

March 17, 2017

Honorable Therese M. Terlaje
Vice-Speaker, Committee on Culture and Justice
Suite 201
155 Hesler Place
Hagåtña, Guam 96910

RE: Resolution 51 -34 (LS)

Dear Senators of the 34th Guam Legislature,

My name is Connie Rose Lujan Sayama and I am a native inhabitant of Guåhan. I am submitting this written testimony in support of Resolution 51 -34 (LS), on measures to appeal against the ruling of the District Court of Guam in the Davis v. Guam case, and in defending the rights of the native inhabitants of Guam.

Today, we stand up tall, with our right hands over our hearts, as we recite the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. Thereafter, we struggle to find the words to our Guam Hymn, the Fanoghe Chamorro. Lastly, we end with our Guam pledge, struggling again, as we murmur the Inifresi. As we hoist our Guam flag, the Seal of Guam is **halted**, as the U.S. flag is risen first, and as the U.S. flag is lowered, for a short period, our Guam seal sways independently before it is lowered, and is **halted** once again. For too long, our Chamorro people have been stripped of their inherent rights as indigenous people of Guam. Once again, we were **halted**, as Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood ruled in favor of the U.S. constitution, a constitution that is not our own.

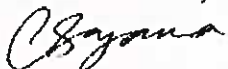
The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Article 3, states, "Indigenous peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development." Guam's political status plebiscite created a path toward self-determination for Guam's future, a decision native inhabitants have never been a part of, due to centuries of colonization.

The National Association of Social Workers, in their policy statement on Sovereignty, Rights, and Well-Being of Indigenous Peoples, "condemns oppressive acts by administering powers of government that exploit indigenous peoples," and supports, "the rights of indigenous peoples in their efforts to gain health and self-determination." By the hands of colonizers, the Chamorro people have endured the exploitation of their land and peoples, all of whom have inferiorized their inherent rights as indigenous people of Guam. Today, is no different story.

"If we jump too quickly to the universal formulation, 'all lives matter,' then we miss the fact that [Chamorro] people have not yet been included in the idea of 'all lives.'" By ruling in favor of an all-inclusive vote, we dismiss the fact that the Chamorro people were the "all," first. As the first peoples of Guåhan, these are our inherent rights, which can never be seized.

Senators of the 34th Guam Legislature, by supporting this resolution, you are recognizing that this Davis v. Guam ruling is a social injustice to the native inhabitants of Guam, and you are supporting their rights to self-determination. I support Resolution 51 -34 (LS), on measures to appeal against the ruling of the District Court of Guam in the Davis v. Guam case, and in defending the rights of the native inhabitants of Guam. Thank you for your consideration.

Si Yu'us Ma'ase,



Connie Rose Lujan Sayama, BSW