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July 28, 2021

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva  
Chair, House Committee on Natural Resources  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1324 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

*Transmitted via email to [Ivan.Robles@mail.house.gov](mailto:Ivan.Robles@mail.house.gov)*

**RE: Testimony for Committee Hearing on “The President's FY22 Budget Priority for the Territories: Medicaid, SSI, and SNAP Parity”**

*Dear Chair Grijalva:*

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony for the written record to express my full support for the provision of adequate and equitable funding for Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP) for territories, as prioritized in President Biden’s fiscal year 2022 budget request.

**Medicaid**

Under Medicaid, unlike states, territories are subject to annual caps and expiration dates for federal funding. In addition to these limits on federal funding, territories must also match federal dollars with local dollars at a fixed federal to territory ratio (55:45). This contrasts with the local match that states are required to contribute based on their per-capita income. The inability of some territories to meet this high match requirement has prevented Guam and our sister territories from availing of much-needed federal funds. In addition, the annual cap on Medicaid funds for territories has led to the government of Guam having to cover the remaining costs with unmatched local funds.

Since 2019, territorial Medicaid funding has been awarded on a temporary basis through legislative intervention. Thus, we continue to face threats of potential severe funding cliffs. We are appreciative of Representatives Darren Soto and Gus Bilirakis for their introduction of H.R. 4406 to extend Medicaid funding and the temporary Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP), as well its subsequent passing in the House Committee on Energy and Commerce. However, a permanent solution proffered by President Biden to remove funding caps and align our matching rates to that of the states is necessary.

**Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**

Since its creation almost 50 years ago, SSI has excluded Guam, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands and American Samoa, but is available to our sister territory, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). There is no relevant difference between Guam and the CNMI that would lead to the denial of SSI benefits to otherwise eligible U.S. citizens. With the extension of SSI to Guam, an estimated 24,000 people can finally avail of this much needed assistance. We hope the Committee will also support helping aged, blind, and disabled individuals in Guam with limited or no income to meet their basic needs.

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**

Under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Guam and U.S. Virgin Islands are fortunate to receive annual allotments under the program to provide necessary sustenance to our most vulnerable residents. However, this support is not spread equally amongst our sister territories, Puerto Rico, CNMI, and American Samoa, who receive fixed block grants to operate localized nutrition programs in lieu of SNAP. These funding constraints significantly impact these territories' abilities to match nutritional assistance benefits to their population needs. We hope that the Committee will work towards addressing these discrepancies in order for all territories to get equal treatment and assistance under SNAP.

I share President Biden's vision to provide equity under vital quality of life federal programs for the millions of Americans living in the territories and recognize and appreciate the work of your Committee in advocating in Congress for the same. Our strong partnership has been beneficial to the people of Guam, and I look forward to continuing working closely with your Committee. Should you need more information regarding the impact or implementation of these programs in Guam, my office remains available to you.

*Si Yu'os ma'åse*, Mr. Chair.

*Senseremente,*



**LOURDES A. LEON GUERRERO**

*Maga'hågan Guåhan*

Governor of Guam