

CONGRESSWOMAN MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

Swearing-In Address Latte of Freedom, Hall of Governors January 23, 2017

Hafa Adai and Good Afternoon.

It is an honor to be here with all of you today and I thank you joining me for my swearing-in ceremony. I also appreciate everyone's flexibility. It seems that we were subject to some very unusual delays in getting to Guam. I just find it ironic that this occurred the day after President Trump was inaugurated so I guess we can blame him now!

Anyhow, I would like to thank and welcome Governor Calvo and First Lady Christine Calvo, Lieutenant Governor Tenorio, Speaker Cruz, Chief Justice Maraman, the Members of the Thirty-Fourth Guam Legislature, our Mayors and Vice Mayors, members of the Consular Corps, and all other distinguished guests, my family, friends and longtime supporters-thank you and welcome. I also want to thank Chief Judge Frances Tydingco-Gatewood and the District Court of Guam for organizing and hosting this morning's ceremony. This is a tradition that Chief Judge Tydingco-Gatewood began several terms ago and I appreciate her continued effort to make this event a reality.

As many of you know and I shared at my last swearing in ceremony here in the Latte of Freedom Hall of Governors, it is an amazing honor to stand before all of you in this place. This Latte of Freedom was a dream for my husband Ricky, and I am proud to be here and continue to share in his legacy. Ricky was my mentor and inspiration to first enter politics. He always encouraged me to serve and I am so humbled to be able to continue this service.

A few weeks ago, I was inaugurated into the 115th Congress by Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, but knew I also needed to celebrate this special day with the people of Guam. I reflect back on the progress we've made over, not only the last two years, but the last 14 years. I am so proud of our work and perseverance and I am reinvigorated to continue my service and fighting for the people of Guam. I look back at our work and recall legislative accomplishments including making all of Guam a HUBZone to improve federal contracting opportunities for all Guam businesses; securing millions of dollars to address some of Guam's most pressing civilian infrastructure needs; holding the Navy accountable to their 'net negative' strategy; establishing a joint Guam-CNMI visa waiver program; increased Compact-Impact funding from \$4.5 million to \$17.9 million; securing funding for expansion of the Guam veterans CBOC; and securing \$268.3 million in additional Medicaid funding in the Affordable Care Act.

Above all else, last year, I am very proud to say that the World War II Loyalty Recognition Act was passed by Congress and signed into law by President Barack Obama. This was a hard fought process that started with my predecessors. I must recognize the late Congressman Won Pat, the late Congressman Blas and Congressman Robert Underwood who all fought the good fight before me. Each one of them paved the way to gain this recognition that the people of Guam so rightly deserve. The Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act honors Guam's greatest generation and rightfully recognizes and provides monetary compensation to the survivors of the occupation of Guam during World War II. Our war survivors have waited long

enough and they have now been recognized for their sacrifices and we look forward to the compensation to come for the hardships they endured.

Although passage of Guam war claims is a major legislative achievement there is much that remains to be accomplished. There are a lot of unknowns with the election of Donald Trump as our President but we must be prepared for quick legislative action. We may have a chance to fix the Medicaid cliff to improve our Federal match and provide greater flexibility to the territory. If we pursue tax reform then we will be ready to offer proposals that would provide a federal cover over for EITC payments which is included in legislation that I co-sponsored with Congresswoman Plaskett of the Virgin Islands. Once again, I will pursue a legislative fix to the H-2B crisis that the island is currently facing. While I hope that the Trump Administration may seek regulatory relief I stand ready with a legislative fix should they be unable or unwilling to fix our problem. Additionally, my priority will be addressing some of our most critical issues facing the people of Guam. I want to ensure that our veterans exposed to Agent Orange receive the proper treatment and help necessary. I will continue to advance legislation that finds innovative ways to address the challenges posed by Compact-Impact. Finally, I will continue to use my position on the House Armed Services Committee to make sure the realignment stays on track and is good for our people. We must do what is beneficial for Guam and continue with the momentum we have built for the military buildup and ensure this realignment brings jobs and opportunity to our people.

I also hope that our community will continue to make progress on self-determination. Guam must realize our self-determination and decide and bring to completion, not just the vote but full implementation of whatever status we choose. I have said on many occasions that self-determination and deciding for ourselves how we want to be affiliated with the United States and recognized in the world is the most important long-term goal for our people. We need to get on with this process and I hope that our local leaders will renew their effort at setting a date for a plebiscite on this matter in the very near future.

Before closing, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the people of Guam for their vote of confidence, yet again and reelecting me to my eighth term as Guam's Delegate to the United States House of Representatives. Thank you for exercising your right to vote and participating in the democratic process. This was a long and hard fought election and am humbled by the overwhelming love and support I have received. Things were not always easy, and I want to recognize my opponent and good friend, former Governor Felix Camacho. He was an admirable opponent and I commend him for his willingness to continue to serve our people.

I must also take this opportunity to thank everyone who made this past campaign possible. Thank you to my dedicated and hard-working core group of supporters and village organization, and to my campaign co-chairs, Mr. Clifford Guzman and Mayor Melissa Savares. It was the time and dedication of this core group that made every event possible. I surround myself with the best and brightest and must also take this opportunity to thank my staff, both here in Guam and Washington D.C. They have shown true dedication and commitment to working for the people of Guam. Thank you.

Again, I have been humbled by the trust and confidence our people have placed in me to represent our island in Congress, and I work hard to ensure that we are providing better opportunities for our people and that the federal government is held accountable for their responsibilities to Guam. We must continue to build on the progress that we have made, and I know that we can do this together. Guam is at a unique point in our history. The world is ever changing and things are unpredictable, but we are strong and resilient. Together we will build a

better community for generations to come. I stand committed to serving you, the people of Guam. God bless Guam and God bless the United States of America. Biba Guam! Si yu'us ma'ase'.