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GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 430.03. Diego T. Benavente Smiling Cove Marina.

The designated harbor/marina located between the “American Memorial Park” and the “Eloy S. Inos Peace Park” in Puerto Rico on Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, shall be henceforth known as the “Diego T. Benavente Smiling Cove Marina.”

Source: SLL 24-17, § 2 (Dec. 29, 2025).

Commission Comment: Pursuant to 1 CMC § 3806(a) and (b), the Commission renumbered SLL 24-17 § 2 from the stated § 430.02 to § 430.03 in order for the section to fit harmoniously within the Code. Additionally, SLL 24-17 contained a findings and purpose section that states:

Section 1. Findings and Purpose. Devoted to public service for decades, the Honorable Diego Tenorio Benavente began his career in the CNMI House of Representatives, first representing Precinct II before later serving Precinct I on Saipan. Elected in 1989, he served six consecutive terms through 2000, demonstrating principled leadership and earning the respect of colleagues and constituents alike. As Speaker during the 9th, 10th, and 11th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislatures, he guided the passage of critical measures that strengthened the Commonwealth’s economy, infrastructure, and educational systems, leaving a legacy of legislative achievement that continues to benefit the community.

Influential in advancing the CNMI’s standing throughout the Pacific region, Diego Tenorio Benavente has worked to strengthen ties between island governments and promote cooperative development. In addition to his service in the Legislature, he also served one term from 2002–2006 as Lieutenant Governor of the CNMI under the administration of Former Governor Juan Nekai Babauta, where his leadership extended to the executive branch and reinforced his reputation for integrity and dedication. Following his term, he was once again elected to the House of Representatives, serving in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislatures, where he continued to champion tourism, economic development, and resource management. Today, he continues to serve the region as a member of the Board of Directors of the Pacific Islands Development Bank and, since 2018, as the Honorary Consul of the Federated States of Micronesia to the CNMI, roles through which he champions the growth and prosperity of island communities.

Exceptional in his accomplishments beyond the halls of government, Diego Tenorio Benavente is an avid fisherman who has worked to persevere and has earned victories in several fishing derby categories, including twice being named Grand Champion of the annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament. Many of these marine activities begin at the Smiling Cove Marina on Saipan, a central harbor and landmark for the fishing community. Smiling Cove has long been a gathering place for fishermen, families, and visitors alike, and it is fitting that

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this landmark be named in honor of a leader who both shaped public policy and lived the culture of the sea. His life-long membership in the Saipan Fishermen's Association reflects his deep connection to the maritime traditions of the Commonwealth and his commitment to preserving them for future generations. Through both competition and advocacy, he has helped foster pride in the CNMI's fishing heritage and inspired others to carry it forward.

Generous with his time, wisdom, and compassion, he has been a source of guidance and support for countless individuals across the Commonwealth. As a devoted husband, loving father, proud grandfather, supportive brother, and caring uncle, Diego Tenorio Benavente is admired not only for his public service but for the humility and kindness that define his character. These personal qualities have made him as beloved in private life as he is respected in public life, creating a legacy built on both achievement and service to humanity.

Owing to the Diego Tenorio Benavente's long-standing legacy as a distinguished public servant and devoted fisherman, it is only fitting that the relevant Smiling Cove Marina bears his name. This designation will serve as a lasting tribute to his leadership, his contributions to the Commonwealth, and the example he has set for future generations. By renaming Smiling Cove Marina as the "Diego T. Benavente Smiling Cove Marina," the Delegation affirms its recognition of a lifetime dedicated to service, community, and the enduring values that bind the Commonwealth together.

Under section 3, the Department of Lands and Natural Resources, through the Division of Fish and Wildlife, shall continue to administer the Smiling Cove Marina facility.