

**Congresswoman Madeleine Z. Bordallo**  
**Congressional Address**  
**Guam Legislature Session Hall**  
**January 17, 2006**

“Opportunities Within Our Reach”

It is my honor to report to you as your Delegate to Congress on the progress of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress and on the issues that are important to us. The first session of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress ended just before Christmas as one of the longest Congressional sessions in history. The session ended with major issues on the forefront such as the war in Iraq, the reauthorization of the Patriot Act, the national debt of over eight trillion dollars, the budget deficit, and domestic surveillance. Budget pressures created by the war in Iraq and federal assistance for communities ravaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita make it very difficult to pass appropriations and tax relief measures.

It is against this backdrop and in this environment that we have sought to advance issues that are important to the people of Guam. While routine legislative business has not come to a standstill, it has been disrupted by particularly controversial and politically charged debates and recent controversies. The second session of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress promises to be as contentious and as difficult as the first session, perhaps more so because of upcoming mid-term elections.

Our success in Congress is based on working closely with the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the Legislature, and community leaders on our bipartisan agenda. We have been most effective when we have spoken with one common voice and one common purpose.

My first Congressional Address to the Legislature in February 2004, focused on the challenges ahead. In

particular, I sounded the rallying call to prepare for the Base Realignment and Closure round, BRAC 2005. The Governor, the Legislature, and the Chamber of Commerce – in particular, the Armed Forces Committee of the Chamber-- responded. Because we spoke with one voice, we fared very well in the BRAC 2005 process, sustaining only minimal losses to our military community, and we are now poised to see our bases more fully utilized.

I also reported in 2004 that we would be challenged in requesting the President to exercise debt-relief authority given to him by Congress as part of the Compact reauthorization legislation, House Joint Resolution 63. While we are all disappointed that the President did not grant the debt relief, this provision was the catalyst for privatizing the Guam Telephone Authority, and that has been a very successful initiative. However, as you know,

we benefited in that same legislation from a substantial increase in Compact-impact assistance, which is now set at \$30 million per year for Guam, Hawaii and the Northern Marianas for twenty years. Guam's share of that total for this fiscal year is \$14.2 million. Progress on these fronts was made in large part because Chairman Richard Pombo and Ranking Member Nick Rahall of the House Resources Committee worked closely with us on Compact issues affecting Guam, and I thank them for their continued leadership and support. Now some may wonder if Team Guam fumbled the ball on debt relief...well, we don't have instant replay. But from my vantage point, I can say that Team Feds blocked a great play that Chairman Pombo, Ranking Member Rahall and the Resources Committee initiated and, more specifically, a certain line backer whose

initials are “OMB” – the Office of Management and Budget – played a central role in blocking this play.

I also talked about the economic challenges we faced and the need to focus on these issues. We have made tremendous progress in developing initiatives to strengthen and diversify Guam’s economy. Our Territorial Highway Program has seen a 30% increase in annual Federal funding to \$106.5 million over five years, including \$16 million in identified high-priority projects within the highway bill. These high priority projects include \$6.6 million to replace three bridges in Hagatna for flood control mitigation, \$6 million for an inter-modal facility at the port, \$400,000 for new mass transit buses, and \$3 million for road improvements in the north. These projects will help to stimulate Hagatna redevelopment and will help the port grow with our economy.

We successfully included in the budget reconciliation measure that passed the House last month a significant 70% increase in Medicaid assistance to Guam, an increase of \$2.5 million in FY 2006 and an increase of \$5 million in FY 2007. When enacted, this increase would, in effect, close the gap between the Medicaid cap in the territories and state-like treatment. Chairman Dan Burton, who visited Guam, was instrumental in helping us with our amendment and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, led by Chairman Mike Honda, gave us critical support. Chairman Joe Barton, who shepherded our amendment through this process in his committee, deserves our thanks for his leadership in helping the territories to address the Medicaid issue.

Over the past two years we worked to provide additional funds of \$1.5 million to expand the Community

Health Center in Dededo and \$240,000 in FY 2005 to support the University of Guam's nursing program.

And we are making progress on a new Veterans Outpatient Clinic which will be constructed next year to improve services to our veterans. Our veterans deserve the health care that our nation promised, and along with our efforts to build the new clinic, we continue to hold Veterans Town Hall meetings to address other health and benefits issues, and we have been working closely with Senator Unpingco on these veterans issues.

To help our visitor industry, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus worked with me to encourage the U.S. Department of Commerce to focus a part of a \$10 million "Visit the U.S.A." marketing effort on Japan, rather than just the United Kingdom.

Furthermore, increased military construction spending during the past two Fiscal Years and \$89.5 million in spending in Fiscal Year 2006 are helping to stimulate our economic recovery.

The challenges ahead that I noted in my 2004 address to you laid the groundwork for the opportunities within our reach today. The recent announcement by Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld -- that the lion's share of 7,000 United States Marines that will be moved out of bases in Okinawa will be relocated to Guam -- is the most significant of these opportunities. Marines of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Expeditionary Force are the modern day successors of the units that liberated Guam in July 1944. We welcome them home.

We are forging a strong relationship between the Marines and Guam – between the liberators and the

liberated – that will give meaning to the words “host community”. I want to recognize Colonel Carl Matter, who is with us today at my invitation to represent Lieutenant General John F. Goodman, Commander of Marine Forces Pacific. Colonel Matter, it is with great enthusiasm and much optimism that we welcome the Marines back to Guam. I will paraphrase what our Chamorro elders – interned in concentration camps in 1944 – are reported to have said upon meeting the Marines liberating the island, “What took you so long?”

The opportunities within our reach presented by the re-location of Marine forces to Guam require us to plan for and prepare for these changes. It is up to us as a community to begin the preparations necessary for making the Marine re-location as beneficial for our island as is possible.

I can assure you that Colonel Matter is only the first of many thousands of Marines who will be the recipient of the warm, Chamorro hospitality for which Guam is famous. I am working with General Goodman to develop an orientation to Guam that emphasizes our culture and our community values so together we will live side by side as one community and as good neighbors.

We expect that the first Marine units will relocate as early as 2008, while the full relocation is expected to be completed within ten years. The military construction budget for Guam in future years will increase substantially to accommodate this growth. The impact this promises to have on Guam's construction and service industries is significant. We are ready to take on these challenges and work to realize the opportunities that are within our reach.

To realize the potential in new jobs, we should prioritize educational opportunities and vocational training programs for Guam's workforce. I will work in the months ahead to increase federal job training assistance for our island from the U.S. Department of Labor. These job opportunities are within our reach if we work together to better prepare our residents for the jobs that will be created.

The planned increases of federal investment in Guam to support the military build-up will result in service contracts and construction projects, and these are new opportunities within reach for our business community. I am working with federal agencies, such as the Small Business Administration and the General Services Administration, to provide training for Guam's small businesses, so that they can bid competitively on these new contracts. My legislation that designated our entire island

as a Historically Underutilized Business Zone, or HUBZone, will help to achieve this goal. The Small Business Administration will soon provide a training program to help Guam businesses gain HUBZone certification. These efforts will help small businesses realize the contracting opportunities within our reach, strengthen our economy and improve the quality of life on our island.

The renewed utilization of Guam's bases is not limited to the Marine relocation. The Air Force has announced its intent to establish a Global Strike Force on Guam that will include Global Hawk unmanned reconnaissance aircraft, deployed bombers, tankers and fighter aircraft. The Navy has announced its intent to relocate a submarine to Guam to replace the USS San Francisco, and they may yet transfer other submarines to Guam or relocate ships in the future to

support the new Marine presence. These issues are expected to be addressed in the Pentagon's Quadrennial Defense Review, or the QDR. The QDR is on schedule to be transmitted to Congress by March of this year. The QDR may also make a recommendation for carrier presence in the Pacific. Guam remains central to new concepts under consideration for increased operational rotations of carriers in the Pacific and the possible stationing of a new carrier in the Pacific. Ultimately, regional security requirements drive these decisions. I look forward to increased utilization of and more port calls at Apra Harbor by the Navy.

We have an opportunity within our reach in the immediate future to significantly improve our infrastructure for the benefit of our people and to complement the increase in military forces and the economic activity that

will be coming. Our tax revenues will increase, both indirectly from economic activity and directly from Section 30 increases.

We should prioritize improvements to water, power, roads and other essential infrastructure. I will continue to facilitate cooperation between our local leaders and military officials to leverage defense dollars for the benefit of our island. Opportunities to pursue joint civilian and military projects are before us and should be pursued, such as defense access roads.

