

Arnold I. Palacios
Governor



David M. Apatang
Lieutenant Governor

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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The Honorable Kimberlyn King-Hinds
Member of Congress
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman King-Hinds

I appreciate the opportunity to have met with you previously and am grateful for your attention to the issues we discussed. In our initial conversation, I respectfully mentioned the letter we sent to the Biden administration regarding our request to access the unused Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) funds (\$231 million) and the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) funds (\$183 million) for a total balance of about **\$414 million**.

I am now writing to urgently request your support for legislation allowing the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) to retain unused Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) funds from the American Rescue Plan Act.

The downturn in tourism across the region has been exacerbated by the strength of the U.S. dollar, making travel to the CNMI less affordable for international visitors. Additionally, external factors such as geopolitical tensions and the global economic impacts have further complicated recovery efforts.


To address this, our administration has actively supported diversification to secure new tourist markets and fostering other industries to reduce our dependency on a single sector. However, these efforts need financial support to truly take effect.

Retaining these funds would enable us to:

- Stimulate economic recovery
- Strengthen critical public services
- Support the transition to a more resilient economy by aiding businesses and workers in both traditional and emerging sectors

Your leadership and our collective efforts are crucial for our CNMI community's recovery and sustainable future. I appreciate your attention to this urgent matter and look forward to your support.

Respectfully,



ARNOLD I. PALACIOS
Governor