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For Immediate Release

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CNMI LAW ENFORCEMENT SUBMITS HIDTA PETITION

Office of the Attorney General, Saipan – A collaborative effort between CNMI local law enforcement agencies comprising of the Office of the Attorney General, the Department of Public Safety, Division of Customs Service and the Commonwealth Ports Police resulted in a submission on July 3, 2018, a Petition for the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) designation with the National Office of Drug Control Policy in Washington, D.C.

The HIDTA program was created by Congress in accordance with the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988 and is administered by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). Federal financial assistance is provided to federal, state, local and tribal law enforcement agencies and territories operating in regions determined to be affected by drug trafficking and aims to reduce illegal drug trafficking and production.

Attorney General Edward Manibusan states, “The CNMI has seen an increase in the use, manufacturing, and trafficking of illegal drugs. The illicit trade heavily impacts the CNMI by increasing violent crimes, placing families in jeopardy and perpetuating fear in the community.” He continues, “As each branch of the Commonwealth government and community stakeholders have made efforts to address the drug problems, the CNMI is limited in resources and due to our remote location, we are faced with unique obstacles.” “Given HIDTA designation and federal support and collaboration, the Petitioners will be able to rise above the challenges in the fight against drug importation, interdiction, and prosecution,” the AG concludes.

The Petition was made with the support of CNMI Governor Ralph DLG. Torres, Senate President Arnold I. Palacios, US House of Representative Congressman Gregorio Kilili Sablan, Secretary of Finance Larrisa Larson, and Drug Court Manager TaAnn Kabua-Demapan.

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