

RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor



ARNOLD I. PALACIOS
Lieutenant Governor

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

February 28, 2022

The Honorable Edmund S. Villagomez
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twenty-Second Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

The Honorable Jude U. Hofschneider
President of the Senate
Twenty-Second Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. Speaker and Mr. President:

This is to inform you that I have signed into law **House Bill No. 22-26, HD1** entitled, "To amend 3 CMC §2204(e) to remove the limitation of term for members to serve on the Health Care Professions Licensing Board; and for other purposes." which was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Twenty-Second Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

This bill becomes **Public Law No. 22-14**. Copies bearing my signature are forwarded for your reference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph DLG. Torres", is written over a circular embossed seal of the Governor's Office.

RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor

cc: Lt. Governor; Press Secretary; Attorney General's Office; Executive Director, Health Care Professions Licensing Board; Law Revision Commission; Public Auditor; Special Assistant for Administration; Special Assistant for Programs and Legislative Review



House of Representatives

Public Law No. 22-14

NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 500586
SAIPAN, MP 96950

February 7, 2022

The Honorable Ralph DLG. Torres
Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern
Mariana Islands
Capitol Hill
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Governor Torres:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith for your action **H. B. No. 22-26, HD1**, entitled: "To amend 3 CMC §2204(e) to remove the limitation of terms for members to serve on the Health Care Professions Licensing Board; and for other purposes.", which was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Twenty-Second Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Sincerely yours,


Linda B. Muna
House Clerk

Attachment



Twenty-Second Legislature
of the
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FIRST REGULAR SESSION

MARCH 16, 2021

REPRESENTATIVE BLAS JONATHAN "BJ" T. ATTAO OF SAIPAN, PRECINCT 3 (*for himself, Representatives Celina R. Babauta, Sheila J. Babauta, Joel C. Camacho, Angel A. Demapan, Joseph A. Flores, Richard T. Lizama, Donald M. Manglona, Edwin K. Propst, Christina M.E. Sablan, John Paul P. Sablan, and Ralph N. Yumul,*) in an open and public meeting with an opportunity for the public to comment, introduced the following Bill:

H. B. No. 22-26, HD1

AN ACT

**TO AMEND 3 CMC §2204(E) TO REMOVE THE LIMITATION OF
TERMS FOR MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE HEALTH CARE
PROFESSIONS LICENSING BOARD; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.**

The Bill was referred to the House Committee on Health and Welfare, which submitted Standing Committee Report 22-9; adopted 5/28/2021.

**THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON
FIRST AND FINAL READING, MAY 28, 2021;**
with amendments in the form of H. B. No. 22-26, HD1 and transmitted to **THE SENATE.**

The Bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Judiciary, Government & Law, which submitted Standing Committee Report 22-62; adopted 2/3/2022.
THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE SENATE ON FEBRUARY 3, 2022, FIRST AND FINAL READING;
without amendments and returned to **THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.**

THE BILL WAS FINALLY PASSED ON MAY 28, 2021.



Linda B. Muña, House Clerk



Twenty-Second Legislature
of the
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FIRST DAY, SECOND SPECIAL SESSION

MAY 28, 2021

H. B. No. 26, HD1

AN ACT

**TO AMEND 3 CMC §2204(E) TO REMOVE THE LIMITATION OF
TERMS FOR MEMBERS TO SERVE ON THE HEALTH CARE
PROFESSIONS LICENSING BOARD; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.**

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE TWENTY-SECOND NORTHERN
MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:**

SECTION 1. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

1 The Legislature finds that Public Law 15-105, entitled as the “Health Care Professions
2 Licensing Act of 2007”, was enacted to repeal and re-enact Public Law 3-30, as amended, also
3 known as the “Medical Practice Act of 1982”. Despite the changes in statutory language, it has
4 always been the intent of Public Law 15-105 to continue protecting the health, safety, and
5 welfare of the people of the Commonwealth. As a highly integral independent regulatory
6 agency established by Public Law 15-105, the Health Care Professions Licensing Board
7

HOUSE BILL 22-26, HD1

1 (HCPLB) remains committed in carrying out such mission by regulating all health care
2 professions, with the exception of nursing. In doing so, it is the obligation of the (HCPLB) to
3 ensure that the quality of life and health within our Commonwealth remains as the paramount
4 objective for all who call our islands home.

5 The Legislature also finds that pursuant to 3 CMC §2204(e), no member within the
6 HCPLB shall serve more than two consecutive four-year terms. This limitation has proven to
7 be problematic considering the composition of health care professions that make up the Board.
8 Such professions include a dentist, physician, other health care professions (excluding dentists
9 and physicians), and so forth. In the event that a member fulfills his/her second term as a board
10 member, such vacancy must be filled by a new health care professional. This requirement
11 hinders the progress of the HCPLB because of the relatively small pool of healthcare
12 professionals available and willing to serve and the time it takes to identify, appoint, confirm,
13 and train new appointees. In removing the term limitation, board members who are willing to
14 serve can be allowed to continue their work, and the HCPLB can save valuable resources that
15 would otherwise be spent on recruiting and train new appointees.

16 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to amend 3 CMC §2204(e) to remove the limitation
17 of terms for members to serve on the Health Care Professions Licensing Board and for other
18 purposes.

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1 **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.**

2 3 CMC §2204(e) is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 “(e) Terms.

4 (1) The term of office for members of the Board shall be four years, and
5 members shall serve staggered terms to ensure continuity.

6 (2) Upon the expiration of said terms successors shall be appointed with like
7 qualifications and in like manner for terms of four years each, and until their successors
8 are appointed and qualified.

9 (3) Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as is provided for appointment
10 in the first instance. Any person selected to fill a vacancy shall be appointed only for
11 the remainder of the unexpired term.

12 (4) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, any member whose
13 term has expired may serve without further confirmation until such member’s successor
14 has taken office.”

15 **SECTION 3. SEVERABILITY.**

16 If any provisions of this Act or the application of any such provision to any person or
17 circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this
18 Act or the application of its provisions to persons or circumstances other than those to which
19 it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

20 **SECTION 4. SAVINGS CLAUSE.**

21 This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be construed as affecting any
22 existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes repealed or under any rule,
23 regulation, or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect

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1 any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior law. The enactment of the Act shall not
2 have the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal, which
3 shall already be in existence on the date this Act becomes effective.

4 **SECTION 5. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

5 This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the Governor, or its becoming law
6 without such approval.

Attested to by:


Linda B. Muña, House Clerk

Certified by:


SPEAKER EDMUND S. VILLAGOMEZ
House of Representatives
22nd Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature

Approved this **28th** day of **February**, 2022


RALPH D. TORRES
Governor

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands