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Calvo: buildup requires skilled local workforce

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By Nestor Licanto [CONNECT](#)

The Calvo administration is taking a new tact in resolving the H-2b Labor crisis. Guam governor Eddie Calvo says if the federal government wants him to comply with all of the environmental requirements related to the Marine relocation, it will need to ensure Guam has enough skilled workers to build the necessary infrastructure.

Governor Calvo is just back from meetings in the mainland with EPA officials. He says they discussed the strict timetables the agency has set for environmental compliance relating to military construction. Calvo says there are more than \$1.5 billion in projects planned to ensure environmental health and safety. However, he notes, "It will be impossible to fulfill the requirements when it comes to Clean Water and Clean Air Act provisions with the current status quo in regards to these denials of foreign workers."

In essence, the administration is turning the tables on the feds. Calvo is now hanging his hat on the National Environmental Protection Act, a federal law that guides military construction.

Calvo contends that because of the USCIS nearly 100-percent denial rate of H2B skilled labor they won't have the needed workforce to build the required infrastructure.

And until they do, he's calling on EPA to stand with his previous call for a halt to all buildup construction. "Basically, I'm requesting their support because I'm sure they're also concerned about these impacts to our environment because they are the ones who have mandated that we comply," he added.

A provision in this year's national defense spending bill gives USCIS more flexibility in allowing H2B foreign labor for military projects. Calvo has said it should apply to all projects both inside and outside the fence.



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