

TITLE 3: HUMAN RESOURCES
DIVISION 1: EDUCATION

§ 1201. Short Title.

This chapter may be cited as the Chamorro-Carolinian Language Policy Commission Act.

Source: PL 3-26, § 1; repealed and reenacted by PL 15-96, § 2(1201).

Commission Comment: PL 3-26, which took effect April 13, 1982, repealed PL 1-37. PL 3-26, § 10.

Executive Order 94-3, the “Second Re-organization Plan of 1994” (effective August 23, 1994), reorganized the Commonwealth government executive branch, changed agency names and official titles and effected numerous other revisions. According to Executive Order 94-3, § 308(d):

(d) Chamorro-Carolinian Language Policy Commission. The Chamorro-Carolinian Language Policy Commission is allocated to the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs for purposes of administration and coordination.

The full text of Executive Order 94-3 is set forth in the Commission comment to 1 CMC § 2001.

Public Law 15-96 was enacted into law by override on October 4, 2007 and contained the following in addition to severability and savings clauses:

Section 1. Findings. The Legislature finds that Public Law 3-26, as set forth in 3 CMC § 1201 et seq., which established the Chamorro-Carolinian Language Policy Commission ("Language Commission"), was enacted on October 13, 1982. More than 24 years have elapsed since the establishment of the Language Commission and many diverse social and economic forces in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands have influenced changes within the Chamorro and Carolinian cultures and languages. Some of these changes threatened to alter the traditional family values of the indigenous people.

The Legislature further finds that the Language Commission conducted a survey that determined that many Chamorro and Carolinian children do not speak their native language. This is largely due to the lack of understanding, appreciation, practice, and encouragement by parents, schools, and community leaders which resulted in children losing interest in their native language. The Language Commission previously attempted to implement language programs but was either unsuccessful or delayed due to a lack of quorum of the twelve members of the Language Commission during meetings. Moreover, there has been a systematic lack of interest and commitment among appointed members of the Language Commission throughout the past decade or so.

The Legislature finds that certain official documents randomly translated in Chamorro or Carolinian by certain individuals were found to be

TITLE 3: HUMAN RESOURCES
DIVISION 1: EDUCATION

inconsistent with the adopted Orthography and Dictionary of the Chamorro and Carolinian languages. This has created a division or difference of opinion among such translators. Therefore, there is a need to require Chamorro and Carolinian translators to become certified as competent and qualified translators using the adopted and official Orthography and Dictionary of the Chamorro and Carolinian languages. A Certification Committee on Chamorro and Carolinian Translators should be established to certify such translators who perform services for the public and private sectors in the Commonwealth.

The Legislature further finds that the annual budget of the Language Commission provides only for personnel and office supplies but does not fund any of the language programs. The Language Commission requires supplemental funding to implement its language programs. Moreover, there has been some ambiguity as to the status of the Language Commission within the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs and who is the proper expenditure authority of the Language Commission. Accordingly, the purpose of this legislation is repeal and re-enact Chapter 2, Division 1, Title 3 of the Commonwealth Code in order to clarify some ambiguous provisions and to change and add other provisions to streamline and improve the Language Commission.