



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

I Mina'trentai Siette na Liheslaturan Guåhan | 37th Guam Legislature
Committee on Health, Land, Justice and Culture

Unanimous Support for Speaker Terlaje's Transparency Bills

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (March 7, 2023 – Hagåtña, Guam) – During the first regular session of the term, Speaker Therese Terlaje opened the discussion for Bill 12-37 with an impassioned message of truth and justice on the floor of the Guam Legislature. Bill 12-37 (COR) proposes to require legislative approval for the purchase or lease of property owned by the federal or foreign governments for terms in excess of five (5) years. The measure seeks to maintain consistency in local policies related to the purchase, lease, sublease and license of real property on Guam, and ensure transparency for these commitments made on behalf of the people of Guam. The absence of a local statute regarding the lease of federally owned property risks incurring obligations without any public input and counteracts a transparent and consistent policy.

Sessions resumed today to deliberate on Bill 13-37 (COR) which would include representation on the Twenty First Century Healthcare Center Committee from the healthcare industry, representatives from impacted Municipal Planning Councils, and the Guam Legislature; apply the Open Government Law and to allow the public to attend meetings; and to ensure records of deliberation and decisions are made available to the public.

Original landowners of *Lålo*, or Eagles Field and the surrounding properties, attended session to hear discussions on measures that could have impacts on the potential 99-year lease of the property from the federal government. While much of the discussion centered around concerns about the medical campus, Speaker Terlaje's bill seeks to close a gap for all property purchases or leases entered into by the government of Guam as well as ensure public access to the development of the proposed medical campus.

On the passage of both transparency bills, the Speaker thanked her colleagues for their support and stated, "the public has a right to know what they are being committed to for potentially 99 years or more, that in the end when bearing the burden of the costs, the people of Guam are satisfied with the product. Additionally, the legislature should discuss and decide if the government will continue on the course that previous legislatures set for the demand for the return of land to the government of Guam and to original landowners or to allow some other process to be used that avoids a demand for the return of excess property. This would be a huge policy shift that at the very least should be discussed by the people of Guam and the Legislature, and the passage of Bill 12-37 would be the first step."

The measures are being prepared for transmittal to Adelup.

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