



**Arnold I. Palacios**  
Governor

**David M. Apatang**  
Lieutenant Governor

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

August 01, 2023

**GOV 2023-763**

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

The Honorable Edith E. Deleon Guerrero  
President of the Senate  
Twenty-Third Northern Marianas  
Commonwealth Legislature  
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. Speaker and Madame President:

This is to inform you that I have signed into law **House Bill No. 23-11** entitled, "To amend Title 1, Division 8 of the Commonwealth Code by establishing a Veterans' Preference employment provision for the CNMI Government; and for other purposes.", which was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

This bill becomes **Public Law No. 23-05**. Copies bearing my signature are forwarded for your reference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Arnold I. Palacios".

**ARNOLD I. PALACIOS**  
Governor

cc: Lieutenant Governor; Attorney General;  
Commonwealth Law Revision Commission; Public Auditor;  
Special Assistant for Administration; Military and Veterans Affairs Office  
Programs and Legislative Review Office



## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

P.O. BOX 500586  
SAIPAN, MP 96950  
cnmileg.net

June 28, 2023

The Honorable Arnold I. Palacios  
Governor  
Commonwealth of the Northern  
Mariana Islands  
Capitol Hill  
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Governor Palacios:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith for your action **H.B. No. 23-11**, entitled: "To amend Title 1, Division 8 of the Commonwealth Code by establishing a Veterans' Preference employment provision for the CNMI Government; and for other purposes.", which was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Sincerely yours,

  
Linda B. Muña  
House Clerk

Attachment



**TWENTY-THIRD NORTHERN MARIANA COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**FIRST REGULAR SESSION**

**FEBRUARY 3, 2023**

REPRESENTATIVE VICENTE C. CAMACHO, OF SAIPAN, PRECINCT 3 (*for himself*) in an open and public meeting with an opportunity for the public to comment, introduced the following Bill:

**H. B. No. 23-11**

**AN ACT**

**TO AMEND TITLE 1, DIVISION 8 OF THE  
COMMONWEALTH CODE BY ESTABLISHING A VETERANS'  
PREFERENCE EMPLOYMENT PROVISION FOR THE CNMI  
GOVERNMENT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

The Bill was referred to the House Committee on Federal and Foreign Affairs, which submitted Standing Committee Report 23-1; adopted 3/9/2023.

**THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON  
FIRST AND FINAL READING, MARCH 9, 2023;**  
*without amendments* and transmitted to **THE SENATE.**

**IN THE SENATE**

The Bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Judiciary, Government, and Law.  
**THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE SENATE ON FIRST AND FINAL READING, JUNE 23, 2023;**  
*without amendments* and returned to **THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.**

**H. B. NO. 23-11 IS DULY PASSED BY THE TWENTY-THIRD NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH  
LEGISLATURE.**

  
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Linda B. Muña, House Clerk



TWENTY-THIRD NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE  
**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

FOURTH DAY, FIRST REGULAR SESSION

MARCH 9, 2023

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**H. B. No. 23-11**

**AN ACT**

**TO AMEND TITLE 1, DIVISION 8 OF THE COMMONWEALTH  
CODE BY ESTABLISHING A VETERANS' PREFERENCE  
EMPLOYMENT PROVISION FOR THE CNMI  
GOVERNMENT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.**

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

1           **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2           This Act shall be cited as the "CNMI Government Veterans' Preference Act of 2023".

3           **SECTION 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSES.**

4           The Legislature finds that the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands is home  
5 to veterans who have honorably served our country. These remarkably unselfish individuals  
6 honorably answered the nation's call with selfless dedication, and have gone to great lengths  
7 to defend the rights and freedoms that we enjoy today. These heroic men and women, along  
8 with their families, have endured the hardships that come with military service, such as serving  
9 in times of war. As a token of our immeasurable gratitude, it is highly appropriate for the CNMI

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**HOUSE BILL 23-11**

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1 Government to provide employment preference, and opportunities, to these very deserving  
2 veterans and their widows or widowers. It is particularly incumbent on the government to assist  
3 veterans with service-connected permanent or total disabilities, and to exercise such permissive  
4 preference when appropriate. No words or actions can ever equate to the appreciation and  
5 gratitude they rightly deserve.

6 The Legislature also finds U.S. Federal Law provides for veterans' employment  
7 preference under 5 U.S.C. §§ 2108 and 2108a. The Legislature further finds that certain states  
8 and territories, such as Guam, Florida, California, and others, have exercised their own forms  
9 of veterans' preference. Cognizant of such efforts by the different states and territories, it is  
10 imperative that the CNMI implement its own form of veterans' preference. Our honorable  
11 veterans, along with their respective eligible family members, deserve such appreciation.  
12 Therefore, the purpose of this Act is to amend Title 1, Division 8 of the Commonwealth Code  
13 by establishing a veterans' preference employment provision for the CNMI Government.

14 **SECTION 3. ENACTMENT.**

15 Subject to codification by the CNMI Law Revision Commission, new sections are  
16 hereby added to Title 1, Division 8 of the Commonwealth Code to read as follows:

17 **“§ 101. Definition.**

18 For the purpose of this chapter, “Preference Eligible” is defined identically as  
19 at 5 U.S.C. §§ 2108(3)–(4) and 2108a(c) as they may be amended.

20 **§ 102. Additional points for preference eligible.**

21 A preference eligible who applies via Preferential Credit of Qualification  
22 Evaluation for entrance into the civil service pursuant to the Commonwealth Civil

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**HOUSE BILL 23-11**

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1 Service Act, 1 CMC §§ 8101 et seq., is entitled to additional points above his or her  
2 rating, as follows—

3 (1) a preference eligible as defined at 5 U.S.C. § 2108(3)(C)–(G)—2 points; and

4 (2) a preference eligible as defined at 5 U.S.C. § 2108(3)(A)–(B)—1 point.

5 Provided, that the Office of Personnel Management may revise the administration of  
6 this section by regulation.

7 **§ 103. Promulgation of regulations.**

8 The Office of Personnel Management shall promulgate regulations to  
9 implement veterans' preference in examination for the civil service for preference-  
10 eligible veterans and family members as defined in this chapter.”

11 **SECTION 4. SEVERABILITY.**

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

16 **SECTION 5. SAVINGS CLAUSE.**

17 This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be construed as affecting any  
18 existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes repealed or under any rule,  
19 regulation, or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers contained in this Act shall not affect  
20 any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior law. The enactment of the Act shall not  
21 have the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying, any liability, civil or criminal, which  
22 shall already be in existence on the date this Act becomes effective.

**HOUSE BILL 23-11**

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**SECTION 6. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

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


Attested to by:

  
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**Linda B. Muña, House Clerk**

Certified by:

  
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**SPEAKER EDMUND S. VILLAGOMEZ**  
House of Representatives  
23<sup>rd</sup> Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature

Approved this 1<sup>st</sup> day of August, 2023

  
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**ARNOLD I. PALACIOS**  
Governor  
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands