

# PORT AUTHORITY OF GUAM

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## NEWS RELEASE

### Port Receives Bi-Partisan Support in Congress for Expansion

**Piti, Guam, April 28, 2022:** U.S. Congressman Joe Wilson (R-SC), a member of the House Armed Services Committee, wrote a letter yesterday to Admiral John C. Aquilino, Commander United States Indo-Pacific Command, raising a critical point that funding the Port's needs, such as three new gantry cranes, rehabilitation of its wharves and the replacement of 50-plus year old facilities is critical to the military's mission on Guam and in the region. Wilson made known, in his letter to Aquilino, his support for the expansion of the Port Authority of Guam in the context of the important role it provides in the military's Indo-Pacific strategy.

"Recently, I had a meeting with former Guam Delegate Madeleine Z. Bordallo and the Port Authority of Guam regarding the Port's 2022 Masterplan, which is currently underway thanks to funding from the Office of Local Defense Community (OLDCC). This meeting was secured at the urging of Governor Leon Guerrero and Lt. Governor Joshua F. Tenorio," wrote Wilson (R-SC).

Immediately following up this meeting, Port Authority of Guam General Manager Rory J. Respicio confirmed that Wilson continues to be an advocate for Guam and knows that Guam's strategic location requires that there be great focus on what Congress and the Department of Defense must do to ensure that the Port of Guam does not experience uninterrupted operations.

Respicio asked Wilson's assistance in seeking support from USINDOPACOM or DOD to fund the Port of Guam's readiness program along with statutory authorization for the execution of funds, so that the Port does not become a choke-point in the deployment of military and civilian commodities.

"I believe the Port of Guam should be viewed as part of the solution for the rapid discharging and deploying of military assets and its commodities in the Pacific, especially with regard to the Pacific Deterrence Initiative," Wilson wrote. "The implementation of the Pacific Deterrence Initiative and its components including the Guam Defense System requires that we, once again, provide the resources to build capacity and resiliency at the Port of Guam by replacing its aging 50-year-old facilities. In particular, I have been informed there is a pressing need for the acquisition of three new STS Gantry Cranes and the hardening of its wharves. As a member of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness, I understand the significance of Guam in our INDOPACOM strategy and am committed to advocate for Guam's needs."

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During this same trip, Lt. Governor Joshua Tenorio, Bordallo, and Respicio, along with Port Chief Planner Joe Javellana and CIP Coordinator Clarence Lagutang, also met with Congressman John Garamendi who is the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Readiness and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure to seek his assistance in obtaining additional opportunities for federal funding and exploring every possibility for the Port on how best to secure funds.

In making the case for Guam, Respicio emphasized that the Port must expand its terminal yard otherwise it will become a chokepoint for the Guam Military Buildup and the island's local infrastructure.

"Meeting with Congressman Wilson and Garamendi and other key staff members of the House and Senate has opened up the way in seeking additional opportunities for federal funding within INDOPACOM and the Pentagon," Respicio said. "This letter from Congressman Wilson is monumental and it gives Governor Leon Guerrero and Lt. Governor Tenorio a solid case in requesting funds for the Port's Readiness Plan and other funding opportunities for the construction of a new Hospital and medical campus and other critical civilian infrastructure, to name a few."