



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 Provides Statement on Bill 175-37 (COR) Sponsored by Senator Duenas

Hagåtña, Guam - Senator Sabina Flores Perez, Chairperson of the Committee on the Environment, issued the following statement regarding Bill 175-37 (COR):

“The Committee has continued its work on producing the Committee Report for Bill 175-37 (COR). On Friday, May 10, the Committee informed Senator Duenas’ office of the goal of submitting for the upcoming session.

As with every legislation that passes through our Committee, the process is contingent on various factors necessary for the Bill’s comprehensive analysis. In this case, we needed to gain WERI’s, US EPA’s and Guam EPA’s analyses before moving forward with Bill 175-37 due to the extremely concerning risks posed to our Northern Lens Guam Aquifer (NGLA), based on public hearing testimonies by agency officials. It is essential that our government rely on scientific information and expert advice involving the protection of our invaluable sole source aquifer that provides 80% of our island’s water.

While Bill 175-37 proffers advanced nitrogen reducing systems, namely Type 4 systems, that would decrease some level of nitrate contamination, testimony revealed that contamination of both nitrates and other pollutants would still be inevitable. This is important information given our island’s documented trend of increasing nitrate levels, of which GWA projects to exceed the half MCL at five milligram per liter in some parts of the NGLA. Should this happen, GWA may be required to remove wells from service or install treatment at the expense of ratepayers. Furthermore, these Type 4 systems are not approved treatment methods for PFAS and other toxins or pollutants. Scientific studies report PFAS contamination may be significantly attributed to septic systems.

When you consider these factors in light of the Bill 175-37’s proposal to potentially double or even triple the density of private sewage disposal systems over our aquifer, the subsequent doubling or tripling of the volume of sewage and contaminants leaching into our sole source aquifer could result in irreversible consequences that would affect generations.

Our Committee must fully evaluate Bill 175-37, and our Offices must work together toward sustainable solutions for our community’s housing needs while protecting our main water source. Without a clean water source, none of us can live in Guam. ”

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