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<td>Vicente (ben) C. Pangelinan</td>
<td>RELATIVE TO RECOGNIZING, HONORING AND COMMENDS ROBERT N. CELESTIAL FOR HIS DEDICATION AND COMMITMENT TO THE PEOPLE OF GUAM AND ALL THOSE WHO SUFFER FROM CANCERS ATTRIBUTED TO RADIATION EXPOSURE.</td>
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Resolution No. 89-32 (LS)

Introduced by: Vicente (ben) C. Pangelinan
T. C. Ada
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Frank B. Aguon, Jr.
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Michael F. Q. San Nicolas
Aline A. Yamashita, Ph.D.
Judith T. Won Pat, Ed.D.

Relative to recognizing, honoring and commending Robert N. Celestial for his dedication and commitment to the people of Guam, and all those who suffer from cancers attributed to radiation exposure.

BE IT RESOLVED BY I MINA'TRENTAI DOS NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN:

WHEREAS, as a young man, Mr. Robert N. Celestial served in the United States Army from 1975 to 1983, and was assigned to the 84th Engineers Battalion in Hawaii; and
WHEREAS, in 1977, Robert and his battalion were assigned to Runit Island on Enewetak Atoll in the Republic of the Marshall Islands to clean up post-war debris and build a large concrete dome to entomb contaminated soil and debris from nuclear weapons testings conducted by the United States; and

WHEREAS, unbeknownst to them at the time, this assignment exposed Robert and his battalion to ionizing radiation due to their exposure to the contaminants of the uranium filled bombs that were detonated on and around the islands during the nuclear weapons testing, and;

WHEREAS, these contaminants stem from the United States conducting nuclear weapons testing in 1946-1962 where 67 thermonuclear weapons were detonated in the Pacific region to include Johnston Island, Christmas Island and the Marshall Islands;

WHEREAS, of the 67 detonations, 43 of them were detonated in the Enewetok Atoll of the Marshall Islands; and

WHEREAS, ionizing radiation is unstable and only takes a moment to damage cells, yet it may take years for cancer to develop; thyroid cancers and leukemia are particularly sensitive to ionizing radiation, and the onset of these particular cancers can occur in as little as a few years; other cancers that have been attributed to the exposure of ionizing radiation are lung, skin, breast, and stomach cancer, along with multiple myeloma, and;

WHEREAS, by participating in the clean up of Runit Island, Robert and his battalion comrades were subjected to the same atrocious health effects as the inhabitants of the Marshall Islands and the other onsite participants as well as what the stateside millers and miners had experienced; and

WHEREAS, unlike his battalion comrades, Robert’s health issues were not immediately present, but he has experienced over 20 years of debilitating physical pain and disability; and
WHEREAS, Robert did in-depth research on the serious health issues that befell his comrades and himself, and his findings revealed that nuclear contamination wasn’t confined to the Marshall Islands, and that it is widespread in the region due to exposure to ionizing radiation from nuclear fallout caused by the nuclear weapons testings conducted in the Marshall Islands; and

WHEREAS, Robert compiled compelling evidence that Guam and its inhabitants not only received exposure to nuclear fallout due to the multiple nuclear bomb testings in the Marshall Islands, but also due to the decontamination of U.S. Naval vessels in Guam’s waters off Apra Harbor and Cocos Island Lagoon, from 1946 to 1958; and

WHEREAS, in 1990, the United States government established the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990 (RECA) to compensate those in the continental United States who have been exposed to ionizing radiation due to the uranium mining and milling, or due to onsite participation in the detonation and clean up of the nuclear weapons testings, and those who were downwind of these tests in the Pacific and the continental United States; and

WHEREAS, Robert advocated and fought for the inclusion of Guam as downwinders in the RECA, based on the declassification of documents and the sworn testimony of United States Navy (Retired) Lt. Charles Bert Schreiber, who was the Atomic, Biological, and Chemical Warfare Defense Officer at that time, that Guam was significantly exposed to radiation fallout from Operation Ivy Mike, which was a 10.4 megaton hydrogen bomb that was detonated on October 31, 1952, on the Enewetak Atoll in the Marshall Islands; and

WHEREAS, Guam is located approximately one thousand two hundred (1,200) miles directly west of the nuclear weapons test sites in the Marshall Islands; and
WHERAS, oceanic circulation patterns off of Guam are primarily dominated by northeasterly trade winds along the westward flowing North Pacific Equatorial Current, placing Guam directly and indirectly in the line of exposure to nuclear fallout; and

WHEREAS, nuclear fallout is the effect of the detonation of a nuclear bomb, where radioactive particles and earth debris are released into the atmosphere and fall back down to earth contaminating the air, water and lands thousands of miles from the detonation site; and