It is clear that off-base infrastructure is essential to our ability to host military forces and that we must take the steps necessary to prepare our island. I will also continue our close work with the Department of the Interior to develop the bond bank for the insular areas for infrastructure that was proposed by Deputy Assistant

Secretary David Cohen. Last year I used the legislative process to clarify that grants for capital improvement available under the Office of Insular Affairs should be prioritized for those territories facing court-ordered capital improvements, such as Guam's water system. This work has resulted in a \$3.4 million CIP allotment for Guam this year, a \$2 million increase over last year. These funds will be used to help close the Ordot landfill, refurbish the Hagatna boat basin, and construct a heat treatment facility to support an agricultural export market. We provided \$14.2 million in funding for Guam in the Compact-impact legislation that is being used by the Government of Guam to finance the construction of five new schools. And we will continue the work that has begun on a \$20 million project, financed with \$18 million in FEMA funding that will bury the main power lines and enable us to better

withstand the next typhoon. These opportunities to use sustained growth to benefit our whole community by improving our basic infrastructure are within our reach and will make a dramatic difference in our lives.

When Congress reconvenes, I will continue to seek legislative opportunities to advance our issues. The most important issue that I am working on is the war claims bill, H.R. 1595. Supported by 101 of my colleagues and reported out of the House Resources Committee on November 16, 2005, H.R. 1595, the Guam World War II Loyalty Recognition Act, will provide closure to the people of Guam who suffered atrocities – including personal injury, forced labor, forced marches, internment, and death – during the occupation of Guam in World War II. The substitute bill that I offered represents a good compromise

and removes the provision that was most objectionable to many on our island.

The next step is for the bill to be considered by the House Judiciary Committee. Once this second committee has approved the bill, it will be ready for consideration on the floor of the House of Representatives, and if passed by the full House, it will be sent to the Senate for consideration. These steps in the legislative process are very difficult, especially so in this fiscal environment. We are a long way from closure for those scarred by the occupation. But further progress is within our reach and our mutual efforts to work for passage of this bill are more important than ever. Our progress builds on the efforts on this issue that my predecessors, Congressman Tony Won Pat, Congressman Ben Blaz, and Congressman Robert Underwood, have made and I recognize them for their work

in the past. On this note I also wish to thank the Guam Legislature for Resolution 72 affirming support for the substitute bill and the Governor and Lieutenant Governor for their public statements in support of H.R. 1595.

There are other bills that I will work to move forward if opportunities arise. I hope that this is the year that Congress makes progress on radiation issues for the benefit of those who may have suffered exposure from radiation tests during the 1950s. I have supported the efforts of the advocacy group on Guam to address this issue, and while progress has been slow, it is an issue that should be addressed.

There may be opportunities to use the new federal resources that will be given to prepare for an avian flu outbreak to strengthen Guam's health care system, most notably in regional reporting and preventive care issues.

We must remain attentive to and poised to respond to this threat should it come to Guam's shores. The Guam Medical Society has been instrumental in focusing our medical community on preparedness. I have facilitated coordination between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention officials in Atlanta, Speaker Mark Forbes, Chairman Mike Cruz, Senator Lou Leon Guerrero and officials of the Government of Guam. Our legislative leaders have certainly recognized the need for a pro-active response to the avian flu threat and I commend you for your initiatives. The opportunities to address shortcomings in preventive care on Guam are within our reach if we continue to work together on avian flu preparedness.

As the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress returns for its second session later this month, I will renew my efforts to advance our issues. As your representative, I am committed to doing

my part to ensure that we take advantage of opportunities within our reach. The reauthorization of the Higher Education Act is an opportunity in this next session of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress to increase funding for programs at the University of Guam and the Guam Community College. We also will work to fully fund the goals of the No Child Left Behind Act so that resources would be available to the Guam Public School System to raise our schoolchildren's test scores to meet federally mandated performance standards. Federal assistance for professional teacher development is an important part of this effort. I will also be working with the Guam Public School System this year to improve Guam's funding under the national school lunch program, as requested by the Guam Education Policy Board and Superintendent Juan Flores.

Next month, the Interagency Group on Insular Areas will meet in Washington. I will again raise issues that require a higher level of interagency response, including the Government of Guam's request for cabotage exemptions and improvements to the visa waiver program that will help our visitor industry. While the cabotage exemption has been placed on their agenda for the past two years, this issue has not received the positive response both in the IGIA and in the Department of Transportation that is necessary to make any progress at all this year. I will also be requesting IGIA endorsement of my bill to extend the Guam-only visa waiver from 15 to 90 days, so that it conforms to the same visit opportunity as the national visa waiver program.

