

UFISINAN I MAGA'HÅGA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

LOURDES A. LEON GUERRERO
MAGA'HÅGA • GOVERNOR



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April 6, 2020

Honorable Mike Pence
Vice President of the United States of America
Chairman, COVID-19 Task Force
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. Vice President:

I am writing to raise concerns regarding the continuing influx of citizens to Guam from the Freely Associated States (FAS) of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau.

As you know, along with being cultural neighbors to Guam, the FAS have a unique political relationship with the United States that is governed by the Compacts of Free Association. A benefit of such Compact is the privilege of migrating, visa free, from their home countries to the United States for the purposes of education or employment.

In accordance with Executive Orders that I have executed due the discovery of COVID-19 and community spread, all schools on Guam have been closed until the end of the school year, only essential businesses are operating, and stay-at-home directives have been issued. Our economy is currently in a downturn; we no longer have tourists visiting, hotels have closed along with other supporting small businesses and because of this there are no job openings.

The two reasons for the Compact's free migration provisions currently do not exist on Guam, therefore the reasons for FAS citizens to travel here at this time are diminished.

However, during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the FAS have implemented travel policies that disallow their citizens from returning to their respective country, yet continue to allow migration from their countries to the U.S. under the migration provisions of the Compacts. This is very concerning for Guam.

Though we have implemented many measures to curtail the community spread of COVID-19, to include a mandatory fourteen day quarantine for anyone entering Guam and mandatory

quarantine for passengers using Guam as a transit point for another destination. We cannot use limited resources to quarantine FAS citizens who become stranded on Guam because they are not able to return to their country, nor can we quarantine those FAS citizens who are allowed to leave their country utilizing the migration provisions of the Compacts.

For the life of the Compacts, Guam has become home for many FAS citizens seeking to improve their futures but in times of a public health emergency, migration limits must be enforced by the US Government.

We are aware that United Airlines will conduct an *Island Hopper* flight in mid-April that will travel from Guam thru the region to Hawaii and back stopping on 7 islands with only 3 islands Kosrae, Guam and Hawaii allowing for disembarking passengers. In addition to the aforementioned scheduled flights, we have also been informed that Palau and the FSM are also looking into chartering flights from their countries to Guam, adding another level of out-migration in times of a public health emergency.

During this COVID-19 pandemic, I am respectfully requesting that the COVID-19 Task Force provide guidance to the Departments of State, Homeland Security, and Interior to intervene on this matter of continuing travel from the FAS to Guam. The U.S. Government, under the Compacts, has the authority to institute screening measures to ensure that allowable migration is consistent with the Compacts of Free Association; I support and encourage this action.

Senseremente,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero', written in a cursive style.

LOURDES A. LEON GUERRERO

Maga'hāgan Guåhan
Governor of Guam

cc via email: *Sigundo Maga'lāhen Guåhan*