



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

October 4, 2021

GOV21-209

The Honorable Jude U. Hofschneider
President of the Senate
Twenty-Second Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

The Honorable Edmund S. Villagomez
Speaker of the House of Representatives
Twenty-Second Northern Marianas
Commonwealth Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Re: Letter of Support for Senate Bill 22-05

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Speaker,

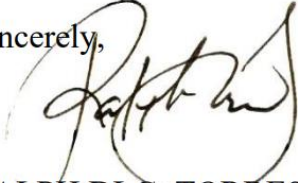
I would like to formally express my support for the Behavioral Health Professional Scholarship of Senate Bill 22-05, which will not only provide assistance to CNMI residents that are looking to further their education in the field of behavioral health, but also ensure that the CNMI will attain much-needed behavioral professionals to help our community. Through this scholarship, it is my hope that we become a healthier CNMI through the acquired knowledge and skills that CNMI residents availing of this program will use to help in the prevention and reduction of behavioral health related to substance abuse, suicide, and criminal activities.

As seen throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the rate of behavioral health issues has worsened, causing a mental illness and substance addiction crisis that must be addressed by the psychologists, psychiatrists, therapists, counselors, social workers, and substance abuse professionals who are qualified to do so.

The strategic conditions of this scholarship award, as reviewed and monitored by the CNMI Scholarship Office, will also provide a means of accountability and assurance that the recipient of the scholarship award will return to the CNMI after graduation to join the CNMI workforce. Through these conditions, CNMI residents will be encouraged to apply and avail of this scholarship opportunity to utilize their acquired knowledge in their respective field of behavioral health study for the betterment of the Commonwealth.

It is my hope that the Twenty-Second Northern Marianas Commonwealth Legislature will look favorably upon Senate Bill 22-05, as this is a solution that will ultimately provide the people of our Commonwealth with critical behavioral health assistance at a time that it is greatly needed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph DLG. Torres". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ralph" being the most prominent.

RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor