

UFISINAN I MAGA'HÅGA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

LOURDES A. LEON GUERRERO
MAGA'HÅGA • GOVERNOR



JOSHUA F. TENORIO
SIGUNDO MAGA'LÁHI • LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

February 6, 2019

The Honorable David Bernhardt
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Bernhardt:

I am writing to alert you to a serious situation with respect to implementation of the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act, P.L. 114-328, Title XVII. It is my understanding that the Department of the Treasury is claiming that it is unable to issue final award payments for adjudicated claims in accordance with the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act.

As you may know, redressing atrocities committed against the people of Guam during the island's occupation by Imperial Japanese Forces during World War II had been pursued by each of Guam's Delegate to the House of Representatives beginning with the late former Delegate Antonio Won Pat. Former Delegate Robert Underwood was successful in passing P.L. 107-333, the Guam War Claims Review Commission Act, which was appointed by the Secretary of the Interior to review the historical record of Guam's occupation, determine if parity was paid to Guam's residents, and advise on any additional compensation necessary to achieve parity for death, personal injury, forced labor, forced march, and internment. The report by this federal Commission was the basis for the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act.

Since 1947 and up until the enactment of P.L. 114-328, Guam's local legislators, governors, and each of Guam's congressional delegates have been advocating to resolve this issue.

I am deeply concerned that as we believed parity and closure were near for Guam's remaining survivors, an interpretation of P.L. 114-328 may now necessitate additional congressional action which will cause further delays. This year marks the 75th Anniversary of Guam's liberation by U.S. forces from Japan and the ability to provide closure is long overdue.

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My office has been communicating with the Office of Insular Affairs over the past several days. We have discussed administrative remedies which we believe can be exercised to avoid any further delay in the implementation of Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act. I understand that any administrative solution to this situation would take your direct interest and I respectfully request yours, along with Assistant Secretary Doug Domenech's, assistance.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Senseramente,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lourdes" being more prominent.

Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero
Governor of Guam