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Labor appointee wants to focus on worker shortage crisis

Louella Losinio | The Guam Daily Post 11 hrs ago



DELL'ISOLA: Department of Labor acting Director David Dell'Isola speaks during his confirmation hearing for the position at the Guam Congress Building in Hagåtña on Wednesday. David Castro/The Guam Daily Post

The Leon Guerrero administration's appointee for director of the Guam Department of Labor wants to focus on the worker shortage as a result of the H-2B visa issue, and workers' compensation statutes and other issues.

Acting Director David Dell'Isola appeared Wednesday before the Legislature's committee on labor. The director has nine divisions under his purview, including the Agency For Human Resources Development, which was integrated into the department during the previous administration.

Dell'Isola said he is evaluating each division to identify challenges and areas of growth.

With the removal of the Philippines from the list of countries that can supply foreign workers on H-2B visas, Dell'Isola has been focusing on the department's Alien Labor Processing and Certification Division.

Dell'Isola said the public and private sector should adopt a "One Guam approach" to the crisis.

Another critical area is the Worker's Compensation Commission, Dell'Isola said. Workers' compensation allows employees to receive benefits and services when injured on the job. To bring resolution to compensation settlements, a worker will need to go through the commission and its board. The six-member panel can take months to meet.

According to Dell'Isola, he has been ordered by the court to conduct a formal hearing for the commission within 90 days.

He also has been working closely with the Office of the Attorney General for a memorandum of understanding on providing legal assistance to the Labor Department. The MOU would assign a part-time but dedicated attorney to workers' compensation matters.

"One of the biggest stumbling blocks was getting a permanent person to assist us in these legal matters," he said.

Testimonies of support

Grace Donaldson, chief operating officer and general manager of Pacific Human Resource Services, said as the former director of the Agency for Human Resource Development, Dell'Isola was instrumental in the implementation of the U.S. Department of Labor-registered apprenticeship program. The program combined on-the-job training with classroom instruction.

Maria Connelley, former director of the department, said she is confident in Dell'Isola's leadership and commitment to carry out the tasks needed to meet DOL's mission.

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