



OFFICE OF SENATOR
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao

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

Media Statement
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The following statement was made by Senator Shawn Gumataotao today to open the discussions on substituted Bill 44-38 (COR) or the General Appropriations Act of 2026 at the Guam Congress Building:

"Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me to share my thoughts on the motion to accept Bill 44-38 as substituted on the Floor. The Fiscal Year Budget is one of our most important mandates. The Organic Act of Guam is explicit on our role in this process-appropriations shall be made by the legislature. I rise to express my excitement for the new fiscal year budget process. I appreciate the work of the Chairman of the Committee on Government Finance and Operations to this point.

I appreciate the work of the men and women of the agencies under the Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and your Guam National Guard who played a key role in this important process as well. This is a process. A series of actions or steps taken to achieve a particular end. With that said, Mr. Speaker, in recent days, I have seen a contrast in behavior in the lead up to today. We are a far cry from where this Branch started in the first legislative session in March to this very moment. We shouldn't be. The end of this budgetary process will drive how the Government of Guam will operate starting 51 days from now on October 1, 2025. More importantly, the end of the process will also facilitate actions from those served by our three Branches of Government. All eyes are on the Guam Congress Building for a public policy that must be of help to every man, woman, and child at every level of this island society.

Every taxpayer will be watching what we do today and in the few weeks ahead to prioritize their money for critical services impacting public education, safety, and healthcare. I ask the people of Guam to pray for me and my colleagues – the men and women charged by the voters of Guam to put together a responsible spending plan that is the culmination of hundreds of hours of preparation-public hearings, meetings, discussions and research. That budget must consider the economic reality each of us face, including Guam's high cost of living, federal funding cuts, and a struggling tourism industry.

The act making appropriations for the operations of the three branches of the government for Fiscal Year 2026 lays in front of us. Our task is to review the budget presented to us and enact it into law with a vote of yay or nay. It will be a plan that has a purpose to allocate resources rationally. We will strive to make budgetary decisions that are cost-effective to yield the greatest benefit with the available resources-at least that is my commitment.

Mr. Speaker, though not my first time working on a fiscal year budget of the Government of Guam, I anticipate though in my first budget process in this particular role that there will be major disagreements. I want to just say that what our people may see may be more of a political exercise than a planning one. Compromise must be our goal here. This process is our democratic government in motion. Thank you again Mr. Speaker."

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