



## **OFFICE OF SENATOR SABINA FLORES PEREZ**

Chairperson

Committee on Environment, Revenue and Taxation, and Procurement

*I MINA'TRENTAI SINGKO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN*

35<sup>TH</sup> GUAM LEGISLATURE

### **PRESS RELEASE**

## **Senator Perez's Bill 53-35 Passes to Ban Scuba Fishing**

*Guam, March 11, 2020* – Senator Perez's measure, Bill 53-35 (COR), was passed by the body today to place a ban scuba fishing. "I am thankful to my colleagues in supporting the passage of Bill 53-35 (COR). This is a response to a growing environmental and cultural threat. The passing of Bill 53-35 is a first step in protecting and rebuilding our coral reefs, improving the safety for all fishermen, and preserving our ocean food source for our people, and for our future generations to come," said Senator Perez.

The ban provided by Bill 53-35 has already been adopted in 63 nations/jurisdictions, including the CNMI. This is a tested and sensible approach, supported by most Pacific island nations.

Coral reef systems are one of the most productive ecosystems on Earth, providing important services to mankind including fisheries, coastal protection, medicines, recreation, and tourism. The decrease in reef fish biomass has repercussions for our coral reefs. "The solution must focus on sustainability. Our ancestors had a sense of reciprocity and balance. We are a culture whose identity and survival are based on the bounty of our ocean as long as we do not take more than what can be regenerated," stated Perez.

"Our ancestors faced challenges in the past, and they managed their fish stocks accordingly. They were wise stewards, who preserved the environment and their fishing practices for us. Now it's our turn to come together, take responsibility, and preserve our resources and the cultural way of life for future generations," said Senator Perez.

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