

***I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN***  
**2025 (FIRST) Regular Session**

**Resolution No.       -38 (COR)**

Introduced by:

William A. Parkinson 

**Relative to expressing *I Liheslaturan Guåhan*'s support for a full examination of statehood or enhanced autonomous status for Guam, on terms defined by the people of Guam, and urging that any change secure Guam's constitutional rights, political equality, economic welfare, and cultural heritage.**

1       **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES OF *I***  
2 ***MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN*:**

3       **WHEREAS**, recent discourse among U.S. policymakers and think tanks have  
4 advocated for the statehood of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana  
5 Islands. Former Congressman Dr. Robert Underwood, chairman of the Pacific Center  
6 for Island Security, has apprised members of this Legislature regarding these  
7 developments and discussion going on in Washington D.C.; and

8       **WHEREAS**, Guam has been an unincorporated territory of the United States  
9 since 1898, remaining on the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories,  
10 and its people – although U.S. citizens since the passage of the Organic Act of 1950 –  
11 lack equal political representation and full self-governance under the current territorial  
12 arrangement; and

13       **WHEREAS**, the U.S. Constitution (Article IV, §3) grants Congress authority  
14 over territories and the admission of new states, and pursuant to this power Congress  
15 established Guam's civil government via the Organic Act (P.L. 81-630, 64 Stat. 384).  
16 However, the Insular Cases decided by the U.S. Supreme Court in the early 1900s  
17 created a doctrine of “unincorporated territory,” holding that the Constitution applies

1 only partially in territories not on a presumed path to statehood. These cases (e.g.  
2 *Downes v. Bidwell*, 182 U.S. 244 (1901) and *Balzac v. Porto Rico*, 258 U.S. 298 (1922))  
3 differentiated Guam and similar territories from fully incorporated U.S. soil; and

4 **WHEREAS**, the economic and strategic implications of statehood versus the  
5 status quo must be carefully analyzed to protect Guam’s interests. As a territory, Guam  
6 has developed certain unique fiscal arrangements and autonomies that any status change  
7 should preserve or enhance including Section 30 Funds; and

8 **WHEREAS**, Guam has a “mirror” federal tax code that encompasses local  
9 control of income tax revenues and spares most island residents from double taxation.  
10 If Guam were to become a state, this tax arrangement would likely be replaced by the  
11 standard federal-state tax system. That raises a concern that Guam could lose a  
12 significant stream of funding, were simply eliminated without compensation; and

13 **WHEREAS**, Guam is presently outside the U.S. customs territory, a status which  
14 allows the Government of Guam to administer its own customs and quarantine regime  
15 and to set local import duties. This autonomy has enabled Guam to generate revenue  
16 and regulate trade to protect local industries and agriculture. *I Liheslaturan Guåhan*  
17 recognizes the potential economic benefits of integration but also wishes to safeguard  
18 Guam’s interests. Congress can address such issues in an admission act, possibly  
19 granting Guam a continuation of certain excise or duty collection authority for local  
20 revenue or an exemption from certain federal trade laws that might adversely impact  
21 the island’s economy; and

22 **WHEREAS**, the people of Guam, as the rightful stewards of their homeland,  
23 must assert their inalienable right to self-determination, ensuring that any deliberations  
24 concerning statehood or enhanced autonomy are conducted with their explicit consent  
25 and active participation; and

26 **WHEREAS**, *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* underscores that the economic implications  
27 of transitioning to statehood necessitate a thorough analysis to safeguard Guam's fiscal  
28 stability, including considerations of existing tax structures and revenue streams vital  
29 to public services; and

1           **WHEREAS**, granting Guam equal political status would signal unequivocally  
2 that Guam is an integral part of the United States, deterring adversaries who might  
3 otherwise perceive Guam as a mere expendable outpost. Treating Guam like a state  
4 could reinforce U.S. credibility in the Indo-Pacific, assuring allies and rivals alike of  
5 America’s commitment to its Pacific territories; and

6           **WHEREAS**, *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* is mindful of the concerns and diverse  
7 perspectives of stakeholders regarding any change in political status. The question of  
8 Guam’s future – whether joining the Union as a state or redefining autonomy in another  
9 fashion – invokes passionate views tied to identity, culture, and history. Guam’s  
10 indigenous people, the CHamoru people, have a unique language, culture, and ancestral  
11 heritage that have survived centuries of colonial rule by Spain, then the U.S., and a  
12 brutal occupation during World War II. Protecting CHamoru heritage and ensuring the  
13 CHamoru people are not marginalized in their homeland is a priority in any status  
14 outcome; and

15           **WHEREAS**, this resolution asserts that through careful, good-faith negotiation  
16 and legal safeguards, it is possible to address these concerns, allowing Guam to attain a  
17 political status that is democratic, equitable, and respectful of our unique identity; now  
18 therefore, be it

19           **RESOLVED**, that the Committee on Rules of *I Mina’trentai Ocho Na*  
20 *Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby, on behalf of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* and the people  
21 of Guam, express *I Liheslaturan Guåhan*’s support for a full examination of statehood  
22 or enhanced autonomous status for Guam, on terms defined by the people of Guam, and  
23 urge that any change secure Guam’s constitutional rights, political equality, economic  
24 welfare, and cultural heritage; and be it further

25           **RESOLVED**, that any proposed status change must be built upon the informed  
26 consent of the people of Guam through a referendum, and *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* calls  
27 upon the President of the United States and the U.S. Congress to recognize the moral  
28 and legal imperative of Guam’s self-determination; and be it further

1           **RESOLVED**, that *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* reaffirms that the ultimate choice of  
2 political status belongs to the people of Guam. The role of Guam’s leaders is to facilitate  
3 that choice by securing options that are viable and beneficial. By adopting this  
4 resolution, *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* expresses the consensus that the time has come to  
5 actively seek a resolution of Guam’s political status – one that ends 125+ years of  
6 colonial uncertainty and fulfills the promise of democracy for our island. In unity with  
7 our community and with respect for all voices in the discussion, we declare that Guam  
8 will move forward to determine its own destiny. *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* commits to  
9 supporting that journey with all resources and leadership at its disposal, in the spirit of  
10 the CHamoru value of *inafa’maolek* – making things right for the benefit of all; and be  
11 it further

12           **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker and the Chairperson of the Committee on Rules  
13 certify, and the Legislative Secretary attest to, the adoption hereof, and that copies of  
14 the same be thereafter transmitted to the Guam Delegate to the U.S. House of  
15 Representatives; to the President of the United States; to the Speaker of the U.S. House  
16 of Representatives and the President of the U.S. Senate; to the Chairs of the relevant  
17 congressional committees on insular affairs; to the Secretary of the Interior and  
18 Secretary of Defense; and to the Honorable Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero, *I Maga’hågan*  
19 *Guåhan*.

**DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES OF  
I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN ON THE           DAY  
OF           2025.**

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**FRANK BLAS JR.**  
Speaker

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**V. ANTHONY ADA**  
Chairperson, Committee on Rules

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**SABRINA S. MATANANE**  
Legislative Secretary

