

LOURDES A. LEON GUERRERO  
GOVERNOR



JOSHUA F. TENORIO  
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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR OF GUAM

April 24, 2023

The Honorable Antony J. Blinken  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C St. NW  
Washington, DC 20520

**RE: Request for Continuation of Annual \$30 Million Appropriation for COFA Impact**

*Håfa Adai* Secretary Blinken,

I appreciate the good work you are doing to secure the peace and well-being of Pacific Islanders. Your extensive travels in the Indo-Pacific region and sincere efforts to strengthen relationships with our allies are noted by many who follow your endeavors.

With the Compacts of Free Association (COFA) before you now, I hope you can understand my grave concern that the annual \$30 million appropriation to the Department of Interior for Compact Impact costs has been removed from the administration's budget request. The government of Guam receives \$12-\$14 million yearly, of which \$5.7 million pays for the lease-back program that funded the construction, collateral equipment, and maintenance of four (4) schools in Guam. This funding has helped alleviate the impact of migration by citizens of the Freely Associated States (FAS) on our local school system.

While Guam remains supportive of a prosperous and mutually beneficial US-FAS relationship, it is crucial to recognize that eliminating the \$30 million appropriation would hinder the government of Guam's ability to maintain payments for our school lease obligations and other social services. The appropriation was the only means that offered partial relief to affected state and territorial governments.

Last week I called Ambassador Joseph Yun, who negotiated the COFAs for the State Department, regarding the status of the appropriation. He stated that he will raise the issue with the Department of Interior. I hope you can rectify the uncertainty and ensure the appropriation will be added into the State or Interior Department's budget, even though the sum is still woefully insufficient to cover COFA migrant costs.

I have consistently advocated for five policy positions to be included in the renegotiated COFAs outlined in my numerous congressional testimonies and letters to the Administration and members of Congress. I have attached my previous letter to you, which elaborates on those policy positions.

From: Governor Leon Guerrero  
To: Secretary Blinken  
April 24, 2023  
Page 2 of 2

The government of Guam has also taken on the task of tackling impact methodology concerns that have prevented full reimbursement for costs expended. Once our report is finalized and submitted to the Department of Interior and/or the Department of State, we expect to receive full reimbursement.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter, and I look forward to your consideration. If you have any questions, my office remains available to you.

*Senseramente,*



**LOURDES A. LEON GUERRERO**

*Maga'hågan Guåhan*

Governor of Guam

Enclosures: 2023 Interagency Group on Insular Affairs (IGIA) Presentation  
Letter to Congressman Ed Case November 7, 2022  
Letter to Secretary Blinken April 15, 2022  
Impact of the Compact of Free Association on Guam FY 2004-2017