



Raúl M. Grijalva
Chairman
House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Bruce Westerman
Ranking Member
House Committee on Natural Resources
1329 Longworth House Office Building
Washington

RE: HR.6504 The Native Pacific Islanders of America Equity Act

Dear Chairman, Grijalva and Ranking Member Westerman,

The Leadership of Republican Party of Guam would like to express its unanimous support of HR. 6504, The Native Pacific Islander of America Equality Act.

The islands of the Marianas, situated in the Pacific between Hawaii and Asia have been the home of the Chamoru people for thousands of years. The Chamoru people speak their own native language, have their own cultural customs, oral history and belief system that actually even predate the Cherokee or Quapaws. To this day they recognize their tribal leader in Guam as the Maga Haga or Maga Lahi.

The United States received the island of Guam in a treaty from the Spanish American War and Chamorus have raised the American flag every day since, except during the two years of foreign occupation of Guam during WWII. Those proud, loyal native inhabitants have succeeded in developing a modern island economy after WWII with many of the largest island businesses being multi-generational family owned Chamoru corporations. However, when working with the Federal Government in their own native island, the Chamoru owned companies do not receive the same consideration as do other "native owned companies" such as those from Alaska or Hawaii. Off-Island companies receive consideration in contracting that smaller Chamoru owned companies do not.

We write today to ask that this Congress grant Chamoru companies with the same benefits provided to the other Native inhabitant companies in Alaska and Hawaii are granted when competing for Federal contracts, an equality in standing that we feel has been long overdue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Juan C. Benitez", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Juan Carlos Benitez

Chairman

Republican Party of Guam