



## COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

**Eloy S. Inos**  
Governor

**Ralph DLG. Torres**  
Lieutenant Governor

NOV 13 2015

Honorable Victor B. Hocog  
Senate President, The Senate  
Nineteenth Northern Marianas  
Commonwealth Legislature  
Saipan, MP 96950

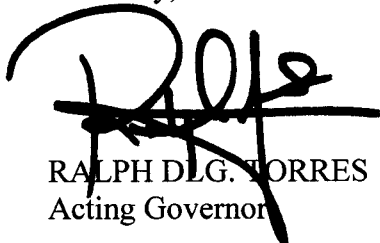
Honorable Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero  
Speaker, House of Representatives  
Nineteenth Northern Marianas  
Commonwealth Legislature  
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Speaker:

This is to inform you that I have signed into law Senate Bill No. 19-28, entitled, "To amend 1 CMC § 7406(a), (e) and (g)(3); and for other purposes," which was passed by the Senate and the House of Representative of the Nineteenth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

This bill becomes **Public Law No. 19-20**. Copies bearing my signature are forwarded for your reference.

Sincerely,



RALPH DLG. TORRES  
Acting Governor

cc: Governor; Attorney General's Office; Department of Public Safety; Public Auditor; Special Assistant for Administration; Special Assistant for Programs and Legislative Review



THE SENATE  
Nineteenth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature  
P. O. Box 500129  
Saipan, MP 96950

October 14, 2015

The Honorable Eloy S. Inos  
Governor  
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
Capital Hill  
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Governor Inos:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith Senate Bill No. 19-28, entitled: "To amend 1 CMC § 7406(a), (e) and (g)(3); and for other purposes," which was passed by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Nineteenth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dolores S. Bermudes".

Dolores S. Bermudes  
Senate Clerk

Attachments



**THE SENATE**  
**NINETEENTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 19-28**

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**AN ACT**

To amend 1 CMC § 7406(a), (e) and (g)(3); and for other purposes.

**SENATE ACTION**

**Offered by Senator(s):** Francisco Q. Cruz and Jude U. Hofschneider

**Date:** March 13, 2015

**Referred to:** None

**Standing Committee Report No.:** None

**Final Reading:** March 20, 2015

**HOUSE ACTION**

**Referred to:** Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations

**Standing Committee Report No.:** 19-30 adopted on 09/28/15

**First and Final Reading:** September 30, 2015

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**DOLORES S. BERMUDES**  
**SENATE CLERK**

NINETEENTH NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION, 2015

S. B. NO. 19-28

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AN ACT

To amend 1 CMC § 7406(a), (e) and (g)(3); and for other purposes.

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

1           **Section 1. Findings and Purpose.** The Legislature finds that Public Law 9-37, the  
2 “Government Vehicle Act of 1994,” was enacted to effectively regulate the use of  
3 government vehicles by distinguishing between the different kinds of government vehicles;  
4 and providing meaningful penalties to adequately deter or punish persons who misuse or  
5 abuse the privilege of driving a government vehicle.

6           The Legislature further finds that the “Government Vehicle Act of 1994” was  
7 amended on July 29, 1997 by Public Law 10-64 to exempt Commonwealth Judges from the  
8 requirement that government vehicles assigned to them be marked and have government  
9 plates. In enacting Public Law 10-64, the Legislature found that, for security reasons, it is  
10 desirable that judges’ cars not be singled out or marked in a distinctive manner.

11           Similarly, the Legislature finds that for security and safety reasons, it is necessary  
12 that elected officials be exempt from the tinting restriction and government license plate  
13 requirements of the Government Vehicle Act. Recently, there have been controversial issues  
14 and legislation in the Commonwealth that have given rise to protest and aggravation among  
15 the people. These issues include the crash of the Retirement Fund, casino matters, land  
16 compensation disputes, and the increased criminal activities around the islands against the  
17 residents and visitors alike. Some of these controversial issues are pending and others such  
18 as the casino but stiffer criminal penalties are being implemented.

**SENATE BILL NO. 19-28**

1 The Legislature finds that regarding any controversial issue, there are always people  
2 that are unhappy and disgruntled with the decisions of elected officials. Therefore, people  
3 will protest and directly express their frustrations to the elected officials responsible for  
4 addressing such controversial issues. This sometimes creates a dangerous and hostile  
5 environment for elected officials. Moreover, sponsoring or supporting criminal laws with  
6 stiffer penalties make elected officials attractive targets for criminals that are angry with  
7 their sentences or punishments.

