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Calvo calls for skilled foreign workers provision

Daily Post Staff 7 hrs ago



Madeleine Bordallo

Gov. Eddie Calvo is calling on members of the U.S House of Representatives and Senate to ensure Guam's need for skilled foreign workers is on the agenda, as they tackle immigration reform.

Calvo wrote to Democratic Del. Madeleine Bordallo and Sens. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, and Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, to inject language in future legislation to provide relief for Guam's shortage of skilled workers – particularly for H-2B workers for civilian projects – into federal legislation. Congress has approved the hiring of up to 4,000 foreign workers a year under H-2B, temporary work visas, but the approval of visa petitions has been primarily granted to employers who need labor for military construction projects on Guam.



Eddie Calvo

The governor stated he's providing "some ideas for language that may be useful" in seeking congressional support.

Though recently voted down in the House, President Donald Trump has made clear that the discussion will be revisited.

"I strongly believe that efforts should be made to include some kind of provision that would ease our outstanding issues with H-2B temporary need, similar to the exemption recently passed in the 2018 (National Defense Authorization Act)," Calvo wrote to the lawmakers.

Bordallo has been nominated to serve on the House-Senate Conference committee to resolve the differences in the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act.

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– **Gov. Eddie Calvo**

As the top Democrat on the readiness subcommittee and a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, Bordallo was selected to work with the Senate to determine the final language in this year's defense authorization bill before final passage and being signed into law, her office stated.

The House bill included provisions that would provide H-2B worker relief on Guam and codify into law the Department of Defense "net-negative" commitment to ensure the military holds less land at the conclusion of the relocation of almost 5,000 Marines from Okinawa to Guam.

The House bill included more than \$377 million in military construction projects on Guam and would protect Guam's former Ship Repair Facility from being developed for uses other than depot-level ship maintenance, Bordallo stated.