

I MINA'TRENTAI UNU NA LIHESLATURAN GUÁHAN
2012 (SECOND) Regular Session

Resolution No. 431-31 (COR)

Introduced by:

T. R. Muña Barnes
B. J.F. Cruz
R. J. Respicio
T. C. Ada
V. A. Ada
F. F. Blas, Jr.
Chris M. Dueñas
J. P. Guthertz, DPA
Sam A. Mabini, Ph.D.
Adolpho Borja Palacios, Sr.
v. c. pangelinan
Dennis G. Rodriguez, Jr.
M. Silva Taijeron
Aline A. Yamashita, Ph.D.
Judith T. Won Pat, Ed.D.

Relative to recognizing and honoring the late Joe “Uncle Tote” Cunningham as an outstanding member of the community who has made many historical and important contributions to Guam’s Arts and Entertainment Industry; and to further extending our condolences to his family on his passing.

1 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES OF *I***
2 ***MINA'TRENTAI UNU NA LIHESLATURAN GUÁHAN:***

3 **WHEREAS**, William Joseph Cunningham, II, was born on July 15, 1944, in
4 Louisville, Kentucky; and he was raised in a home where music, laughter, and
5 creativity were encouraged; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Cunningham’s father had owned a music store, and the family
2 home was always filled with a variety of music, with Cunningham’s preference for
3 jazz, having said that one of his fondest memories was spending two (2) weeks in
4 New York City visiting jazz clubs at the age of eighteen (18) years; and

5 **WHEREAS**, Joe Cunningham studied architecture for four (4) years before
6 enlisting in the United States Air Force in 1967, and he was sent to the Defense
7 Information School (DINFOS) to become a Basic Military Journalist; and

8 **WHEREAS**, Cunningham served as the editor of the Shaw Air Force Base
9 newspaper in South Carolina, until he responded to a call for broadcasters and
10 returned to DINFOS, where he graduated at the top of his class as a radio announcer;
11 and

12 **WHEREAS**, on August 21, 1968, Joe Cunningham was stationed on Guam at
13 his request, having learned about the island from the movie, “No Man is an Island”;
14 and

15 **WHEREAS**, Cunningham was assigned to the American Forces Radio,
16 Andersen AFB, and he spent his free time in the community making friends and
17 playing music; and upon his discharge from the U.S. Air Force in 1971, Cunningham
18 moved to *Malesso (Merizo)* where he remained a permanent resident of Guam; and

19 **WHEREAS**, Joe Cunningham pursued a full musical career and was a member
20 of several notable bands, including “Seadogs”, “5 Way”, “The Kasuals”, “Tugboat”,
21 “Marianas Homegrown”, and “The *Ga’ga* Brothers”; as well as being a respected solo
22 artist; and

23 **WHEREAS**, from 1973 to 1974, Cunningham was part owner of “Leigh’s by
24 the Sea”, a *Malesso* restaurant which showcased local talent and is credited with being
25 the birthplace of Marianas Homegrown; and

1 **WHEREAS**, in 1972, Joe Cunningham traveled to Japan, where he performed
2 for many years with different bands, and he became a sought after sound engineer,
3 producing albums for well-known Japanese artists and establishing many friendships
4 in the Japanese music industry; and

5 **WHEREAS**, in 1976, Cunningham was the assistant producer/translator/lyricist
6 for Japanese composer Kase Kunihiko's recording sessions in London, one of his
7 proudest moments; and

8 **WHEREAS**, Cunningham was fluent in Japanese, and also spoke *Chamorro*
9 and *Tagalog*, through his time in the Philippines, where he also made many friends in
10 the music industry; and

11 **WHEREAS**, in 1977, Cunningham met the late J.D. Crutch at the Charfauros
12 Brothers recording studios, which led to the creation of one of Guam's most well-
13 known musical compilations, the Marianas Homegrown album, which featured the
14 talents of Cunningham as a soloist, and as a member of Tugboat along with J.D.
15 Crutch, Chuck McJohn, and Frank Reyes; and this collaboration led to the participants
16 performing together as "The *Ga'ga* Brothers", and occasionally, the "Balutsu Bob
17 Band"; and