8 Thus, the Legislature finds that it is necessary to protect elected officials from being  
9 targeted by disgruntled persons by exempting vehicles used by elected officials from the  
10 window tinting restriction and government license plate requirement. This will ensure that  
11 elected officials cannot be easily attacked while traveling on the road or in a parked vehicle.  
12 Elected officials cannot effectively protect themselves from harm while traveling on the  
13 road in an un-tinted vehicle clearly visible to everyone and easily identified with a  
14 government license plate.

15 The Legislature further finds that except for law enforcement officers and judges,  
16 most other government employees do not require any special protection while utilizing  
17 government vehicles. By the nature of their positions, elected officials are at a greater risk  
18 of harm while driving government vehicles and must be protected at all times. Accordingly,  
19 the purpose of this legislation is to exempt vehicles used by elected officials from the  
20 window tinting restriction and government license plate requirement.

21 **Section 2. Amendment.** 1 CMC § 7406(a) is hereby amended by adding a new  
22 paragraph (1) and to renumber the remaining paragraphs to read as follows:

23 “(1) “Elected officials” means any person holding any elected office of the  
24 Commonwealth government; and visiting elected officials from other jurisdictions  
25 that are in the Commonwealth for official business using government vehicles.”

26 **Section 3. Amendment.** 1 CMC § 7406(e) is hereby amended to read as follows:

27 “(e) Tinting Prohibited. No person shall operate or use a government vehicle  
28 that has any tinting materials on its windows. This subsection shall not apply to law  
29 enforcement vehicles, nor but shall apply to vehicles used, owned, leased, or

SENATE BILL NO. 19-28

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1 assigned to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and other elected officials. Violation  
2 of this subsection shall be an infraction, punishable by a fine of up to \$500, and/or  
3 three days imprisonment.”

4 **Section 4. Amendment.** 1 CMC § 7406(g)(3) is hereby amended to read as follows:

5 “(3) This subsection shall not apply to unmarked law enforcement vehicles,  
6 nor to vehicles used, owned, leased or assigned to the Governor, Lieutenant  
7 Governor, elected officials and judges.”

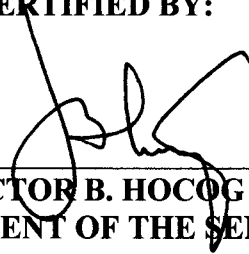
8 **Section 5. Severability.** If any provision of this Act or the application of any such  
9 provision to any person or circumstance should be held invalid by a court of competent  
10 jurisdiction, the remainder of this Act or the application of its provisions to persons or  
11 circumstances other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

12 **Section 6. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be  
13 construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes  
14 repealed or under any rule, regulation or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers  
15 contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior  
16 law. The enactment of this Act shall not have the effect of terminating, or in any way  
17 modifying, any liability civil or criminal, which shall already be in existence at the date this  
18 Act becomes effective.

19 **Section 7. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the  
20 Governor or upon its becoming law without such approval.

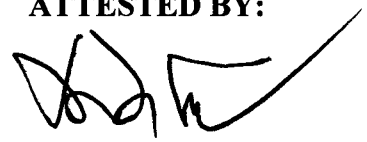
SENATE BILL NO. 19-28

CERTIFIED BY:



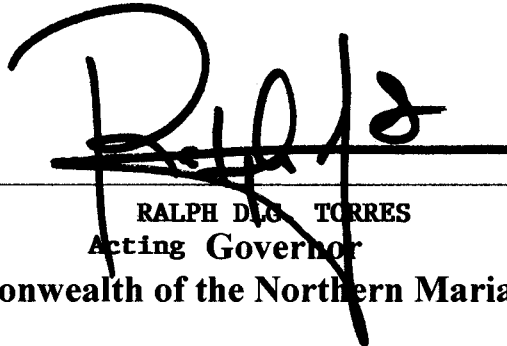
VICTOR B. HOCOG  
PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

ATTESTED BY:



TERESITA A. SANTOS  
SENATE LEGISLATIVE SECRETARY

Approved this 13<sup>th</sup> day of November, 2015



RALPH D.G. TORRES  
Acting Governor  
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands