



GUAM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
PARTNERS IN PROGRESS

January 11, 2021

THE HONORABLE DONALD J. TRUMP
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Hafa Adai President Trump,

On behalf of the Guam Chamber of Commerce, we send our warmest wishes and gratitude to you and your Administration for your tremendous support of Guam and our issues during your tenure in office. We are hopeful that you would consider another act before you take leave before the end of the month.

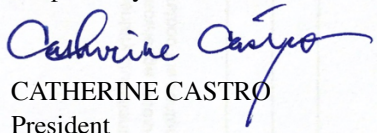
Last January 18, 2020, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (USDHS) imposed a one-year ban on Filipino workers under the federal H-2A and H-2B visa programs. As mentioned in our letter to you on June 19, 2020, this program is particularly important for Guam and the Marianas Islands as there is a shortage of skilled construction workforce to complete the contracting needs associated with U.S. military expansion in Guam and the Region. Historically, Guam has relied on a combination of local construction workers and skilled laborers from the Philippines via the H-2B program. Although Guam has the largest percentage of U.S. construction workers per capita, double the rate of the Continental United States, it would be impossible for our local growth of skilled labor to cover the expected demand for military construction projects to support the ongoing buildup.

We are seeking your support to lift the imposed ban on Filipino workers as imposed by the USDHS which is up for review this month. As mentioned in past correspondence and discussions with the U.S. Department of Interior and USDHS, Guam has not experienced the high overstay rate as noted by USDHS as their reasoning for implementing the ban. Our island has faced extraordinary challenges associated with seeking laborers that have impacted not only military construction projects but private and public construction developments as well (not at all associated with the pandemic situation at hand). Because of our similar cultural background and the geographic proximity of the Philippines to Guam, Filipino labor has been the primary source market for skilled labor needs for the island.

We appreciate your continued support on this issue and look forward to a favorable outcome.

Un Dangkulu na si'Yu'os Ma'åse (Thank you very much).

Respectfully,



CATHERINE CASTRO
President

cc: The Honorable Lourdes Leon Guerrero, Governor of Guam
cc: The Honorable Douglas Domenech, U.S. Department of Interior