



PROCLAMATION

NATIONAL CLEAN ENERGY WEEK

September 23-27, 2024

WHEREAS, renewable energy systems, efficient infrastructure and technologies, and public education are keys to the successful transition of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) to a resilient, clean energy economy; and

WHEREAS, consistent with the policy and purpose of the CNMI Environmental Protection Act, to maintain optimal levels of air, land, and water quality in order to protect and preserve the public health and general welfare, clean energy improves public health by reducing air pollution and the environmental impacts that result from fossil fuel use; and

WHEREAS, solar energy is the primary, locally available renewable energy resource in the CNMI; and

WHEREAS, in 2018, the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation launched a multi-phased project to install large solar energy systems at the public hospital on Saipan and the health centers on Rota and Tinian; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, the Public School System began installing solar energy systems at 19 of its public schools and 3 Head Start centers, reducing their reliance on fossil fuel power generation and shifting to on-site renewable energy systems; and

WHEREAS, in 2022, the CNMI had approximately 5 megawatts of net metered customer-sited solar powered generation, comprising 11% of the islands' total electricity generation; and

WHEREAS, in 2024, the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation is developing a large 20-megawatt solar photovoltaic facility with a battery electric storage system on Saipan, which when completed will be the first utility-scale solar farm in the CNMI; and

WHEREAS, the Northern Marianas College will deploy solar energy systems for all of its new buildings, which will not only lower the institution's utility expenses but also help keep higher education affordable in the CNMI; and

WHEREAS, the Office of Planning and Development, the Department of Public Works - Solid Waste Management, the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy through the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory conducted a Renewable Energy Back-up Power Feasibility Study in 2022 - 2024 to chart a path toward clean, continuous, and reliable energy solutions from solar power with battery storage for the Marpi landfill on Saipan, and the CNMI government is now pursuing funding for implementation, with plans for similar renewable energy systems for waste management facilities on Tinian and Rota; and

WHEREAS, solar photovoltaic systems have been or will be installed at other public facilities around the CNMI, including park pavilions, libraries, government offices, community centers, the correctional facility, public housing, and streets and pathways; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth Office of Transit Authority, under the Office of the Governor, has begun its initiative to electrify transit buses, which will significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality, and enhance public transportation efficiency in the CNMI; and

WHEREAS, 500 Sails, a nonprofit organization dedicated to reviving, promoting, and preserving the maritime cultural traditions of the Marianas, in 2024 launched a regenerative tourism initiative providing 100% fossil fuel-free ocean travel within Saipan Lagoon for visitors and residents; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Public Works - Division of Energy promotes clean energy and electrification initiatives, and is committed to advancing energy conservation and efficiency in the CNMI through programs that aid citizens in adopting energy-saving measures such as replacement of inefficient lighting and appliances with energy-efficient and Energy Star certified products; and

WHEREAS, through a \$3.1 million climate pollution reduction grant awarded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 2024, the Saipan Mayor's Office will assist residents, government agencies, and small businesses in replacing approximately 150,000 inefficient light bulbs and lamps with efficient LED lighting systems throughout Saipan, saving money, reducing reliance on fossil fuels, and cutting carbon emissions by an estimated 12,000 metric tons per year; and

WHEREAS, members of the CNMI's private sector have made significant investments in clean energy infrastructure, such as the region's largest privately-funded solar covered parking lot at the Marianas Business Plaza, the CNMI's first public electric vehicle charging station by Pacifica Insurance, and solar photovoltaic systems at numerous businesses throughout the CNMI; and

WHEREAS, CNMI residents are increasingly shifting to solar energy technology in their homes, including solar water heaters, solar air conditioning, solar lighting, and full-scale solar photovoltaic systems with battery storage; and

WHEREAS, the CNMI Green Growth Initiative, launched in 2024, is a partnership of public, private, and nonprofit sector entities and individuals working together to realize the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including goals for clean energy, climate action, and sustainable communities, through locally driven, culturally informed solutions; and

WHEREAS, through the Office of the Governor, the Green Growth Initiative, and a climate pollution reduction planning grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the CNMI released its first Priority Climate Action Plan in 2024, identifying electric power generation and transportation as the CNMI's largest sources of greenhouse gas emissions and setting forth priority measures to reduce emissions, create good jobs, improve air quality, and transition the CNMI to a clean energy economy; and

WHEREAS, the CNMI is a signatory to the Blue Planet Climate Agreement, joining other island states and territories in committing to the goal of 100% renewable energy by 2045; and

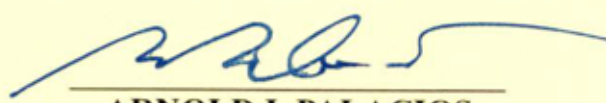
WHEREAS, National Clean Energy Week encourages increased organizational and individual support of innovative solutions that address America's economic and energy needs, and presents an opportunity for municipalities and individuals to implement the cleanest, lowest-emitting energy technologies available;


NOW, THEREFORE, I, ARNOLD I. PALACIOS, Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and **I, DAVID M. APATANG**, Lt. Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands by virtue of the authority vested in us by the Constitution and Laws of the Commonwealth, do hereby proclaim **September 23-27, 2024** as

NATIONAL CLEAN ENERGY WEEK

We call upon the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, public and private entities, businesses, civic and educational groups, and the media, to celebrate the Northern Mariana Islands' advancement towards a clean energy future.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands on this **26th** day of **September 2024**.


ARNOLD I. PALACIOS
Governor


DAVID M. APATANG
Lieutenant Governor