



OFFICE OF SENATOR
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao

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

MEDIA STATEMENT
June 15, 2026

Gumataotao on Homeland Security-Civil Defense Oversight Hearing: **Complacency is the Enemy of Progress.**

Senator Shawn Gumataotao issued the following statement following today's Oversight Hearing regarding FEMA's decision to place all grants on restrictive drawdown status:

"Since our collective swearing-in, the Committee on Emergency Management has recognized FEMA's decision to be consistent with the Federal Government's ongoing efforts to safeguard federal taxpayer dollars through stronger fiscal controls, reservation of critical resources for truly significant events, and a recognition that states and territories should invest more local resources into disaster mitigation, response, and recovery.

According to FEMA's letter dated May 12, 2026, placing all FEMA grants awarded to the Government of Guam on restrictive drawdown status, the 2023 Premier Group Audit identified over \$40 million in questioned costs and 11 compliance issues, none of which have been fully resolved to date. The Office of Public Accountability through OPA Report No. 2024-04 found that the General Fund paid \$71.3 million in expenditures under the OHS-OCD operations, FEMA recovery, and tsunami grant programs, and was only reimbursed \$62.9 million by FEMA. According to OHS-OCD officials today, the Government of Guam has since settled less than \$500,000 from the estimated \$8.4 million in questioned costs. This is unacceptable.

A lesson from history. In the 20th century, America wielded a strength best used in the service of peace. It was as true then as it must remain today in 2026. Strength must be continuous and focused when the enemy changes, and in the 21st century and beyond the enemy has certainly changed. The enemy I am referring to is not some adversary that emerged when this modern emergency management system was established.

Complacency is the enemy of progress.

Strengthening Guam's existing all-hazards warning system, establishing or building up individual and family disaster supplies, scheduling school, workplace, and community-wide drills, and other preparedness efforts require resources and coordination. Our partnership with FEMA remains critical to our preparedness efforts and therefore it is imperative that the Government of Guam does its part to demonstrate good stewardship of local and federal taxpayer funds."

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