



OFFICE OF SENATOR SABINA FLORES PEREZ

Chairperson

Committee on Environment, Revenue and Taxation, Labor, Procurement,
and Statistics, Research, and Planning

I Mina'trentai Siette Na Liheslaturan Guahan • 37th Guam Legislature

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**Senator Perez Urges Inclusion of Bill 35-37 On the Emergency Session
To Address Health and Safety Concerns of the Community**

Hagåtña, Guam – Senator Sabina Flores Perez is urging the 37th Guam Legislature to include Bill 35-37 into today's emergency session for its expeditious passage following insights from Monday's public hearing.

A Request for Emergency Session was initially submitted to Acting Speaker Muña Barnes this morning followed by a second request this afternoon.

Bill No. 35-37 provides the necessary amendments to Public Law 36-139 that would resolve the safety concerns we could be faced with if passed expeditiously. It expands the types of UXO that can be exempted from the prohibition of open detonation, and closes any lapse of UXO disposal that may arise from the enactment date of Public Law 36-139, while at the same time ensuring greater transparency and accountability with military treatment of UXOs. The Bill also clarifies the path to the implementation of safer alternatives for our island.

“It's extremely important that the intent of Public Law 36-139 is preserved for the safety of our island and people. This is a public law that passed with a majority vote and the will of the people. An outright repeal of the law undermines negotiations and compromises made with Joint Region Marianas, and erases our agency in the outcomes of these conversations. Repealing the law threatens to set precedence that any law not approved by Joint Region Marianas and the DoD stands little chance of survival, especially in regards to environment and land. Amendments were made to Public Law 36-139, to enable the DoD to carry out its inherent duty to clear the island of hazardous unexploded ordnance without jeopardizing the rights of the people of Guam to a safe and healthy environment.”

Short of a full repeal of the law, Rear Admiral Benjamin Nicholson proposed five amendments to be included in Bill 35-37, leaving many questions as to why some legislative colleagues are looking to force a repeal of Public Law 36-139 without the written testimony by Guam EPA, in consultation with USEPA. Similarly, Earthjustice Associate Attorney Thien Chau stated a full repeal was unnecessary. The repeal thwarts much needed dialogue between stakeholders to address community concerns that are needed for sustaining our people and the environment.

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