

**Arnold I. Palacios**  
Governor



**David M. Apatang**  
Lieutenant Governor

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

October 27, 2023

GOV 2024-045

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


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

Dear Madame President and Mr. Speaker:

This is to inform you that I have signed into law **Senate Bill No. 23-02, HS1** entitled, "To amend 4 CMC § 2103 to enhance the Marianas Visitors Authority's promoting capabilities in attracting tourists to visit the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands," which was passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

This bill becomes **Public Law No. 23-10**. Copies bearing my signature are forwarded for your reference.

Sincerely,

  
**ARNOLD I. PALACIOS**  
Governor

cc: Lieutenant Governor; Attorney General; Commonwealth Law Revision Commission;  
Public Auditor; Marianas Visitors Authority; Department of Public Lands;  
Special Assistant for Administration; Programs and Legislative Review Office



THE SENATE

Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature  
P. O. Box 500129  
Saipan, MP 96950

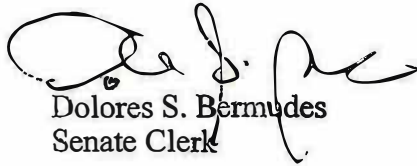
September 21, 2023

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 Senate Bill No. 23-02, HS1, entitled: "To amend 4 CMC § 2103 to enhance the Marianas Visitors Authority's promoting capabilities in attracting tourists to visit the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands," which was passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Twenty-Third Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Sincerely,



Dolores S. Bermudes  
Senate Clerk

Attachments





**THE SENATE**  
**TWENTY-THIRD NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 23-02, HS1**

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**AN ACT**

To amend 4 CMC § 2103 to enhance the Marianas Visitors Authority's promoting capabilities in attracting tourists to visit the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

***SENATE ACTION***

**Offered by Senator(s):** Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero

**Date:** January 10, 2023

**Referred to:** Committee on Resources, Economic Development & Programs and Gaming

**Standing Committee Report No.:** None

**Final Reading:** September 21, 2023 - Accepted HS1

***HOUSE ACTION***

**Referred to:** Committee on Commerce and Tourism

**Standing Committee Report No.:** 23-39 Adopted on 9/7/23

**First and Final Reading:** September 07, 2023

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Celina R. Babauta".

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**Senator Celina R. Babauta**  
**SENATE LEGISLATIVE SECRETARY**



**THE SENATE**  
**TWENTY-THIRD NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE**  
**FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 2023** **S.B. NO. 23-02, HS1**

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**A BILL FOR AN ACT**

To amend 4 CMC § 2103 to enhance the Marianas Visitors Authority's promoting capabilities in attracting tourists to visit the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

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

1       **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that the tourism industry is  
2 vital to the growth of the Commonwealth's economy. It is a major source of employment,  
3 income, and tax revenues, and confers benefits to both individuals and the community as a  
4 whole. Thus, the Legislature finds that the continued development of the tourism industry  
5 should be encouraged by providing a pathway for the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) to  
6 tap into sources of funds that otherwise would not be available to it if its duties are not  
7 expanded to include specific legal duties to act. The Legislature also finds that the duties  
8 stated under 4 CMC §2103 do not fully encompass the actions Marianas Visitors Authority  
9 (MVA) may undertake in promoting and attracting tourists to the Northern Mariana Islands.  
10 Therefore, MVA's duties need to be expanded to include duties that qualify MVA for  
11 available grants without permanently shifting authorities and duties from agencies already  
12 tasked with the same. Now, therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to temporarily expand  
13 the authority of MVA, subject to the limitations provided in Article XI of the CNMI  
14 Constitution, and designate conditions set forth by the Department of Public Lands on public  
15 properties located within 150 feet of high water as provided in PL 15-02 up to the year 2027.

SENATE BILL NO. 23-02, HS1

1           Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to amend 4 CMC § 2103 to enhance MVA’s  
2 promoting capabilities in attracting tourists to visit the Commonwealth of the Northern  
3 Mariana Islands up to the same day that this Act becomes effective in 2027.

4           **Section 2. Amendment.** Title 4, Division 2, Chapter 1, Article 1, § 2103, of the  
5 Commonwealth Code is amended by adding new subsections (p), (q), and (r) to read as  
6 follows:

7           “§ 2103. Duty to Promote Tourism.

8           (a)-(o) [Unchanged.]

9           (p) Planning, designing, and proposing projects and programs to enhance the CNMI as  
10 a tourist destination on properties not located within 150 feet from high water pursuant to  
11 Article XI of the CNMI Constitution and PL 15-02, Section 105 (e) without the expressed  
12 approval of the Department of Public Lands.

13           (q) Planning, designing, and developing tourist-enhancement projects, including but  
14 not limited to recreational and public facilities that will attract potential visitors subject to the  
15 same restrictions in (p) of this Section. The MVA shall collaborate and work with the  
16 Division of Parks and Recreation (DPR) under the Department of Lands and Natural  
17 Resources (DLNR) and the Department of Public Lands (DPL) in developing facility designs  
18 and the overall improvement of the sites under the jurisdiction of the DPR and the Mayors of  
19 the respective senatorial districts pursuant to the designation conditions issued by the  
20 Department of Public Lands on public lands located within 150 feet of high water.

21           (r) MVA may sponsor events and issue grants for construction projects and programs  
22 in the manner provided in this section to increase visitors’ satisfaction, but shall not generate  
23 revenue for MVA from such events, construction projects, and programs on properties located  
24 in areas described in PL15-02, Section 105 (e) and codified as 1 CMC §2806 (e).”


25           **Section 3. Severability.** If any provision of this Act or the application of any such  
26 provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent  
27 jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to persons or  
28 circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid shall not be affected thereby.

SENATE BILL NO. 23-02, HS1

1       **Section 4. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be  
2 construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes  
3 repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers  
4 contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior law.  
5 The enactment of the Act shall not have the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying,  
6 any liability, civil or criminal, which shall already be in existence on the date this Act  
7 becomes effective.

8       **Section 5. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the  
9 Governor or becoming law without such approval and shall expire 4 years from the date this  
10 Act becomes law.


**CERTIFIED BY:**

  
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**EDITH E. DELEON GUERRERO**  
**PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE**

**ATTESTED BY:**

  
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**CELINA R. BABAUTA**  
**SENATE LEGISLATIVE SECRETARY**

Approved this 27<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2023

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