



OFFICE OF SENATOR  
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao

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**Gumataotao: Bill 280 Protects Our Island Community and The Men and Women that Protect Guam.**

*Compelling testimonies strengthen renewed push for proactive policies safeguarding judicial and peace officers*

A public hearing was held today on Bill No. 280 by Senator Shawn Gumataotao. If approved, the measure criminalizes the use of force, threats, or deception against or toward a Judicial Officer or Peace Officer, or members of their family, including the dissemination through any means, including by posting on the internet, the judicial officer's or peace officer's – or their family's – personal information.

“Judicial officers and peace officers have a role in our society. While many may not like some of the outcomes of their respective work, these men and women uphold a strict adherence to the years of their training and the code of conduct that each swears to uphold when they put on a robe or when they don a uniform adorned specifically with a metal badge,” Senator Gumataotao stated.

“At its core, this bill is about deterrence and ensuring that there are real and significant consequences to the act of threatening judicial and peace officers and their families for no other reason than the carrying out of official duties,” testified Chief Justice of Guam, the Honorable Katherine Maraman. “These public officials undertake significant burden when they agree to adjudicate cases or ensure compliance with court orders – their sacrifices should never include personal safety and security.”

“Public servants, including judges, should not be compelled to choose between fulfilling their duties and exposing themselves and their families to potential harm,” wrote the Honorable F. Philip Carbullido, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Guam. “By enacting Bill No. 280-38 (COR), we can take a crucial step toward safeguarding the independence and impartiality of judicial officers. This bill will help ensure that all individuals involved in the administration of justice can carry out their duties without fear or intimidation.”

“Unfortunately, we are seeing more incidents across the country where judges and their families are being threatened, harassed, or targeted because of decisions made from the bench,” added the Honorable Alberto Lamorena, III, Presiding Judge of the Superior Court of Guam. “In some cases, personal information such as home addresses and family information has been posted online. In other cases, threats have escalated into violence. These actions not only put individuals at risk, but they also threaten the independence of the courts and public confidence in our justice system.”

“Just by living on island, parties and court patrons know where judges live, where their children go to school and where they usually buy their groceries,” wrote the Honorable Sean Brown, Superior Court of Guam Magistrate Judge. “This fact means that Judicial Officers are much more accessible than in many larger jurisdictions. As a result, the concern addressed by Bill 280-38 is even more real on Guam than in places where Judicial Officers are not at the forefront of public gaze or can be found at the village mart on a regular basis.”

“As courts confront more frequent and sophisticated forms of doxxing, online harassment, and targeted intimidation, the need for proactive and comprehensive protections has become critical,” wrote Danielle Rosete, Administrator of the Courts, Judiciary of Guam.

“Our community has come to see that while there is an important role that our judicial and peace officers serve, there is a misconception that their titles define them more than their humanity does. They are our neighbors. They are our family members. They are much like us whether some may like it or not,” Senator Gumataotao added. “This policy comes as acts of violence against judicial officers and peace officers are on the rise. Guam is not immune. I am a believer that due process is as important a right we have as Americans. It is also this right that judicial officers and peace officers swear to protect.”

Senator Gumataotao extends his gratitude to the many other individuals including Maryland Chief Justice Matthew Fader, United States District Judge for the District of New Jersey, Esther Salas, and officials across Guam’s public safety and law enforcement community who contributed to today’s Public Hearing in support of Bill 280.

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