



OFFICE OF SENATOR  
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao

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

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## **Gumataotao: Support Aspiring Athletes, Promote Public Health and Safety with Much-Needed Community Sports and Recreational Facilities**

*Government and sports leaders back Bill 326 prioritizing unused public land in Barrigada Heights for public use*

A public hearing was held today on Bill No. 326 by Senator Shawn Gumataotao. If approved, the measure authorizes leasing a portion of government land in Barrigada Heights to the Guam Football Association (GFA) for developing and managing a football (soccer) pitch.

Bill 326 builds on the 38th Guam Legislature's work from earlier this year which led to the prioritization of unused public land in *Hagåtña* for a new football pitch and shared space for critical sports activities. "Bill 326 is our latest effort to prioritize public land for public use," Senator Gumataotao stated. "GFA has the resources to invest in additional sports facilities across our island in support of Guam's families, and the organization made it clear through discussions regarding a similar proposal a few months ago that outside of their Agat and Talofofu facilities, Guam was granted at least two projects, but the organization does not have property for these initiatives."

"Honorable Senators, it is imperative that we continue to develop sports fields so our kids can be physically active and live a healthy lifestyle," testified Barrigada Mayor June Blas in support of Bill 326. "The Vice-Mayor and I feel that having more kids on the field, and less on the streets, would help deter our youth from drugs and alcohol."

"The proposed partnership aligns with GFA's mission of using football as a tool for education, health, community engagement, and social development," added GFA President Valentino "Tino" San Gil. "Our programs currently serve thousands of participants annually, including youth leagues, school competitions, recreational programs, women's football initiatives, coach education courses, referee development, and community outreach activities."

GFA General Secretary Joseph Cepeda offered that the proposed lease authorized under Bill 326 presents an opportunity to expand access to sports and recreation in Barrigada and create a lasting community asset that will benefit generations of Guam residents.

"The facilities envisioned in this measure will serve as a safe and integral space for youth and families at a time when DPR and other government-run facilities are either no longer in existence or are deteriorating faster than this government can fix them," Senator Gumataotao added. "Bill 326 is straightforward and necessary. It reminds us that developing facilities and programs to support our physical and mental health and wellness must be prioritized especially at a time when chronic disease, physical inactivity, and additional fast-food restaurants and dialysis centers are becoming all too common."

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).