

I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No.	Sponsor	Title	Date Intro	Date of Presentation	Date Adopted	Date Referred	Referred to	PUBLIC HEARING DATE	DATE AUTHORS REPORT FILED	NOTES
214-38 (COR)	Telo T. Taitague Sabrina Salas Matanane Joe S. San Agustin Christopher M. Dueñas Frank F. Blas, Jr. William A. Parkinson Jesse A. Lujan Shelly V. Calvo Therese M. Terlaje Tina Rose Muña-Barnes Chris Barnett Sabina Flores Perez Vincent A.V. Borja V. Anthony Ada Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao	Relative to Recognizing Victim Advocates Reaching Out (VARO) on the Occasion of Its Forty-Fourth (44th) Anniversary; and to Congratulate Them on the Occasion of Its Fifth (5th) Annual Purple Gala; and Commending Its Staff, Volunteers, Board of Directors, and Community Partners for Their Continued Commitment to Advocacy, Crisis Intervention, Education, and Support for Victims and Survivors Throughout Guam.	9/4/26 10:17 a.m.	9/16/26 2:00 p.m.						

I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2026 (SECOND) Regular Session

Resolution No. 214-38 (COR)

Introduced by:

Telo T. Taitague 
Sabrina Salas Matanane 
Joe S. San Agustin 
Christopher M. Dueñas 
Frank Blas Jr. 
William A. Parkinson 
Jesse A. Lujan 
Shelly V. Calvo 
Therese M. Terlaje 
Tina Rose Muña-Barnes 
Chris Barnett 
Sabina Flores Perez 
Vincent A. V. Borja 
V. Anthony Ada 
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao 

Relative to Recognizing Victim Advocates Reaching Out (VARO) on the Occasion of Its Forty-Fourth (44th) Anniversary; and to Congratulate Them on the Occasion of Its Fifth (5th) Annual Purple Gala; and Commending Its Staff, Volunteers, Board of Directors, and Community Partners for Their Continued Commitment to Advocacy, Crisis Intervention, Education, and Support for Victims and Survivors Throughout Guam.

1 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES OF I
2 MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN:

3 WHEREAS, Victim Advocates Reaching Out (VARO) is a Guam-based
4 nonprofit organization whose history dates back to 1982, when Beverly Paulk and

1 U.S. Navy psychiatrist Gene Tinelli recognized the need for an organized community
2 response for victims of sexual assault and abuse; the organization was originally
3 established as Counseling Advocates Reaching Out (CARO), bringing together
4 civilian and military volunteers and coordinating with hospitals, law enforcement, and
5 the court system; and

6 **WHEREAS**, the first CARO volunteer group consisted of twenty-five (25)
7 trained individuals who provided support and a safe space for victims; as the
8 organization's role grew, its services expanded beyond its original mission, and in
9 1989 CARO became Victim Advocates Reaching Out (VARO), reflecting its broader
10 commitment to victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, child
11 abuse, human trafficking, and other forms of violence and trauma that affect
12 individuals and families on Guam; and

13 **WHEREAS**, VARO was established in response to the growing need for victim
14 advocacy services on the island, recognizing that victims of crime often face
15 significant emotional, psychological, and financial challenges in the aftermath of their
16 experiences; and

17 **WHEREAS**, since its inception, VARO has provided a comprehensive range of
18 services aimed at supporting victims through every stage of their recovery, including
19 crisis intervention, advocacy, a 24-hour crisis hotline, emergency shelter and housing
20 support, crisis counseling and therapeutic services, safety planning, legal advocacy,
21 and support during court proceedings, ensuring that no victim is left without the help
22 and resources they need; and

23 **WHEREAS**, VARO has played a critical role in bridging the gap between
24 victims and essential community services by collaborating with local law
25 enforcement, legal professionals, healthcare providers, government agencies, and
26 other organizations to create a network of care that addresses the immediate and
27 long-term needs of victims; and

1 **WHEREAS**, through ongoing outreach, education, and advocacy efforts,
2 VARO has raised public awareness of the challenges faced by victims, actively
3 engaging the community in conversations about violence, victimization, and the steps
4 that can be taken to reduce and prevent these crimes; and

5 **WHEREAS**, VARO has been instrumental in empowering victims to regain
6 control over their lives by offering programs that focus on healing and recovery,
7 helping them navigate the legal system, secure restraining orders, and find safe and
8 stable housing, while also advocating for stronger protections and policies to
9 safeguard their rights; and

10 **WHEREAS**, over the years, VARO has expanded its services to meet the
11 evolving needs of Guam’s victims, including providing culturally sensitive services
12 that take into account the unique social and cultural dynamics of the island
13 community, ensuring that every victim, regardless of background, has access to the
14 care they deserve; and

15 **WHEREAS**, volunteerism remains central to VARO’s mission, with trained
16 volunteer advocates continuing to serve as a cornerstone of its work; the organization
17 conducts training for individuals interested in becoming advocates and relies on
18 partnerships, grants, fundraising, community support, and its dedicated volunteers,
19 approximately thirty (30) active volunteers as of August 2026, to maintain its ability
20 to offer life-saving support free of charge; and

21 **WHEREAS**, VARO is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and an
22 Executive Director, and has become a cornerstone of victim support on Guam,
23 offering more than just crisis intervention, it provides hope, safety, and a path toward
24 healing, with a vision of creating a community where every victim has the opportunity
25 to rebuild and thrive; and

26 **WHEREAS**, in October 2026, VARO celebrates its Forty-Fourth (44th)
27 Anniversary, recognizing more than four decades of service and the many volunteers,

1 advocates, board members, staff, community partners, donors, and supporters who
2 have sustained its mission; and

3 **WHEREAS**, on Saturday, October 10, 2026, VARO will host its Fifth (5th)
4 Annual Purple Gala, “Bloom in Hope,” its signature fundraising event bringing
5 together community members, partners, and supporters to help sustain the
6 organization’s programs and services for victims and survivors throughout Guam; and
7 now therefore, be it

8 **RESOLVED**, that the Committee on Rules of *I Mina'trentai Ocho Na*
9 *Liheslaturan Guåhan* does hereby, on behalf of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* and the people
10 of Guam, recognize Victim Advocates Reaching Out (VARO) on the occasion of its
11 Forty-Fourth (44th) Anniversary; and commend its staff, volunteers, Board of
12 Directors, and community partners for their continued commitment to advocacy, crisis
13 intervention, education, and support for victims and survivors throughout Guam; and
14 be it further

15 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker and the Chairperson of the Committee on Rules
16 certify, and the Legislative Secretary attest to, the adoption hereof, and that copies of
17 the same be thereafter transmitted to Victim Advocates Reaching Out (VARO), and to
18 the Honorable Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero, *I Maga'hågan Guåhan*.

**DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON RULES OF
I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN ON THE [REDACTED] DAY
OF [REDACTED] MONTH 2026.**

Frank F. Blas, Jr.
Speaker

V. Anthony Ada
Chairperson, Committee on Rules

Sabrina Salas Matanane
Legislative Secretary