

**I MINA'TRENTA NA LIHESLATURAN GUAHAN**  
**2010 (SECOND) Regular Session**

May 6 PM 5:06

*D. J. Gutierrez*

Bill No. 331 (COV)

Introduced by:

Committee on Rules, Natural Resources, Federal, Foreign, and Micronesian Affairs  
By request of *I Maga'lahaen Guahan* in accordance with the Organic Act of Guam

**AN ACT RELATIVE TO CHANGING THE OFFICIAL NAME OF GUAM TO ITS NAME IN THE CHAMORRO LANGUAGE, NAMELY "GUAHAN".**

1           **Section 1. Legislative Findings and Intent.**   Guam is referred to as  
2   *Guahan* in the Chamorro language. *Guahan* is "a place that has" i.e., a place of  
3   resources. *Guahan* is all all-encompassing.

4           According to the Guam Historian of the government of Guam, the  
5   etymology of *Guahan* could be derived from the base word, *guaha*. *Guaha* means,  
6   there is, have, exist. The final "n" is a grammatical marker which denotes  
7   "possession off." Thus *guaha* plus the "n" marker for possessive quality implies,  
8   "a place of resources." The "n" grammatical feature of *Guahan* is a similar feature  
9   of most of the Mariana Islands- Saipan, Tinian, Agrigan, Agrihan, Pagan,  
10   Aalamagan , Sarigan, Guguan. Unlike *Guahan*, it is difficult to decipher the base  
11   word Guam or its etymology.

12           Words instill ownership and in most modern proceedings, the word *Guahan*

1 instills indigenous ownership. This is obvious in the historic and cultural  
2 connection of the Chamorro people of Guam to the land, wind and ocean. *Guahan*  
3 is akin to the Hawaiian *Ohana* or *Hui* family and indicative of *inafa'maolek* culture  
4 of the Chamorro people.

5 Guam was predominately referred to as *Guahan* from 1521 until 1898. In  
6 1898, the Treaty of Paris signed by Spain and the United States of American  
7 referred to the island as Guam. Thereafter, a Naval Governor of Guam requested  
8 that the official designation of the island be “Isle of Guam”.

9 *I Liheslatura* finds that *Guahan* represents *I Chamorro* and their way of life.  
10 To truly reflect the Island and her indigenous people, *I Liheslatura* finds that Guam  
11 shall be renamed and designated as *Guahan*.

12 **Section 2.** Guam shall herein after be *Guahan* and shall be the official  
13 designation of the Island. All references to Guam shall be renamed or understood  
14 to refer to *Guahan*.