



Office of the Mayor
Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan

Joey P. San Nicolas
Mayor

August 2, 2016

Honorable Francisco M. Borja
Senate President
19th CNMI Legislature
Saipan, MP 96950

Dear Senate President Borja:

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to comment on SLB 19-106: To Regulate Marijuana in the Northern Mariana Islands; and for other purposes.

SLB 19-106 proposes to give the people of the Commonwealth the opportunity to end the current prohibition on Marijuana by placing it on the ballot this coming November 8, 2016. I am writing to give my full endorsement of the intent of this bill.


As a former Attorney General, I have seen first-hand the economic and social costs of prohibition whether it is from resources spent on arrests and prosecution or the consequences on employability as a result of a single marijuana arrest. As Mayor of Tinian trying to rid my island of a far more dangerous and lethal drug, I believe that resources spent on the continued prohibition of marijuana is better utilized to stop the sale of Crystal Meth and to rehabilitate our people who are addicted to this drug.

For many years, we have heard the arguments for or against Marijuana played out on the national level. There are merits to both sides of the arguments which I will not rehash here but I am not convinced that the continued prohibition and criminalization serves a beneficial purpose. Twenty five states and the District of Columbia have legalized marijuana for medical purposes. The science supporting medical use are significant. Four states have fully ended the prohibition on marijuana by allowing for recreational use reaping substantial economic benefits. These are notable considerations given the precarious state of our economy and the types of physical ailments that members of our community are suffering from.

I will note that like any new regulation, there will be issues with implementation and enforcement. These challenges however are not insurmountable and should not be an impediment to allowing, at the very least, the people of the Commonwealth to decide on this very important issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this very important issue.

Sincerely,


JOEY P. SAN NICOLAS
Mayor of Tinian and Aguiguan

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