



# Association of Pacific Island Legislatures

American Samoa  
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
FSM, State of Chuuk  
FSM, State of Kosrae  
FSM, State of Pohnpei  
FSM, State of Yap  
Island of Guam  
Republic of Kiribati  
Republic of the Marshall Islands  
Republic of Nauru  
Republic of Palau  
State of Hawaii

## A RESOLUTION

### APIL Resolution No. 42-GA-01

**“Honoring and commending the Honorable Diego Tenorio Benavente of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands for his continuing dedication to preserving, protecting and promoting the advancement and welfare of our people throughout The Blue Continent, and extending to him our most fervent prayers and wishes for strength and courage as he courageously faces the challenges posed by leukemia.”**

1           **WHEREAS**, on the 21st day of April, 1959, the Honorable Diego Tenorio  
2 Benavente was born to Roman Manahane Benavente and Dolores Tenorio Benavente,  
3 and was raised in the Northern Marianas during the challenging era of the conclusion  
4 of the administration of the U.N. Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and the early  
5 years of political enlightenment in the post TTPI era, where the challenges of bringing  
6 democracy to our people was being experienced throughout the vast expanses of  
7 Micronesia; and

8           **WHEREAS**, during the formative years of young adulthood, the Honorable  
9 Diego Tenorio Benavente joined the efforts of colleagues all across our Pacific Region  
10 of the world on our paths of discovery to the shores of self-rule and self-government;  
11 and

12           **WHEREAS**, the Honorable Diego Tenorio Benavente entered the world of  
13 politics in 1990, when he was first elected to the Seventh Northern Marianas

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1 Commonwealth Legislature, and thereafter this freshman Legislator went on to  
2 faithfully serve his people in the Northern Mariana Islands continuously through the  
3 Twelfth Legislature, obtaining the leadership position of Speaker of the Ninth, Tenth,  
4 and Eleventh Legislatures; and

5       **WHEREAS**, holding the top leadership positions in the Legislative Branch of  
6 the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Honorable Diego Tenorio  
7 Benavente stood at the forefront of CNMI's entry into the modern world where this  
8 cherished statesman has led the way in promoting not only economic advancement, but  
9 making great strides in protecting the health, education and welfare of his fellow  
10 islanders; and

11       **WHEREAS**, in 2002, the Honorable Diego Tenorio Benavente was elected  
12 Lieutenant Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, serving  
13 under Governor Juan N. Babauta until 2006, but later returned to the House of  
14 Representatives as a member of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Northern Marianas  
15 Commonwealth Legislatures, where he chaired and served on key committees until his  
16 retirement from governmental service in 2011; and

17       **WHEREAS**, throughout his long career in full government service and in his  
18 active years of retirement, the Honorable Diego Tenorio Benavente has devoted his  
19 attention, not only to the people of the Northern Marianas, but has also directed his  
20 efforts to promoting the advancement and protection of the health and welfare of our  
21 peoples throughout Micronesia, especially through his commitment to the mission and  
22 goals of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures; and

1           **WHEREAS**, as a member of the Board of Directors of the APIL, Honorable  
2   Diego Tenorio Benavente was instrumental in advancing many of the initiatives  
3   embraced by the Association, through which this beloved statesman sought to explore  
4   and to articulate our common needs and then to strengthen our shared priorities in a  
5   multitude of fields such as economic growth, financial self-reliance and responsible  
6   governance; and

7           **WHEREAS**, most notable among his accomplishments with the APIL,  
8   Honorable Diego Tenorio Benavente chaired the Task Force that led to the enduring  
9   formation of the Pacific Islands Development Bank (PIDB), where he later served as  
10  Chairman of the Bank’s Board of Governors as well as serving as a Member of the  
11  Bank’s Board of Directors; and

12          **WHEREAS**, in 2023, in recognition of his devotion to the formation and  
13  growth of the Pacific Islands Development Bank, the Honorable Diego Tenorio  
14  Benavente was appointed by the PIDB Board of Directors as the first-ever Director  
15  Emeritus; and

16          **WHEREAS**, the Honorable Diego Tenorio Benavente’s passion for the  
17  environment did not stop at the shores of the Northern Mariana Islands, for during his  
18  fruitful years of public service, he has shared his passions and valuable expertise with  
19  environmentalists throughout the Micronesian Islands, serving as a vital member of the  
20  Board of the Micronesian Conservation Trust and a proud and effective advocate of the  
21  Micronesian Challenge; and

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1           **WHEREAS**, despite having been diagnosed with an advanced case of  
2   leukemia, former Speaker and Lieutenant Governor Benavente continues to embrace  
3   the challenges of not only his own life, but of all of those around him; and

4           **WHEREAS**, on October 27, 2025, the Honorable Diego Tenorio Benavente  
5   spoke before the 65<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the APIL Board of Directors and delivered a stirring  
6   message of strength and assurance that reminded us that the strength of our organization  
7   is found in unity and in the camaraderie of all APIL members working together as one;  
8   and

9           **WHEREAS**, former Speaker and Lieutenant Governor Benavente challenged  
10   the APIL members that we must cultivate the next wave of island legislators,  
11   economists and administrators who will carry our work forward long after our terms  
12   have ended; and

13          **WHEREAS**, as the Honorable Diego Tenorio Benavente reminded us in his  
14   remarks before the 65th Board of Directors, the strength of our islands can be seen in  
15   the Chamorro Latte Stone—comprised of the haligi and the tasa that together uphold  
16   the weight of the island home—symbolizing the balance between stability and  
17   resilience that defines our people, and representing the dual strength of the APIL and  
18   PIDB working together to sustain The Blue Continent; and

19          **WHEREAS**, the Honorable Diego Tenorio Benavente likewise compared the  
20   unity of our Pacific community to the Carolinian Lighatúttúr, the traditional necklace  
21   woven from countless small glass beads, each one unique yet bound together in

1 harmony and beauty, symbolizing how each island nation, though distinct, contributes  
2 to the shared prosperity and resilience of The Blue Continent; and

3       **WHEREAS**, Delegates of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures, speak  
4 with one voice as we embrace the astonishing deeds and accomplishments of our  
5 beloved and trusted colleague in the advancement of our islands and our people; now,  
6 therefore,

7       **BE IT RESOLVED** by the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures, 42nd  
8 General Assembly, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, October 28-29,  
9 2025, that members of the Association of Pacific Island Legislatures hereby most  
10 respectfully honor and commend the Honorable Diego Tenorio Benavente for his  
11 continuing dedication to preserving, protecting and promoting the advancement and  
12 welfare of our people throughout The Blue Continent; and

13       **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Association of Pacific Island  
14 Legislatures hereby recognizes the Chamorro Latte Stone, as invoked by the Honorable  
15 Diego Tenorio Benavente in his address to the Board, as a living symbol of the dual  
16 strength of the APIL and PIDB, representing the structural harmony between political  
17 cooperation and economic self-reliance, and the strength and balance that has sustained  
18 our people and our institutions through times of challenge and change; and


19       **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Association of Pacific Island  
20 Legislatures affirms the Carolinian Lighatúttúr, as expressed by the Honorable Diego  
21 Tenorio Benavente, as a guiding metaphor for the interconnectedness and solidarity  
22 among the peoples of The Blue Continent, reminding all member states that unity is the

1 foundation of regional prosperity and peace, as so eloquently articulated by him in his  
2 address to the Board of Directors; and

3 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the assembled Delegates of the  
4 Association of Pacific Island Legislatures hereby extend to him our most fervent  
5 prayers and wishes for the strength and the courage he continues to display as he faces  
6 the effects of leukemia; and

7 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the APIL President shall certify, and the  
8 APIL Secretary shall attest to the adoption hereof and that copies of the same shall  
9 thereafter be transmitted to the Honorable Diego Tenorio Benavente; and to the Chief  
10 Executives and Presiding Legislative Officers of each member jurisdiction of the  
11 Association of Pacific Island Legislatures.

**DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED ON THE 29<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF OCTOBER, 2025.**

  
**EDMUND S. VILLAGOMEZ**  
**PRESIDENT**

  
**VICTOR BAMOG**  
**SECRETARY**