18 **WHEREAS**, Joe Cunningham began a second career as a radio announcer on
19 KUAM 610 as Uncle Toting, a name given to him by Ricky Dueñas, a cousin of J.D.
20 Crutch; and

21 **WHEREAS**, Cunningham had many nicknames, including "Joe Flute" and
22 Kanihama Jou, but is best known as Uncle Toting, or Uncle Tote; and

23 **WHEREAS**, in 1994, Cunningham left KUAM to become a full-time
24 advertising agency creative director, but returned to radio four (4) months later to host
25 the morning show on Hit Radio 100, which was also broadcast on television, until

1 1997, when he was named Creative Director at the McCann Erickson advertising
2 agency; and

3 **WHEREAS**, in 1990, Joe Cunningham taught music legend Kenny Loggins to
4 sing his song, “Forever” in fluent *Chamorro*, and remained active in Guam’s local
5 music scene while building a successful career in advertising production working at
6 some of the island’s finest agencies, such as Glimpses of Guam; and

7 **WHEREAS**, Cunningham developed close relationships with clients, such as
8 the Hyatt Regency Guam, the Micronesian Divers Association, Aqua Quest Video,
9 and Nissan Motors of Guam, where Cunningham was known as the “voice of Nissan
10 Guam” for twenty-seven (27) years; and

11 **WHEREAS**, Joe Cunningham has entertained people for decades, most notably
12 performing the National Anthem (Star Spangled Banner) in the *Chamorro* language
13 for President Bill Clinton during his visit to Guam on November 23, 1998; but it is the
14 image of Uncle Tote skating down Marine Corps Drive on roller blades holding a
15 video camera as part of the annual Liberation Day Parade each year that will be what
16 most people remember him for; and

17 **WHEREAS**, Joe “Uncle Tote” Cunningham has always been a creative force,
18 as a musician, radio personality, producer, sound engineer, videographer, and writer;
19 having remained active in his art throughout his life, most recently recording a new
20 album at Sound Creation Studio in Quezon City Manila; and

21 **WHEREAS**, while Joe Cunningham has touched the hearts of many, it is the
22 hearts of his children he valued most and, as a family man, he encouraged his children
23 to follow their dreams as he had done, often saying one of the greatest moments of his
24 life was performing onstage with his sons, Trey and Brandon; and

1 **WHEREAS**, Joe Cunningham adored his grandchild, and he has two (2) more
2 due this year that will learn how beloved their grandfather was by the people of Guam,
3 his friends all over the world, and mostly by his family; now therefore, be it

4 **RESOLVED**, that the Committee on Rules of *I Mina' Trentai Unu Na*
5 *Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby, on behalf of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* and the people
6 of Guam, recognize and honor the late Joe “Uncle Tote” Cunningham as an
7 outstanding member of our community who has made many historical and important
8 contributions to Guam’s Arts and Entertainment Industry, and who will be greatly
9 missed; and does further extend our sincere condolences to his family on his passing;
10 and be it further

11 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker and the Chairperson of the Committee on Rules
12 certify, and the Legislative Secretary attest to, the adoption hereof, and that copies of
13 the same be thereafter transmitted to the family of the late Joe “Uncle Tote”
14 Cunningham: Lindsey Cunningham Senecal, Trey Cunningham, Brandon
15 Cunningham, Vivian Reyes, and Cindy Cunningham Ellegood; and to the Honorable
16 Edward J.B. Calvo, *I Maga'lahen Guåhan*.

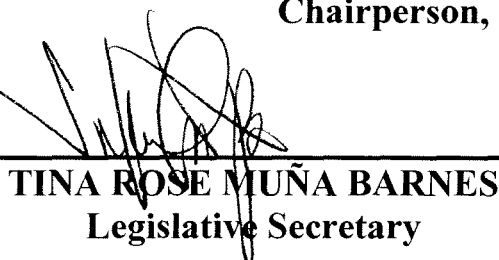
DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY I MINA'TRENTAI UNU NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN ON THIS 25TH DAY OF MAY 2012.



JUDITH T. WON PAT, Ed.D.
Speaker



RORY J. RESPICIO
Chairperson, Committee on Rules



TINA ROSE MUÑA BARNES
Legislative Secretary