



RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor

VICTOR B. HOCO
Lieutenant Governor

COMMONWEALTH of the NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

19 NOV 2018

The Honorable Rafael S. Demapan
Speaker, House of Representatives
Twentieth Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

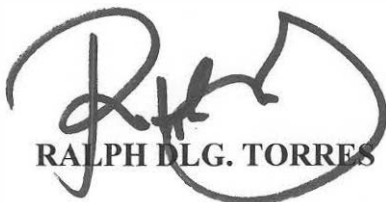
The Honorable Arnold I. Palacios
Senate President, The Senate
Twentieth Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Mr. Speaker and Mr. President:

This is to inform you that I have signed into law **House Bill No. 20-155, HD1**, entitled, "To require all Commonwealth governmental entities to submit an annual "Citizen-Centric Report" of their activities.", which was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Twentieth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

This bill becomes **Public Law No. 20-83**. Copies bearing my signature are forwarded for your reference.

Sincerely,



RALPH DLG. TORRES

cc: Lt. Governor; Press Secretary; Attorney General's Office; Secretary of Finance; Office of Public Auditor; Mayor's Office; Special Assistant for Administration; Special Assistant for Programs and Legislative Review



House of Representatives

20th NORTHERN MARIANAS COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 500586
SAIPAN, MP 96950

October 15, 2018

The Honorable Ralph DLG. Torres
Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern
Mariana Islands
Capitol Hill
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Governor Torres:

I have the honor of transmitting herewith for your action **H. B. No. 20-155, HD1**, entitled: "To require all Commonwealth governmental entities to submit an annual "Citizen-Centric Report" of their activities.", which was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate of the Twentieth Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature.

Sincerely yours,



Linda B. Muña
House Clerk

Attachment



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

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Third Regular Session

February 16, 2018

REPRESENTATIVE JANET U. MARATITA of Saipan, Precinct 1 (*for herself*, and Representative Alice S. Igitol) in an open and public meeting with an opportunity for the public to comment, introduced the following Bill:

H. B. NO. 20-155, HD1

AN ACT

TO REQUIRE ALL COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES TO SUBMIT AN ANNUAL "CITIZEN-CENTRIC REPORT" OF THEIR ACTIVITIES.

The Bill was referred to the House Committee on Judiciary and Governmental Operations, which submitted Standing Committee Report No. 20-115; adopted 4/24/18.

**THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON
FIRST AND FINAL READING, APRIL 24, 2018;**

with amendments in the form of H. B. No. 20-155, HD1, and transmitted to the
THE SENATE.

The Bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Judiciary, Government & Law.
THE BILL WAS PASSED BY THE SENATE ON FIRST AND FINAL READING, OCTOBER 9, 2018;

without amendments and was returned to
THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

THE BILL WAS FINALLY PASSED ON APRIL 24, 2018.



Linda B. Muña, House Clerk



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

FIRST DAY, FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

APRIL 24, 2018

H. B. No. 20-155, HD1

AN ACT

**TO REQUIRE ALL COMMONWEALTH GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES
TO SUBMIT AN ANNUAL "CITIZEN-CENTRIC REPORT" OF
THEIR ACTIVITIES.**

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

1 Section 1. Findings. The Legislature finds that our constituents look to the
2 Commonwealth Legislature to work on their behalf and provide transparency and access to
3 open government on matters that significantly impact their quality of life. That is why
4 stability, transparency, efficiency and continuity in the governance systems that our citizens'
5 are most immediately concerned with, is so necessary. That is why, our priority here at the
6 Legislature is to place our citizens at the center of our government. The concept that good
7 governance relies on good citizenry is important, since our democracy is based on a
8 symbiotic relationship which provides a balance that can only be achieved by working
9 together.

HOUSE BILL 20-155, HD1

1 The Legislature also finds that the foundation of democracy is based on governments
2 being answerable to their citizenry and, as such, having a responsibility to provide
3 information regarding government operations, most notably in regards to how taxpayer
4 dollars are spent. The Legislature further finds that governments should provide such
5 information in an easily understandable and accessible manner. Financial reports are often
6 too lengthy and too technical for the average person to understand.

7 Taxpayers are entitled to transparent financial management information, and we
8 believe that there is an obligation to provide such information. Unfortunately, governments
9 often fail to meet their reporting needs, and that poor performance has created a problem of
10 trust between citizens and their government. Governments need new and innovative means
11 of communicating to overcome these challenges. Therefore, it is the intent of the Legislature
12 to ensure that our government provides more readily available and understandable
13 information to the people of the Commonwealth.

