



SENATOR CHRIS DUEÑAS

I MINA'TRENTAI SIETE NA LIHESLATORAN GUÅHAN

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 17, 2023

SENATOR DUEÑAS INTRODUCES BILL NO. 7-37 (COR) THAT ENHANCES BILL NO. 11-36 (COR) IN HIS PROMISE TO CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR YOUR RIGHTS IN THE 37TH GUAM LEGISLATURE

Bill No. 7-37 (COR) will help address major issues brought up during Governor Lou Leon Guerrero's nearly three (3) year Public Health Emergency.

(Hagatña, Guam) - On January 6, 2023, Governor Lou Leon Guerreo released a Special Address to the public stating that her declared Public Health Emergency will end at 12:00AM, January 7, 2023. In her address, she states, *"We are working with our federal partners to ensure that measures are in place to continue the provision of the emergency allotment for SNAP households to address the food insecurity experienced by these families. Consistent with the advice of the administering federal agency, I will be issuing a separate emergency declaration for this limited purpose."* - Governor Leon Guerrero

After nearly three (3) years of extended public health emergencies: local businesses have been shut down, crime rate has risen and drugs have doubled in plaguing our island. For the Governor to deny any of this, I encourage her to come out of Adelup and to walk the streets of our people! In the letter from Governor Leon Guerrero to Senator Moylan she stated that she does not play political games with the lives of our people yet somehow managed to end the public health emergency after her inauguration for a second term. According to her office's most recent JIC Release on January 9, 2023: **Report Positive COVID-19 At-home Test Results to DPHSS; Cumulative COVID-19 Test Results: 224 New Cases Reported January 4-9; Nine Hospitalized; Three COVID-19-related Fatalities Reported.**

When Covid-19 first entered our island, our streets and our people went silent...and once the numbers were announced at three digits, our residents stayed indoors for fear of their lives. So I ask our governor, what was different then? Our people deserve an answer. The businesses who had to shut down due to lack of operations deserve an answer. The families who made the tough decision to relocate due a failing economy deserve an

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answer. The individuals who found comfort in alcohol and drug abuse during forced isolation deserve an answer! We all deserve an answer, Governor.

These Public Health Emergencies *could have* ended long ago and other measures could have been put in place to aid our people in recovery. So, today, I introduced Bill No. 7-37 (COR) that, if enacted, would help address major issues Republican Senators James Moylan, Tony Ada, Frank Blas Jr., Telo Taitague and Joanne Brown along with Speaker Therese Terlaje, brought up during your three (3) years long Public Health Emergency. Bill No. 7-37 will allow the Legislature to *end* a Governor's Public Health Emergency declaration with a majority vote.

"I want to thank Governor Lou Leon Guerrero for acknowledging that a public health emergency can end without risking SNAP benefits and other emergency necessities. The Governor's first Executive Order of her second term clearly demonstrates that these issues could be addressed individually just as she stated through her Special Address to the public on January 6, 2023. This is the same action other states have taken a year ago when we first sought to end the declaration and why Bill No. 11-36 (COR) was so important and why this newly enhanced bill is still necessary." said Senator Dueñas.

[Click here to read a letter from Senator Dueñas to Governor Lou Leon Guerrero - April 4, 2022](#)

"Hawaii has removed all the unnecessary mandates while keeping the much needed aid for their people intact. I see no reason why our island can't do the same. Our people have lived with this long enough. It is time to get our island moving and back to normal." - Senator Dueñas.

[Click here to read a letter from Senator Moylan to Governor Lou Leon Guerrero - April 7, 2022](#)

"...it is evidently clear that the Governor of Guam can indeed sign an E.O. addressing a specific emergency, such as food insecurity, the need of the National Guard, or nursing shortages, to assure that any federal funding is not jeopardized for these necessities. (...cont) I recommend that your administration review the E.O. signed by Governor Ige (I have attached a copy) and draft an E.O. to assure that the SNAP



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funding is not paused if lawmakers do indeed end the emergency declaration.” - Senator Moylan

[Click here to read a letter from Governor Lou Leon Guerrero to Senator Moylan - April 9, 2022](#)

“I cannot speak to the considerations Governor Ige took into account when structuring Hawaii’s relevant public health emergencies, but I can speak to the factors I take into account in structuring Guam’s. My actions have always been guided by science, fact, and data. I do not play political games with the lives of our people.” - Governor Lou Leon Guerrero

Below are reference links on the attempt to override Governor Lou Leon Guerrero’s veto of Bill No. 11-36:

Regular Session, September 30, 2022:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3Ikbg4F2o4

Timestamps:

37:28 Voting on Vetoed Bill No. 11-36 (COR)

Remarks Re: Vetoed Bill No. 11-36 (COR):

41:32 Remarks from Senator Duenas

47:36 Remarks from Senator Brown

56:12 Remarks from Senator Ada

1:00:28 Remarks from Senator Blas

1:06:31 Remarks from Speaker Terlaje

END OF RELEASE#####