



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Benigno R. Fitial

Governor

Eloy S. Inos

Lt. Governor

Honorable Elicoo "Eli" D. Cabrera
Speaker, House of Representatives
Seventeenth Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

NOV 07 2011

Honorable Paul A. Manglona
President, The Senate
Seventeenth Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. Speaker and Mr. President:

This is to inform you that I have signed into law House Bill No. 17-172, entitled, "To preserve and designate one hectare of public land on the island of Rota for the future site of the Rota Veterans Cemetery; and for other purposes," which was passed by the Seventeenth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

This bill becomes **Public Law No. 17-60**. Copies bearing my signature are forwarded for your reference.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benigno R. Fitial".

BENIGNO R. FITIAL

cc: Lt. Governor
Attorney General
Executive Director for Military and Veterans Affairs
Department of Finance
Mayor of Rota
Department of Public Lands
Department of Lands and Natural Resources
Commonwealth's Law Revision Commission
Special Assistant for Programs and Legislative Review



The House of Representatives

NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

P.O. Box 500586
Saipan, MP 96950

October 24, 2011

The Honorable Benigno R. Fitial
Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern
Mariana Islands
Capitol Hill
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Governor Fitial:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith for your action **H. B. 17-172**, entitled: "An Act to preserve and designate one hectare of public land on the island of Rota for the future site of the Rota Veterans Cemetery; and for other purposes.", which was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Seventeenth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Linda B. Muña".

Linda B. Muña
House Clerk

Attachment



*Seventeenth Legislature
of the
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands*

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Third Regular Session

March 28, 2011

Representative Teresita A. Santos, of Rota, Precinct 7 (*for himself*) in an open and public meeting with an opportunity for the public to comment, introduced the following Bill:

H. B. 17-172

AN ACT

**TO PRESERVE AND DESIGNATE ONE HECTARE OF PUBLIC
LAND ON THE ISLAND OF ROTA FOR THE FUTURE SITE OF
THE ROTA VETERANS CEMETERY; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.**

The Bill was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources, which submitted Standing Committee Report 17-78, which was adopted on May 12, 2011.

**THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON
FIRST AND FINAL, MAY 12, 2011;**
without amendments and transmitted to the
THE SENATE.

The Bill was not referred to a Senate Committee.

THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE SENATE ON FIRST AND FINAL READING, OCTOBER 5, 2011;
without amendments.

H. B. 17-172 WAS RETURNED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OCTOBER 6, 2011.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Muña".

Linda B. Muña, House Clerk



*Seventeenth Legislature
of the
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands*
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2ND DAY, THIRD SPECIAL SESSION

MAY 12, 2011

H. B. 17-172

AN ACT

**TO PRESERVE AND DESIGNATE ONE HECTABE OF PUBLIC
LAND ON THE ISLAND OF ROTA FOR THE FUTURE SITE
OF THE ROTA VETERANS CEMETERY; AND FOR OTHER
PURPOSES.**

**Be it enacted by the Seventeenth Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature:**

1 Section 1. Short Title. This Act may be cited as the "Rota Veterans
2 Cemetery Designation Act of 2011".

3 Section 2. Findings. The Legislature finds that the Commonwealth
4 received a Veterans Cemetery Construction Project Grant in the amount of
5 \$1,666,980 from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in August 2005 for the
6 construction of a CNMI Veterans Cemetery on Saipan. The CNMI Veterans
7 Cemetery construction commenced in September 2005 and the cemetery was
8 opened on November 11, 2006 in Marpi, Saipan. The cemetery is owned and
9 operated by the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

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HOUSE BILL 17-172

1 The Legislature finds that the people and veterans from the island of Rota
2 have expressed their desire to have a veterans cemetery on the island of Rota.
3 Once a loved one is buried at the Veteran's Cemetery on Saipan, it becomes
4 extremely difficult for family members and loved ones to visit the burial site
5 because many are unable to afford the exorbitant airline fare, car rental, food and
6 other expenses incurred when traveling to Saipan. The financial burden that is
7 placed on each member of the bereaved family is too burdensome during their
8 time of loss coupled with the current financial difficulty many of our people face
9 today because of our ailing economy. During the death of a loved one,
10 traditionally, family members visit the burial site frequently after they are buried.
11 All Souls' Day and All Saints' Day are also traditionally spent at the burial sites
12 of loved ones and is practiced every year. With the CNMI Veterans Cemetery
13 located a plane ride away, many families cannot continue this tradition.

14 The Legislature further finds that Rota has lost and buried several Vietnam
15 Veterans and those who were deployed to Iraq at its existing cemetery. As a
16 result, this would justify the need to create and establish a veterans cemetery on
17 the island of Rota. The Rota Veterans Cemetery may inter any eligible veteran,
18 along with spouses and eligible dependents. Therefore, this legislative body
19 empathizes with the people of Rota and is in accord with the intentions of this bill.

20 **Section 3. Designation of Veterans Cemetery.** Notwithstanding any
21 provision of law to the contrary, the Department of Public Lands shall designate

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HOUSE BILL 17-172

1 one hectare of feasible public land on the island of Rota to be preserved and
2 designated as the future site of the Rota Veterans Cemetery.

3 **Section 4. Severability.** If any provisions of this Act or the application
4 of any such provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a
5 court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its
6 provisions to persons or circumstances other than those to which it is held invalid
7 shall not be affected thereby.

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

