A RESOLUTION

Resolution No. 58-BOD-04

“Expressing support towards the efforts of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Government and the private sector in seeking Congressional relief through amendments to U.S. Public Law 110-229 in order to continue the upward growth of the Commonwealth’s economy and the economic growth of the Pacific region.”

1. WHEREAS, APIP has consistently supported regional efforts to advance economic
growth in the Pacific, and understands that growth within one area of the region has rippling
effects for all Pacific states; and

2. WHEREAS, U.S. Public Law 110-229 (PL 110-229) amended the CNMI Covenant to
establish federal control of the CNMI's immigration system starting in 2009, to provide a
CNMI-only temporary work permit program for foreign workers (CW), and to reduce the
number of permits issued annually until the end of 2019; and

3. WHEREAS, in May 2017, the United States Government Accountability Office (GAO)
issued a report analyzing the effects of PL 110-229 on the CNMI; and

4. WHEREAS, Members of Congress requested the GAO to review the implementation
and impact of federal immigration laws in the CNMI with a focus on the potential economic
impact, if any, due to the complete reduction of CW workers and the federal and CNMI
governments’ efforts to address the CNMI’s labor force challenges; and
WHEREAS, the GAO concluded that if no CW workers were available to supplement
the workforce, the CNMI's GDP growth rate may be negatively affected by up to 62%, and
such an effect would cause immense damage to the CNMI's economy and to the CNMI
government's revenues; and

WHEREAS, the GAO also concluded that ending the CW program would negatively
affect CNMI businesses, resulting in the loss of services and employment to CNMI residents; and

WHEREAS, the GAO found that the federal and CNMI governments, as well as CNMI
businesses, have taken steps to train U.S. citizens and to reduce reliance on CW workers; and

WHEREAS, the CNMI's geographical location makes it extremely difficult to convince
U.S. citizens to relocate from the mainland to Saipan for employment; and

WHEREAS, the effects of ending the CW program will more than likely cause
irreversible damage to the CNMI economy, impacting the livelihood of every man, woman and
child; and

WHEREAS, the end of the CW program will more than likely result in the closure of
countless businesses in the CNMI, resulting in unemployment and a significant decrease of tax
payments to the federal and local governments; and

WHEREAS, the end of the CW program will more than likely result in the loss of basic
public services, such as medical care, public safety and reliable utilities; and

WHEREAS, APIL is dedicated to its partnership with CNMI and all its member
jurisdictions and is concerned for the future health and safety of the residents of CNMI; and
WHEREAS, APIL supports the amendment of PL 110-229 to extend the CW program in order to continue the upward mobility of the CNMI economy and to support the economic development of the entire region; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Directors of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures, 58th Board Meeting, Republic of Palau, December 6-7, 2017, that this Board of Directors of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures hereby expresses support towards the efforts of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Government and the private sector in seeking Congressional relief through amendments to U.S. Public Law 110-229 in order to continue the upward growth of the Commonwealth’s economy and the economic growth of the Pacific region; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the APIL President shall certify and the APIL Secretary shall attest to the adoption hereof and that copies of the same shall be transmitted to the President of the United States of America, to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of the U.S. Congress, to the Governor and Presiding Legislative Officers of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and to the Chief Executive and Presiding Legislative Officers of each member jurisdiction of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED ON THE 7th DAY OF DECEMBER, 2017.

ROBERT I. Taulung
PRESIDENT

NELSON STEPHEN
SECRETARY