14 **Section 2. Enactment.** The following is enacted subject to revision by the
15 Commonwealth Law Revision Commission:

16 **“Section 101. The Citizen-Centric Report.**

17 (a) The Office of the Public Auditor shall be responsible for coordinating
18 overseeing the Citizen-Centric Report program established by this section.

19 (b) Timeline for Submission. No later than thirty (30) calendar days after each
20 fiscal year, every secretary, director, administrator, president or head of a
21 Commonwealth government agency, including line departments and agencies,
22 autonomous and semi-autonomous agencies, public corporations, the Mayor’s Offices

HOUSE BILL 20-155, HD1

1 Municipal Councils and boards and commissions shall submit to the Public Auditor
2 and the presiding officers of the Legislature, in electronic format an annual Citizen-
3 Centric Report. The Citizen-Centric Report shall be posted on the entity's website
4 and the websites of the Office of the Governor, the CNMI Legislature, and Office of
5 the Public Auditor.

6 (c) Content Guidelines.

7 (1) Page one of the Citizen-Centric Report should include a brief table of
8 contents, and shall contain information about the entity, including, but not
9 limited to, the entity's vision statement, strategic goals, operational structure,
10 and demographics.

11 (2) Page two of the Citizen-Centric Report should reflect a performance
12 report based on a summary of the entity's key missions and/or services and
13 possible outcome measures.

14 (3) Page three of the Citizen-Centric Report should provide a clear
15 snapshot of financial data as it relates to the performance report presented in
16 page two. This portion of the report should address the entity's cost for services
17 provided and by what means those costs were covered.

18 (4) Page four of the Citizen-Centric Report should present the entity's
19 forecast of future challenges and economic outlook.

20 (5) Miscellaneous information, including, but not limited to, information
21 sources, entity contact information, and feedback options, may be included in
22 sections throughout the report.

HOUSE BILL 20-155, HD1

1 (d) Design Guidelines. The design of a Citizen-Centric Report is just as
2 important as the content. A report will only be effective if it is read and referenced;
3 thus, it should be visually appealing. The Office of the Public Auditor shall provide
4 assistance and guidelines for the design of Citizen-Centric Reports, including
5 suggestions for design considerations of visual appeal and readability, physical
6 layout, colors, images and graphics, and type and fonts. The Office of the Public
7 Auditor shall also provide suggestions for publishing software and report distribution.

8 (e) Penalties. Violations of this Act shall be punishable as follows:

9 (1) First Offense: Official verbal warning with an opportunity to cure
10 in 30 days. Failure to cure a first violation after 30 days shall be punished by
11 a fine of \$50.00 per day payable to the Office of Public Auditor until the
12 violation is cured.

13 (2) Second Offense: Official written warning with an opportunity to
14 cure in 30 days. Failure to cure a second or subsequent violation after 30 days
15 shall be punished by a fine of \$100.00 per day payable to the Office of Public
16 Auditor until the violation is cured.

17 (f) (1) Notwithstanding any laws or provisions to the contrary, in cases
18 involving non-autonomous agencies, the CNMI Department of Finance shall be
19 authorized to collect any fines and penalties that are due pursuant to this Act by
20 withholding any amounts due from the violating entity's annual budget
21 appropriation in the current or next annual appropriation. Payments shall be made to
22 the Office of Public Auditor and shall be available without fiscal year limitation.

HOUSE BILL 20-155, HD1

1 (2) Notwithstanding any laws or provisions to the contrary, in cases
2 involving autonomous agencies, the violating entity shall pay any fines and penalties
3 that are due pursuant to this Act from the violating entity's annual budget
4 appropriation in the current or next annual appropriation. Payments shall be made to
5 the Office of Public Auditor and shall be available without fiscal year limitation."

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

10 **Section 4. Savings Clause.** This Act and any repealer contained herein shall not be
11 construed as affecting any existing right acquired under contract or acquired under statutes
12 repealed or under any rule, regulation, or order adopted under the statutes. Repealers
13 contained in this Act shall not affect any proceeding instituted under or pursuant to prior law.
14 The enactment of the Act shall not have the effect of terminating, or in any way modifying,
15 any liability, civil or criminal, which shall already be in existence on the date this Act
16 becomes effective.

HOUSE BILL 20-155, HD1


1 **Section 5. Effective Date.** This Act shall take effect upon its approval by the
2 Governor, or its becoming law without such approval.

Attested to by:




Linda B. Muña, House Clerk

Certified by:



SPEAKER RAFAEL S. DEMAPAN
House of Representatives
20th Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature

Approved this 19th day of November, 2018



RALF DLG. TORRES
Governor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands