

A. REAL ESTATE INDUSTRY RELATED ISSUES

1. Increase in Real Estate Tax Rate for Properties with Improvement valued at \$1 million or more. Public Law 35-1 was signed into law by the Governor on March 2, 2019 to correct an error in the previous law created by the 34th Legislature to make clear that the law imposes an additional 100% tax levy on Guam real property with property improvements valued at one million (\$1 million) or more. This additional tax levy has created a severe financial burden to a certain class of property owners and most especially to residential and commercial tenants whose rental spaces happen to be in buildings valued at \$1 million or more, being that the additional cost of the tax levy will most surely be passed on to the tenants. This tax levy places the financial burden on the backs of middle- and low-income wage earners and owners of small businesses.

Do you support the repeal of this law?

Support Oppose Undecided

Please Explain your choice:

- I voted against the bill increasing this tax provision and was not present during the vote on the technical fix because that was the day my mother died. In considering a repeal I would look at how many properties truly are being used for housing of middle and low income wage earners, and other data, and whether repeal of this provision will in fact benefit those tenants through a reduction of rent. I will also consider how much more local and federal subsidies will be provided for rental and utility assistance for low and middle income families.
- For small businesses we have done better than repeal the 4-5% GRT, we reduced it down to 3% for 90% of businesses. .
- **2. Improving the Building Permit Process. Property owners seeking to construct improvements on their property as well as contractors engaged to construct such improvements are confronted by a building permit application and occupancy permit process that is rife with unreasonable and unresponsive review periods, potentially corrupt communication with individual agency review personnel, unreasonable, inconsistent, and shifting permit requirements and standards of certain review agencies, and a frustrating linear review process.**

What will you do to improve and expedite the building permit application and the occupancy permit issuance process?

Please Explain:

- I passed Bill 46-36 which extended the validity of a building permit for a period up to 12 months before it lapses and is voided. Industry professionals supported the effort and shared stories regarding delays in construction and difficulties in obtaining building permits and occupancy permits. The bill was also supported by DPW and is consistent with the intent to reform and streamline the permitting process.
- In addition, my committee held oversight to uncover any issues with the delay in the processing of applications with the GLUC. I discovered that the delays were with agency

review and reporting, and obtained commitments from the GLUC, Agency Review Committee, and the Chief Planner for timelier review.

- I worked to expedite the approval of workforce housing when a backlog occurred during the pandemic.
- I ensured DLM maintained operations during the shutdown.
- In my oversight I closely monitor the progress of the Task Force in implementing electronic applications which facilitate concurrent agency review and shortens the review period.
- I will continue to address systemic issues in order to foster a business climate that nurtures development and investment while not compromising the safety of the community and our land and water resources.

3. Housing Shortage. Guam is experiencing a severe housing shortage due to a variety of reasons. These include the rising cost of construction labor and materials, rising mortgage/construction loan interest rates, unresponsive, stifling and potentially corrupt build permit application process, increasing restrictive environmental regulations, and conditions placed on local housing development by competing and more lucrative military construction contracts, and H2 visa labor restrictions.

What legislative action will you pursue with commitment and purpose to address/resolve Guam's severe housing shortage?

Please Explain:

- I recently passed the landmark *Guam Undersea Access for Homes Act (GUAHA)* authorizing the CLTC to license submerged lands for telecommunications expansion. This bill was supported by the telecommunications industry because it encourages fair and responsible practices for landing submarine cables on Guam. The revenues for these licenses go directly toward infrastructure for residential expansion, providing resources for surveys, water, power, and sewer which are critically needed to get large tracts subdivided into more residential lots and more families into sanitary and safe homes on CLTC properties. While previous licenses were undervaluing these submerged lands as low as \$5000 annually, my bill could realize millions for housing development in the near future.
- In the last few budgets and in continuing discussions with GCC, ensured additional manpower development funding to train surveyors and local construction workforce.
- I continue to work with GWA and CLTC to ensure federal infrastructure funds and local appropriations in the budget bill are dedicated to install sewer to large tracts of land that can be further divided, increasing the number of lots available for housing.
- I support the expansion of GEPA rules to add additional types of safe waste disposal that can be used on a property in order for homes to be built where sewer is not available

4. Repeal of Business Privilege Tax (BPT)Rate Increase. In March 2018, Public Law 34-87 increased the BPT tax rate from 4% to 5%. The law stated that the increase was "temporary" and was necessary to combat the loss of revenue caused by Federal tax cuts, but with no sunset date to the increase specified. This BPT Tax increase has resulted in significant

increases in construction labor and materials and generally adversely affects the entire business environment in Guam. Despite many proposals to repeal this increase considered by subsequent legislatures, private sector businesses effectively paralyzed by Covid 19 operation restrictions, and a change in President's political party, the rate remains at 5%.

Do you support the repeal of the BPT Rate increase and return the rate to 4%? Support
 Oppose Undecided

Please Explain:

- My record is clear. I will continue to fight for our small businesses and promote an atmosphere of entrepreneurial spirit ensuring their sustainability by supporting policy that creates more opportunities and jobs. I opposed the tax increases in the 34th Guam Legislature. I authored policy and supported efforts to roll back BPT in the 35th Guam Legislature. I moved to reduce the BPT from 5% to 4% during debate on BPT exemptions for small businesses, which I also supported. My motion failed to garner majority support. I also lent my strong support this term to the granting of exemptions down to 3% for over 90% of businesses on Guam. This exemption is bigger than the repeal of the increase from 4% to 5% for most businesses.

B. GENERAL GOVERNMENT

1. Full-time or Part-Time Legislature. The Guam Legislature over the past many decades has been a "full-time" legislature. Some candidates aspire to a senatorial position as a career goal that pursues and emphasizes popularity rather than effectuating a smaller and more efficient and cost-effective government.

Will you support the creation, introduction and passage of a bill to change the operation of the Guam Legislature from full time to part time?

Support Oppose Undecided **Please Explain your choice:**

- Members of the Guam Legislature must meet the demands and high expectations that their constituency rightfully demands. Wise public policy for Guam benefits greatly from diverse members of our community stepping up to public service after much experience in government, business, and raising families on Guam.
- It is physically not possible to truly hold the executive branch accountable or to have proper oversight of agencies looking at them only part-time. Legislators must become intimately familiar with the years-long problems that were not resolved by quick fix legislation. They must take the time to study the impact of their potential decisions on all the people of Guam and listening only part time is not good representation.
- To hold the government accountable and for true checks and balances, the Legislature requires leaders who cannot be misled on the facts or how the government works, and who are familiar with what has been tried before and have the perseverance to try different ways when unsuccessful.
- I have watched the most controversial measures be passed after several attempts by legislators who were able to withstand the whims of the day and continued to hammer away at the long-term solutions, and to gain consensus from the broader community that sometimes takes time. Some of the most beneficial laws implemented on Guam were a result of years of

work in complex areas, and by gaining the trust of the people over the course of dedicated, selfless, public service.

- Legislators cannot serve two masters and must serve all the people of Guam, notwithstanding private interests and special interests. Serving full time and focusing on legislative duties only, offers a temporary insulation from undue pressure from employers or other special interests and honors representation of the entire community. Conversion to a part-time basis should not occur without full community input and would require careful protections be built in to protect from undue influence of special interests to the detriment of the health and welfare of the people of Guam.

2. Legislative Priorities. Whether you are an incumbent, a former legislator or a first-time candidate for Senator in the 37th Guam Legislature, what are the top two (2) legislative priorities you will pursue if elected? Please respond to this question under two conditions: (1) if you are in the majority or (2) if you are in the minority.

Please Explain:

Whether in the majority or minority, my priorities will remain consistent. While federal aid has provided a bridge to recovery and rebuilding, we must also stand on our own and address three of the most basic needs in our community: employment, housing and access to healthcare, and to prevent any further losses in jobs and stable housing in the next few months while we diversify and rebuild healthcare, social services, and other economic pillars.

3. Repeal of Useless or Problematic Laws. Are there current laws that you believe are not useful or problematic that should be repealed? If yes, can you list the top two (2) laws that you believe should be repealed?

Please Explain: _____

All legislative solutions necessarily begin with a review of current law and amendments as needed. I begin with a problem and look for a solution and do not randomly look through the code for obsolete laws to repeal. For example, we continue to review the subdivision laws and septic tank laws with an aim to increase affordable housing opportunities. We also continue to review laws to ensure accountability and streamlining of agency services.

4. Military Buildup on Guam. Given that there is currently a significant military buildup on Guam and that the U.S. Marine base in Okinawa is in process of relocating to Guam (a “fait accompli” if you will), local legislative support of or opposition to these Department of Defense actions will determine the 37th Guam Legislature’s general political posture vis-a-vis our military community. The membership of the Guam Association of Realtors (GAR) is interested in your position on these current military activities.

As a Senatorial candidate, do you support the current military buildup and relocation of the U.S. Marine base from Okinawa to Guam?

___ Support ___ Oppose ___ Undecided

Please Explain your choice:

- Military activity continues to contribute to our economy, especially during COVID when all other business activity has been restricted. However, any activity or expansion by the Department of Defense must be done with increased transparency to GovGuam, opening its processes to the public and more readily providing information. The government of Guam must be able to protect against the adverse impacts that were recognized in 11,000 pages of the Environmental Impact Statement, including adverse impacts to our healthcare system, schools, environment and cultural sites, among others. Many of these impacts cannot be mitigated and according to Dr. Ruane, an economist at UOG, the economic benefits estimated by the military were not accurate. Thus, I do not support activity that will harm Guam and I believe the government of Guam should continue to do what it can to protect the residents of Guam from adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated or will not be mitigated by choice of the Department of Defense.
- I look forward to the audit by the Office of Public Accountability of tax revenues from military contracts to ensure Guam is receiving the financial benefit from increased military construction activity.

5. Political Status. The topic of Guam political status is in constant discussion and debate by our island community, i.e., (1) remain a U.S. Territory, (2) become a state or (3) seek independence. Holding a firm position on one of the above options would seem to influence your actions as a Senator.

What political status option draws your support?

Remain a U.S. Territory Statehood Independence

Please Explain your choice:

- Guam must continue to pursue its decades long multipronged strategy of critical negotiations with the U.S. and seeking support at the U.N. Independence gives Guam a true seat to negotiate a relationship with the US for security and other important matters that can be a win-win, and independence provides for mutual consent going forward.

C. PUBLIC AND PERSONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

1. Continuation of the Governor's Covid-19 Pandemic Emergency Powers. The Governor declared a state of emergency to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic in the spring of 2020. It is now the fall of 2022, and the state of emergency is still in effect but scheduled to expire October 5th. By law, the Guam Legislature has the authority to terminate or to extend the Governor's extensive emergency powers.

Discounting a year into the pandemic which most people acknowledge as the public health emergency period, are you in support of the Governor's continuing extension of emergency powers into October 2022?

Support Oppose Undecided Please Explain your choice:

. I support continued emergency powers where specific federal aid or other actions are dependent on said declaration, as listed in the October Executive Order. However, I oppose any continuation of these powers, where there isn't a reasonable and timely justification provided

by the Administration, where it is clear that it is needed to ensure the health, safety, or security of our people.

I supported Bill 11-36 and voted three times in favor of overriding the Governor's veto of the bill, which would have limited an emergency declaration by any Governor to 90 days and required concurrence of the legislature thereafter. Testimony provided by our community on Bill 11 stated clear concerns for a lack of answers and accountability from their government on decisions that directly impact their livelihoods.

I reemphasize my utmost respect for our front liners who have carried us through this pandemic and for our Governor, whose actions should be always toward protecting our people during these times, but also for the role of this legislature to serve as a system of checks and balances and to improve policy affecting people's lives. The challenges that we have faced with Government response during the COVID-19 pandemic have made it clear that we need a better system of checks and balances during a declared state of emergency, to ensure that decisions that are made by our government truly take into account the health and safety of our people

2. New Public Hospital. The Governor has determined that we need to construct a new hospital and that the site will be at former Eagles Football Field in Mangilao along Route 15. Since the Guam Legislature must eventually be involved in the development of a new hospital, your role as a Senator will be to decide your position in determining the location and the funding of a new hospital.

Do you believe Guam needs a new public hospital and, if yes, where do you think it should be located and how do you propose to fund the design and construction of the new facility?

Please Explain:

I support the building of a new hospital and would support a plan for a new hospital that has been fully vetted and deliberated by the government, medical professionals, and the people of Guam. I have scheduled another Oversight and Public Hearing on October 18, 2022, on the proposed location of a new hospital as well as contracts pertaining to the proposed medical health care campus which the administration should have vetted with the public. In addition to government and industry stakeholders, original landowners of the proposed location have been invited to weigh in at this hearing. This will be my third hearing that touches the topic of the proposed location of the medical campus and I will continue to use my role as the Legislative Oversight Chair on Health and Land to ensure that the public has access to information pertaining to the selection of the location of the new hospital and to allow them a forum to air their concerns.

3. Drug Abuse. Drug abuse is rampant on our island and is no doubt a cause of criminal activity, acts of violence against the public, homelessness, family violence and gradual destruction of the family unit and businesses. As a Senator, you will be in a powerful position to affect public policy changes to prevent or at a minimum mitigate drug abuse and its impact on our community.

As a legislator, what will you do to address the problem of drug abuse on our island?

Please Explain:

- The AG and Chief of Police cited drugs as the leading cause of crime with the majority of drugs being imported, so we must stop drugs at the borders. Customs testified that they do not have enough canine teams for adequate inspection at our ports. Customs must train additional canine teams and achieve a much higher inspection rate of incoming vessels before cargo is moved out of the port and airport. As a senator I have advocated for and worked to dedicate additional resources for these canine units and facilities for increased inspections at the Port and Airport.
- In addition, I was able to secure additional funding in the FY2023 budget for Detoxification and Rehabilitation Services for Guam Behavioral Health and Wellness and Inpatient Detox programs by over half a million dollars. This would give Guam Behavioral Health what they requested for the upcoming fiscal year, plus an additional \$100,00 over their request, in an effort to prioritize the island's drug problem. Many crimes and neglect issues often stem from people in our community struggling with substance abuse. We must continue to find and allocate resources for rehabilitation that is sufficient to address Guam's drug problem.