



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

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

**Statement from Speaker Terlaje on FY 2022 Budget Act now Public Law 36-54**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (September 11, 2021 – Hagåtña, Guam)**

Now that the FY 2022 budget has lapsed into law, it is time for the administration to implement the priorities in the \$937 million budget set forth by the Legislature. This budget was constructed with no information from the administration regarding how \$600 million in American Rescue Plan funds will be used to move our island forward during this pandemic and supplement the FY 2022 budget.

Regardless, a successful budget requires continuous oversight and transparency, adherence to the law and spending priorities contained in the law, and critical checks and balances for the benefit of the people of Guam. Adjusting the FY 2021 budget to ensure all revenues are accounted for and appropriated for tax refunds is a crucial addition to the FY 2022 Budget Act. All budgets are based on projections and need to be adjusted throughout the year so that it is responsible and responsive to agencies' needs and critical services for the community.

The FY22 budget bill as passed prioritizes current FY 2021 revenues for tax refunds, including money received from Section 30 and other taxes, in contrast to the reduction of the general fund amount presented for refunds in the initial FY22 Substitute Bill and its further reduction on the floor. I want the people's money returned to them now when they need it. It is the Legislature that has mandated through budgets that refunds are a priority and the Legislature should not go back on that policy now especially with all of the federal funds the administration is currently holding and the additional funds it is expecting. We should pay refunds faster with what we can control and no longer hold on to people's refunds. There is no excuse to lag behind other jurisdictions in returning the people's money to them.

Critical services can continue without interruption now that the budget bill is law. We must now address the urgent needs this budget cannot address and ensure fairness and transparency for the additional \$600 million that Guam is holding in the bank and the millions more that Guam is expecting from the federal government to aid and recover the people of Guam.

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