

TWELFTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH

FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 2000

PUBLIC LAW NO. 12-76
FL B. NO. 12403, CD1

AN ACT

To create the Business License Application Task Force to **formulate** a plan for a One-Stop Business License Center; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE **TWELFTH** NORTHERN MARIANAS
COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE:

Section 1. Legislative Findings. The Legislature recognizes that obtaining a business license to do business in the- **CNMI** have been unnecessarily inconvenienced, if not **frustrated** because a business license cannot be **obtained** at a single **governmental** office. The applicants have had to drive around to many **places** that are miles apart. Further, procedures and processes at times take **weeks**, if not, months to complete. **Unless** the process is **streamlined**, unnecessary delays will result in **frustration** with the system, **resulting** in diverting businesses **elsewhere**. **In** furtherance of reducing the time, **travel** and delay caused by having to visit many agencies to complete a business application procedure, the **Legislature** finds that a task force should be created to study the feasibility of **implementing** a One-Stop Business **Application Center** at the Department of Revenue and Taxation and **to** compile the steps necessary for such implementation, including consideration of an electronic licensing process **vis-à-vis** a licensing **website**.

Section 2. Business License Application Task Force. There is hereby created within the government of the **CNMI** a Business License Application Task Force, consisting of one (1) representative **from** each of the agencies or **departments from** which a license applicant needs **approval** or **clearance** in order to obtain a business license. The **director, general** manager, or chief executive officer of the agency or department **shall** designate the representative for each **such** agency. **The** representative **from** the Department **of Revenue** and Taxation **shall** be the Chairperson of the Task Force and **shall** preside over its meetings and direct its activities.

Section 3. Responsibilities and Authority of Task Force. The responsibilities and authority of the Task Force shall be to:

(a) Prepare, through the expertise and analysis of the Task Force's members, a comprehensive plan with the goal of providing a timely, responsive and responsible "One-Stop" Business License Application Center." In preparing such a plan, the Task Force shall:

- (i) Obtain from each agency involved in giving approvals or clearances for the issuance of business licenses a copy of the law, rule, regulation, Executive Order, or authority, if any, requiring such approval or clearance; and
- (ii) Undertake analysis of the procedures carried out by each agency separately, and by the agencies as a whole, in obtaining approval or clearance for the issuance of a business license, with the aim of simplifying the procedure and making the approval or clearance issued by agencies relevant, necessary and sufficient for the particular license being issued, as well as accelerating the process for obtaining either approval or rejection of applications for business licenses; and
- (iii) Hold one (1) or more public hearings on the subject of obtaining business licenses to gather input from the community for improving the process; and
- (iv) Fully consider electronic licensing processing vis-à-vis a licensing website.

(b) To make detailed recommendations to the Governor and to the Legislature, including minority dissenting opinions, if any, regarding any changes, deletions, or additions to the current application process which would make the decision making process timely, responsive, and responsible;

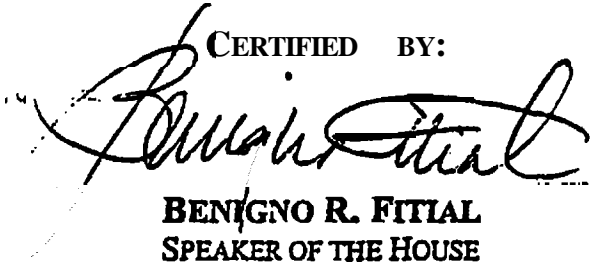
(c) To deliver to the Governor and Legislature within ninety (90) days of the enactment of this Act, both an oral presentation and written report detailing the plan and recommendations provided for in this section. The report shall include the steps necessary to facilitate the expedited application process, which shall be implemented within thirty (30) days of approval by the Legislature by statute of the recommendations in the Task Force's Report.

Section 4. **Cooperation of Government Agencies.** All agencies, departments, boards, commissions and other instrumentalities of the government of the CNMI which are involved in the process of providing approvals or clearances for business licenses shall render such assistance to the Task Force as the Task Force may require.

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

Section 6. **Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the Governor, or upon its becoming law without such approval.

CERTIFIED BY:




BENIGNO R. FITIAL
SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE

ATTESTED TO BY:



EVELYN C. FLEMING
HOUSE CLERK

Approved this 30th day of November, 2001



PEDRO F. TENORIO
GOVERNOR
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS