

Governor gets no commitment to lift H2-B Visa ban from U.S. officials

By **Clynt Ridgell** - September 20, 2017

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Guam – Although he got to meet with many high-ranking U.S. officials Governor Eddie Calvo told members of the Guam Contractors Association today that there was no commitment from any of them to remove the restrictions on the H-2B visa which threatens the Guam military buildup.

Thanks to recent threats from North Korea Guam was thrust into the national and international spotlight. This in turn helped Governor Calvo to get meetings with high ranking U.S. officials that he has been trying to meet with for years like the Homela Security chief.

“So, I had an opportunity to meet with acting Homeland Security Chief Elaine Duke as well as the Director of U.S. Customs and Immigration Services for a very, very, blunt and serious discussion on Guam,” said Governor Calvo.

However, these meetings along with meetings with various secretaries senators and even USCIS Director James McCament did not result in any real commitment to lift the ban on H-2B visas. Visas that are badly needed to provide a workforce for

construction for the Guam military buildup.

"If they don't change as of yesterday this buildup is not gonna happen with the workers that we have now. Period," said Governor Calvo.

With the hurricane reconstruction in Texas and Florida it will be even more difficult for Guam to bring in thousands of construction workers from the continental U.S.

So, what's the answer to Guam's labor shortage? The Governor says we need help from major U.S. corporations and lobbyists who hold sway in D.C.

"Every major corporation in the United States has influence whether it was with their congressman or their Senator or their mayor or their governor. I met the Granite group a few weeks ago. Well it's the Granites it's the Huntsmens it's those groups that are going to have to help us and use whatever influence they can. We need a lobbyist. I know lobbying is a dirty word but the Governor can go there and speak as much as he wants but if I'm only gonna go there every four or five months we need to have folks lobbying on our behalf. That's how Washington works," said Governor Calvo.

The Governor says that Washington D.C. needs to realize that the H-2B workers are vital to the Guam military buildup.

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