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House OKs \$377M in military spending for Guam

Daily News Staff May 26, 2018

Fiscal Year 2019 Military Construction Authorization for Guam

Project	Cost
ACE Gym & Dining	27,910,000
Earth Covered Magazines	52,270,000
Machine Gun Range	70,000,000
Ordnance Ops	22,020,000
Unaccompanied Enlisted Housing	36,170,000
X-Ray Wharf Improvements (Berth 2)	75,600,000
Hayman Munitions Storage Igloos MSA 2	9,800,000
Replace Andersen Housing Phase III	83,441,000
Guam Total	\$ 377,211,000

PROJECTS: Breakdown of the military construction funds for Guam in fiscal year 2019. Courtesy of the Office of Madeleine Bordallo

The U.S. House of Representatives has passed H.R. 5515, the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019, which approves \$377 million in military construction spending on Guam.

Included in the legislation is Del. Madeleine Bordallo's provision holding the Navy and the Defense Department accountable to its promise "to hold less land at the conclusion of the Marine realignment than it did when the program started."

The realignment involves reducing the number of troops in Okinawa, Japan, by moving almost 5,000 Marine Corps personnel and about 1,300 of their family members to a new base on Guam.

This so-called "net-negative" commitment requires the Navy to make public the list of properties on Guam that it expects to return to the local government and provides the governor of Guam with a formal mechanism to petition for additional lands to be added to the list. Bordallo also wants to ensure the list of lands the Navy expects to return to GovGuam is available to the public.

In addition, the 2019 NDAA extends Guam's exemption from the national H-2B visa caps until 2020 and provides for flexibility for health care workers to be admitted under the H-2B visa program. Guam employers want more leeway on hiring foreign workers on H-2B visas to meet a labor shortage in construction and health care.

It also includes another provision sponsored by Bordallo that requires the Navy to continue to use the former Guam Ship Repair Facility for "depot-level ship maintenance."

The House version now moves to a conference committee, where the final version will be hashed out.