WHEREAS, coupled with the declassified information and his extensive research, in 2002 Robert was able to garner the assistance of then Senators Angel L.G. Santos, Carmen Fernandez, and Mark Forbes to execute the Legislature’s Blue Ribbon Panel Committee, composed of Robert Celestial and 11 other citizens of Guam, and chaired by Dr. Chris Perez, which conducted research and adopted findings on Guam’s exposure to radiation; and

WHEREAS, from the work and the results produced by Robert and the Blue Ribbon Panel, the Members of the 27th Guam Legislature moved to pass a resolution that petitioned the United States government to include Guam in the RECA for the just compensation of the unethical bereavement of the island health issues; and

WHEREAS, in 2004 a Guam delegation, composed of Delegate Bordallo, Senator Carmen Fernandez, and Mr. Robert Celestial presented oral testimony and submitted documented evidence of radiation exposure on Guam, before the Committee to Assess the Scientific Information for the Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program, under the auspices of the National Research Council and mandated by Congress; and

WHEREAS, the assessment of the scientific information for the Radiation Exposure Screening and Education Program (RESEP) book (2005) reports that Guam did receive measurable fallout from the atmospheric testing of nuclear
weapons in the Pacific, and that the residents of Guam during that period should be eligible for compensation under RECA as a “downwinder”; and

WHEREAS, a RECA “downwinder” is someone who was exposed to radiation fallout from nuclear weapons testing, and suffer from any of the following illnesses: larynx, thyroid, breast (female/male), small intestines, pancreas, ovary, salivary gland, lung, esophagus, stomach, brain, urinary bladder, bile ducts, liver, colon, and gall bladder cancers, leukemia (other than chronic lymphocytic leukemia), and multiple myeloma lymphomas (other than Hodgkin’s disease); and

WHEREAS, Dr. Robert Haddock, an epidemiologist with the University of Guam, and the Guam Cancer Registry have done extensive research regarding cancer in Micronesia, and report that the most common cancers afflicted by island residents are breast, colorectal, lung, prostate, and

WHEREAS, Senator Tom Udall (D) of New Mexico, along with Congressman Ben Lujan (D) of New Mexico, introduced legislation in 2010 and 2011 to amend RECA in order to expand compensation and to include Guam as a “downwinder”; and

WHEREAS, these measures did not move past their respective committees and died at the end of their respective terms; and

WHEREAS, Robert, along with the people of Guam, continue to wait for fair inclusion in the RECA; and

WHEREAS, over the course of his research and advocacy, Robert has gathered and organized the Pacific Association for Radiation Survivors (PARS), an organization on Guam consisting of island residents and their families who suffer from known cancers related to radiation exposure, and;

WHEREAS, Robert with the support of his family, friends, peers and PARS continue to dedicate his time and resources to educating students, families, and
elected leaders, on Guam, the region, and States, and to advocate for Guam’s inclusion in the RECA; and

WHEREAS, Robert continues to urge the island and nation leaders to recognize that certain cancers that plague the people of Guam are directly related to exposure to ionizing radiation, and that inclusion in RECA is a form of social justice and just compensation for the unethical bereavement of the health of island residents; and

WHEREAS, I Liheslaturan Guåhan, in support of Robert and the findings of the Blue Ribbon Panel have submitted Resolution 73 (2005), Resolution 5 (2007), and Resolution 30-62 (2009), and Resolution 171-31 (2011) to the U.S. Congress and the President of the United States and will continue to petition the United States to extend inclusion of Guam into RECA; and now therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that I Mina’Treñtaí Dos Na Liheslaturan Guåhan does hereby, on behalf of the people of Guam, recognize, honor and commend Robert N. Celestial for his dedication, commitment and undaunting service to the island of Guam; and does further extend Un Dångkolo Na Si Yu’os Ma’åse’ to him for being an inspiration to the people of Guam, and especially to those fighting cancer; and be it further

RESOLVED, that I Liheslaturan Guåhan does further specifically commend and thank Mr. Celestial for his unprecedented research and advocacy work in petitioning the United States government for the social justice that is due to the island; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Speaker certify, and the Legislative Secretary attest to, the adoption hereof, and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted to Mr. Robert N. Celestial; to the Pacific Association for Radiation Survivors (PARS); to the Guam Cancer Research Center; to the Guam Cancer Trust Fund; the Honorable
Congresswoman Madeline Bordallo; and to the Honorable Edward J.B. Calvo, I

Maga’låhen Guåhan.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY I MINA’TRENTAI DOS NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN ON THE 28th DAY OF MARCH 2013

BENJAMIN J.P. CRUZ
Acting-Speaker

TINA ROSE MUÑA BARNES
Legislative Secretary