



OFFICE OF SENATOR
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao

38th Guam Legislature | *I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan*

MEDIA STATEMENT

May 4, 2026

Senator Shawn Gumataotao issued the following statement regarding today's Public Hearing for the Department of Corrections' (DOC) FY 2027 Budget Request:

“I thank the DOC's uniformed and support staff for continuing to do their best within the department's resource limitations. Building on the 2021 DOC Modernization Act and funding set aside for a new facility, the Public Safety Committee led several discussions last year to move the initiative forward following our tour of the Adult Correctional Facility in Mangilao.

The Public Safety Committee acknowledges the attention and commitment policymakers have given to the urgent safety and health concerns that have plagued DOC for many years. Our Branch's commitment led to the 2021 DOC Modernization Act which included a \$5 million General Fund appropriation in FY 2025, an authorization for DOC to use \$1 million from that same funding source for immediate facility repairs, and a \$5 million appropriation from unappropriated excess FY 2026 General Fund collections.

The lack of forward movement on developing a new prison impacts most if not all aspects of DOC's operations. Continued delays create risks for employee and inmate safety, lead to uncontrolled overtime costs and employee burnout, and result in the movement of illegal contraband and stopgap fixes for facility plumbing, electrical, and structural issues.

It is one thing to resist public policy. But when those in charge of DOC in the past effectively lobby this Branch and then lack the discipline to follow through, it always comes back to why pursue changes in law in the first place. I would like to see DOC finally turn words into action on a new prison facility in the remaining four months of FY 2026 and through the FY 2027 Budget. The lack of prioritization by DOC leadership in the past to improve conditions at DOC is not due to a lack of funding or legislative support.

I will continue working with Acting DOC Director Joseph Carbullido and his team to finally move forward on a new prison. If a new prison is not a priority of DOC for the remainder of 2026, senators need to redeploy limited taxpayer dollars to other public safety needs.”

For more information, please contact Senator Gumataotao's office at (671) 647-1409/1411 or via email at office.senatorshawn@guamlegislature.gov.