



Office of the Speaker **THERESE M. TERLAJE**

I Mina'trentai Sais na Liheslaturan Guåhan | 36th Guam Legislature
Committee on Health, Land, Justice and Culture

Guam Legislature: Prioritize Funds for direct assistance to the people, critical infrastructure, and workforce development

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (May 7, 2021 – Hagåtña, Guam) Today, the 36th Guam Legislature sent a letter signed by all 15 senators to the Governor with a collective list of priorities for the anticipated \$664 M from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP). The priorities listed for the ARP funds focus on (1) direct assistance to individuals and families most impacted by the pandemic, (2) expanding healthcare services, (3) investment in infrastructure and technology that will spur economic growth, affordable housing and development, (4) workforce training and diversification, and student aid to build the skills of our workers especially in areas that are critical for economic recovery and healthcare, and (5) upgrades and streamlining of government services.

This priority list does not increase government positions or wages, is separate from the FY 2022 budget, and does not include a proposed allocation of separate federal funds, including \$278M for GDOE from the ARP.

“We are presenting the Governor an opportunity to unite with the entire Legislature on general priorities so that going forward, we will put all of our energy into implementation instead of confrontation,” stated Speaker Therese Terlaje.

Speaker Terlaje and Minority Leader Duenas concurred in a joint statement, *“The American Rescue Plan funds have the potential to truly change people’s lives through direct assistance during this recovery period, upgrades to our health care system, and providing infrastructure to areas that have been without roads, water and sewers for decades. My colleagues and I look forward to discussing our priorities with the administration in good faith and with the hope that we can work together to ensure the funds are best utilized to address the island’s immediate needs as well as its long-standing issues.”*

Some highlights from the Legislature’s ARP priority listing are:

DIRECT ASSISTANCE TO THE INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES – TOTAL: \$68,000,000

Implementation of Public Law 35-136 - the Recovery Income Support and Empowerment (RISE) Program: \$30,000,000 - To provide direct payments to eligible Guam residents impacted by the public health emergency through the implementation of the RISE Act. Eligible individuals will receive a one-time payment of \$800 and joint filers will receive \$1600 as described in P.L. 35-136.

Small Business Pandemic Assistance Program and Guam Economic Development Authority (GEDA) programs: \$35,000,000 - Funding for the Small Business Pandemic Assistance Program to provide direct assistance to businesses negatively impacted by the pandemic; and to develop additional programs or opportunities for the creation of new small businesses and to encourage economic growth.

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EXPANDING HEALTHCARE SERVICES - TOTAL: \$233,156,322

Guam Memorial Hospital (GMH): \$22,000,000 for existing hospital; \$200,000,000 for new hospital - To address urgent infrastructure repairs to the existing public hospital to ensure safety in patient care and compliance with CMS mandates. Advance funding for the new public hospital.

INFRASTRUCTURE AND TECHNOLOGY UPGRADES - TOTAL: \$341,124,678

Guam Waterworks Authority (GWA): \$52,000,000 - Funding to avert immediate rate increases for ratepayers and to repair existing pipelines, connect sewer lines to outlying areas and tracts of land which are not currently on-grid, and for the expansion of the septic tank elimination program to protect the Northern Aquifer Lens from potential leaching and contamination.

Department of Public Works (DPW): \$30,000,000 - To primarily repair Guam's roads, advance the Village Streets Master Plan and fund related projects, equipment, supplies and materials; and to fund delayed highway and infrastructure projects to promote commerce and transportation throughout Guam.

Guam Customs and Quarantine Agency (GCQA): \$25,000,000 - To assist GCQA in light of the financial shortfall in the GCQA fund and contractual services, to include various service and communications contracts, maintenance of systems, Drug Dog Detector Unit related expenses, scanners and fuel experienced due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Additionally, the funding will aid the Agency in becoming an established and reliable source of revenue for the People of Guam, and the reinforcement of drug interdiction and invasive species efforts in partnership with the Port Authority of Guam.

Department of Land Management (DLM): \$15,000,000 - To improve the public's access to land information and to assist the public in swiftly obtaining and securing land titles and land registration information through more government land surveys and a modernized Title Search Web Service System at the Department of Land Management. The upgrades to the data systems at DLM will support the timely review and actions necessary for homeowners, developers, businesses, and regulatory agencies to promote meaningful and sustainable development for the community.

Chamorro Land Trust Commission (CLTC): \$25,000,000 - To bring in long awaited water and sewer infrastructure to CLTC properties to support the building of affordable homes for families and allow agricultural and economic diversification. This infusion of infrastructure to large tracts will encourage the development of affordable and permanent housing and assist with the establishment of additional business activity in parts of Guam currently underutilized.

WORKFORCE TRAINING/DIVERSIFICATION AND DIRECT STUDENT AID - TOTAL: \$18,500,000

Department of Labor (DOL): \$3,000,000 - To provide services to the unemployed as well as mitigate unemployment fraud; and for the planning and development of a local unemployment program, a study of the workers' compensation program, and the expansion of GDOL services available for displaced workers to search

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for employment. GDOL will play a main role in rebuilding the economy and making sure there is a robust labor force with a diversified skill set.

Guam Community College (GCC): \$7,000,000 - For the advancement of GCC'S Apprenticeship Program to develop and train Guam's workforce to meet industry needs, especially in areas that are critical for economic recovery and healthcare.

University of Guam (UOG): \$7,000,000 - For direct financial aid to students in need through the Student Financial Assistance Program and to increase scholarships for the nursing program, social work program, other health related programs, teaching programs, and Protech scholarships for medical school.

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Attached is the 36th Guam Legislature's letter to the Governor.

For more information, please contact Speaker Therese M. Terlaje's office at (671) 472-3586 or via e-mail at senatorterlajeguam@gmail.com.