

TITLE 4: ECONOMIC RESOURCES
DIVISION 5: BUSINESS REGULATION

§ 51501. Definitions.

Unless the context otherwise requires, the words and terms defined in this chapter shall have the following meanings:

(a) *Commonwealth*. “Commonwealth” means Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

(b) *Court*. “Court” means the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Superior Court.

(c) *Lien*. “Lien” means a legal right or interest that a creditor has in another’s property, lasting usually until a debt or duty that is secured is satisfied.

(d) *Lien holder*. “Lienholder” means a person having or owning a lien.

(e) *Person*. “Person” means any individual, corporation, partnership, association, business trust, firm, company, joint venture company, or limited liability company.

Source: PL 15-117, § 2(51401).

Commission Comment: PL 15-117, enacted on November 29, 2007, included severability and savings provisions and the following:

Section 1. Short Title. This Act may be cited as the Statutory Liens Act of 2006.

Section 2. Findings and Purpose. The Legislature finds that many business establishments repair or perform work on jewelry, watches, appliances, equipment, instruments, and vehicles which are often abandoned and not paid for by the owners. As a result, these businesses are left with unwanted articles and unpaid invoices as well as the inability to sell such articles and vehicles to recover their losses.

The Legislature further finds that the Commonwealth hospitals, which comprise the Commonwealth Health Center, Tinian Health Center, and Rota Health Center are inundated with millions of dollars worth of unpaid medical bills and paid Medicaid expenses provided to individuals. Collection of such bills and expenses has been tedious and often unsuccessful. Establishing liens of hospitals and liens to recover benefits paid to Medicaid would assist the Commonwealth hospitals in collecting unpaid medical bills.

The purpose of this legislation is to establish statutory liens to assist businesses [to] recover losses stemming from unpaid repairs and work performed on articles and vehicles, and to assist the hospitals in the collection of unpaid medical bills and to recover benefits paid to Medicaid.