

CNMI Legislative Report
164th Council Meeting
Oct. 19 to 23, 2015
Gov. H. Rex Lee Auditorium
(Fale Laumei), Utulei, American Samoa

1. Public Law 19-3, which was introduced by Sen. Palacios and other senators, was signed into law on August 14, 2015. The law amended the Commonwealth Price Freeze Act to allow the Governor to declare a “price freeze”, which shall last until the governor rescinds the price freeze, or the declaration of emergency or disaster is terminated. Upon the declaration of a price freeze, all prices of items for sale, and housing rentals including apartments and condos, shall be frozen until the price freeze is rescinded or terminated. In the past the Price Freeze Act did not allow the Governor to declare a price freeze for more than ten days during a state of major disaster.

2. Public Law 19-4, which was introduced by Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero, was signed into law on September 3, 2015. The law exempted non-commercial appliances not intended for resale, including but not limited to freezers, refrigerators, washers, dryers, and power generators from excise tax for the duration of a declaration of disaster. The exemption is valid for the duration of the declaration of disaster or within thirty days of said declaration, whichever period is longer.

The new law also suspended the Environmental Beautification Tax during the duration of the declaration of disaster.

3. Public Law 19-5, which was introduced by Representative Joseph Lee Pan Guerrero, was signed into law on September 8, 2015. The law prohibits boating while under the influence of alcohol or controlled substance. The bill proposes to amend existing law which is confusing and difficult to enforce, thus making the waters of the Commonwealth safer for fishermen, swimmers, divers, snorkelers and tourists.