

GUAM DAILY POST • TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 2016

ONLINE READER POLL

Do you favor Bill 318 that requires village municipal planning council approval before a project can be approved by the Guam Land Use Commission?

- Yes.
- No.
- I don't know.



EDITORIAL

Feds must fix worker visa slowdown

The federal government must resolve the H-2B visa problem. The U.S. government has long recognized Guam's reliance on foreign labor, particularly in the construction industry. In fact, the federal government began that reliance as the most practical way to get its military facilities built in the Cold War era. But the current snafu and the potential negative impact on the Guam economy appears to be one more instance of the federal government's apparent inability to deal with Guam in a consistent manner that recognizes Guam's unique circumstances, its needs and what it can offer.

We support the government's efforts to enforce rules and regulations to ensure foreign workers are not exploited or abused. We also support

and encourage the Department of Labor efforts to ensure that employers are following the rules so that conscientious, law-abiding employers do not lose out to competitors who are less scrupulous.

It is important, and required, that local workers be hired first, and training programs have been initiated to provide the opportunity for workers who are members of the Guam community to take part in, and benefit from, the island's growth. But Guam has a limited population and is several thousands of miles away from U.S. population centers. As a result, foreign workers have become an integral part of Guam's development. Guam has been exempted from the national cap on H-2 visas - an acknowledgement of its unique labor reality. But that

exemption means little if all H-2 visas are denied.

The sudden foreign worker visa stoppage is impacting the island's health care industry as services are curtailed because Guam does not have enough nurses, and it is threatening its construction industry as contractors looking to secure some of the anticipated boom in military construction contracts will not have enough workers for the projects.

The current problem is not, we are told, the result of any change in policy or regulation, but a change in personnel. The new personnel, apparently, have not been able, or perhaps willing, to recognize Guam's unique needs, and the impact that their decisions have on a territory one-third of the globe away.

POSTINGS Responses from our readers. What do you have to say?

Re: There is no future in the past
06.13.2016

Mathew M. Philips:
Guam is a winner. Lots of different people marrying different kinds of people, producing bright and

Re: Bicyclist's condition remains unchanged
06.13.2016

John Valencia:
So is the driver related to someone political? Just wondering, normally somebody would