Some opportunities don't seem like opportunities but seem more like obstacles. I share the concern of many

regarding the status of land transfers to original landowners in Tiyan and the possible violation of the airport deeds due to these transfers. I believe that this issue requires careful review and I am urging our local leaders to be forthcoming with the details of the actions that have brought us to this point. At some point, the Government of Guam will have to propose its remedy to bring Guam back into compliance with the transfer deeds. This is an opportunity to clarify land use policy on Guam for our community and to engage appropriate federal officials on how we can resolve outstanding disputes, such as the northern high school land deed issue. The Governor, the Attorney General, the Legislature and I have important roles in this dialogue, and I hope we can find the common ground for solutions to this issue.

As we look down the road, we should re-focus on issues of self government and new opportunities to advance Guam's political development. My amendment to the Organic Act to create a unified Judiciary provides a greater measure of local self-governance and ensures a co-equal third branch of government. There have been some good ideas lately about how to move forward, and I am open to these ideas. In the past year, some have advocated changes to the Organic Act, others have advocated moving beyond the Organic Act to a Guam Constitution, and there is even a promising proposal by Senator Klitzkie on a new approach to amending the Organic Act. It is important that we develop a consensus and that we consider the far reaching effects of these proposals. The opportunity for real change is within our reach if we work together to further the cause of self governance for our island.

We should make the most of our opportunities, however great or small they are. I have hosted six Congressional Delegations to our island, and just this past weekend I hosted Congressman Mike Honda, the Chairman of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus. These visits, whether for a few hours or a few days, are opportunities to tell our story, to enlighten Members of Congress about our issues, and to forge enduring friendships. Many of you have participated in these events, and we have all made a positive impact for our island. In this regard, I also want to thank the Governor and Lieutenant Governor and their respective spouses and their staffs for the gracious courtesies they have extended to the visiting delegations. These small courtesies really make the most of these visits.

I use every opportunity to promote Guam, both on island and in Washington, and to help advance our issues. We have promoted our island with our annual Liberation Celebration on Capitol Hill. Last year's event was attended by 33 members of Congress, Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta, and over 700 guests.

Both in Washington and in Guam, my staff and I are dedicated to making the most of any opening to make progress on the many issues that we are working on. This is the hard work of representation. There is no magic bullet or secret formula. There is no super lobbyist whose influence can substitute for honest and hardworking elected representation.

When we return, Congress will probably be consumed by a growing lobbying scandal that has far reaching consequences – even to our shores. My report to you today

would not be complete without a word about Guam's missed opportunities because the corrupting influence of "big money" and the "big deal" made its way onto our island. There is one more opportunity within our reach that I sincerely hope we take – an opportunity to make a fresh start, to disavow unethical practices, and to renew our commitment to our people that our work on their behalf is driven by honesty and dedication not by deception and greed. As elected officials, we have choices – whether to govern as public servants or as politicians; whether to seek consensus or to seek division; whether to work together or to work against each other. I believe that the people of Guam want us to choose the higher path and I am willing to walk that path with you.

In this, my second term in office, I have had the distinct honor to represent the people of Guam in Congress,

and not a day goes by that I am not deeply grateful for this honor. If there is one thing that stands out as I recall my experiences of the past three years, it is my deep and profound gratitude to our men and women who serve our nation in harm's way today. In my five trips to Iraq and three trips to Afghanistan, my trips to the Horn of Africa and even to a carrier deployed in the Middle East, I have seen the face of selfless dedication and I cannot even begin to express my pride in our men and women from Guam who are serving everywhere in every capacity. They inspire me to work harder for our island. They embody the words "duty" and "honor".

Whether the perspective is from Guam or Washington, we are far removed from the reality of the sacrifices of those who are deployed in the Global War on Terror.

Earlier this month I was on a Congressional Delegation that

shared the Christmas and New Year's holidays with our troops and I again visited Afghanistan – imagine that, winter in Afghanistan. I was so impressed by two young Chamorro soldiers, Sergeant George Mateo and Sergeant Pete Santos, who were assigned to drive our convoy to an air base. I recall thinking that while I am fortunate to be leaving in two days, these young men, far removed from their families back home, have months left to serve. These soldiers represented the selfless dedication and professionalism of all the men and women in our Armed Forces, both active duty, National Guard and Reserves.

They serve for the noblest ideals, and they are an inspiration to all of us. My work in Washington is dedicated to our sons and daughters in uniform who serve, and to all those quiet heroes in our community whose dedication to public service make our island a great place to

live -- our veterans, our police officers, our fire fighters,  
our nurses, doctors, teachers, and all of our public servants.

To all of you, from all of us, *Dankulo na Si Yu'os Ma'ase*.

God Bless Guam, and God Bless our Great Nation, the  
United States of America.