4, 1947, during a recess of the October Session of the Eighth (8th)
5 Guam Congress. Present at the ceremony were the Honorable Eduardo T.
6 Calvo, Chairman of the House of Assembly who presided over the formal
7 ceremony; the Honorable Baltazar J. Bordallo, Chairman of the House of
8 Council; Judge Jose C. Manibusan, Senior Judge, Island Court; Ben U. Zafra,
9 Chief Commissioner; Albert Carbuillido, acting Post Commander of the
10 American Legion Mid-Pacific Post; Monsignor Calvo, who delivered the
11 invocation; and many other dignitaries; and

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

16 **WHEREAS**, the relationship between the Guam Congress and Governor
17 Pownall was tumultuous at best, often resulting in confrontation between
18 Pownall’s naval rule of law and the *Chamorro* leaders’ struggle for political
19 rights. These confrontations intensified as events and issues worsened on
20 matters of military land-taking, security clearances, and oppressed legislative
21 powers of the Guam Congress. Throughout all of these contentious

1 developments, the Guam Congress Building was constructed and would
2 become the center of political disobedience; and

3 **WHEREAS**, on March 5, 1949, one of the most significant political
4 events in the history of Guam took place at the Guam Congress Building
5 when the Guam Assembly walked out en masse, through a motion by
6 Assemblyman Antonio C. Cruz, to protest what was seen as a lack of respect
7 and authority by Governor Pownall in his intervention of the proper
8 execution of an Assembly arrest warrant for a contempt charge against a U.S.
9 Navy civil service employee; and

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

16 **WHEREAS**, in December 2000, while visiting Guam, former Guam
17 Assemblyman Carlos P. Taitano explained in his words the importance of the
18 Guam Congress Building, stating,

19 *“The Guam Legislature Building is of historical, political and cultural*
20 *importance because it was in the House of Assembly of the Guam*
21 *Congress where Chamorros staged the first revolt against colonial*
22 *administration on March 5, 1949 since the Spanish-Chamorro Wars in*

1 *the late 1600s. The last Guam Congress met in this building. The First*
2 *Guam Legislature met in this building.”; and*

3 **WHEREAS**, in the quest for political freedom, the Guam Congress
4 Building became the center of strength and courage in the face of fear of arrest
5 and imprisonment for acts of defiance against the arbitrary rule of the U.S.
6 Naval Military Government, and it has become a symbol of the struggle of the
7 *Chamorro* people to survive the events and circumstances that they have no
8 control of *or* choice; and

9 **WHEREAS**, the Guam Congress Building was deemed unsafe for use
10 and occupation by an engineering study in 1989, which facilitated the move of
11 *I Liheslatura* (the Legislature) to its current temporary location; and

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

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

17 **WHEREAS**, it is in the best interest of the people of Guam that the
18 Guam Congress Building be fully restored for use by *I Liheslaturan Guåhan*
19 (the Guam Legislature) and the people of Guam; and

20 **WHEREAS**, one of the mandates of the Guam Preservation Trust is the
21 protection of historic structures and sites through stabilization, rehabilitation,
22 reconstruction *or* restoration; and

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

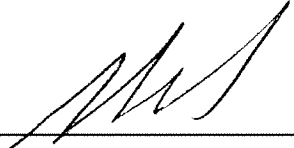
4 **RESOLVED**, that *I Mina'Bente Nuebi Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* does
5 officially request the Guam Preservation Trust to restore, rehabilitate, and
6 renovate the Guam Congress Building; and be it further

7 **RESOLVED**, that *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* appoint representatives who will
8 communicate directly with the Guam Preservation Trust on the progress of
9 the restoration, renovation, and rehabilitation project. The Speaker of *I*
10 *Liheslaturan Guåhan* or a designee and the Minority Leader of *I Liheslaturan*
11 *Guåhan* or a designee, shall serve as the representatives of *I Liheslaturan*
12 *Guåhan*; and be it further

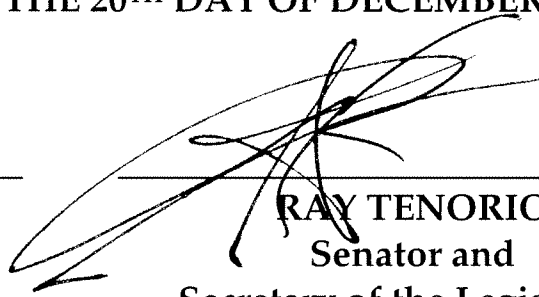
13 **RESOLVED**, that a Subcommittee on Legislative Building be
14 established under the Committee on Education, General and Omnibus Affairs,
15 whose *sole* purpose is to oversee the project of restoration, renovation and
16 rehabilitation of the Guam Congress Building; and be it further

17 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker certify, and the Secretary of the
18 Legislature attest to, the adoption hereof, and that copies of the same be
19 thereafter transmitted to the Guam Preservation Trust; and to the Honorable
20 Felix P. Camacho, *I Maga'lahren Guåhan*.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY *I MINA'BENTE NUEBI NA LIHESLATURAN GUÁHAN* ON THE 20TH DAY OF DECEMBER 2007.



EDWARD J.B. CALVO
Acting Speaker



RAY TENORIO
Senator and
Secretary of the Legislature