



EDDIE BAZA CALVO
Governor

RAY TENORIO
Lieutenant Governor

Office of the Governor of Guam.

August 8, 2018

President Donald J. Trump
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Buenas yan Håfa Adai, Mr. President:

Greetings, *Må'gas gi Sanlågu*, President of the United States! I write to you from Guam, in our traditional CHamoru language, to ask you to join me in supporting the right to vote for our military veterans living in our U.S. territory in the western Pacific.

As the nation celebrates Independence Day on the Fourth of July, Guam also celebrates Liberation Day on July 21. In 1944, the United States returned to Guam and began its military campaign to free us, the only U.S. soil outside of the Philippines to be occupied fully by Axis Powers in World War II.

Some historians estimate up to 10% of our population died during the brutal three-year occupation. On August 8, 1944, the Chagui'an massacre site, now on the National Register of Historic Places, saw the beheading of 45 indigenous CHamorus. Some of them were as young as 15 years old. They had been forced to carry war supplies for the enemy.

Sixty-three years after Chagui'an, on the same month and day, August 8, 2008, U.S. Navy Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Anthony Carbullido died while serving our country. His convoy hit an IED in Afghanistan. He, too, was young. Only 25 years old, this proud American patriot, U.S. citizen, and Navy man from Guam paid the ultimate sacrifice. He too, was carrying war supplies. But he did so for his own beloved country, the United States of America.

As another August 8 passes, I salute our heroic son HM2 Carbullido. He is one among many Guam patriots to have served since World War II, who have paid the ultimate price to defend our nation and uphold democracy around the world.



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Mr. President, following your North Korean summit on June 13, Air Force One touched down on Andersen Air Force Base in Guam. I was proud to welcome you in person to our island as the premier American stronghold guarding the Asia-Pacific borders and an unparalleled strategic base of operations for the peace-keeping efforts in this region:

- One-third of prime land is occupied by U.S. naval and air-force bases
- The highest per-capita American military enlistment rate is in Guam
- One out of every eight Guamanians has served in the U.S. Armed Forces
- 450% higher casualty rate for Guam service members in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Four thousand U.S. patriots are buried at the Guam U.S. Veterans Cemetery

So many from Guam laid down their lives, and thousands more fought and bled on foreign shores in the service of America's most cherished and noblest ideal: the defense of democracy. Today, sons and daughters of Guam continue that legacy of service. Yet, despite this, not one can participate in the democratic process with a vote for their Commander-in-Chief, the American president.

This tragic irony affects thousands of our American citizens and military veterans living across the U.S. territories: “equal in war, unequal in peace,” as the late Brigadier General and former Congressman Ben Blaz, USMC (Ret.), told Congress. Would we permit this to happen anywhere else, on the streets of Brooklyn or in the small towns of Illinois, for those who gave their very lives to our nation?

“America, My Irony,” is the title of a memorial poem about the Guam U.S. Veterans Cemetery, attached to this correspondence. Joseph W. Duenas, the Guamanian-American author, is the son of a 27-year veteran of the U.S. Army. His message resonates with our veterans, our military families, the U.S. citizens of Guam, and all brothers- and sisters-in-arms in the United States: “Beneath each stone, a patriot sleeps.”

At a time of heated national debate on the rights of immigrants, have we yet fallen short in advocating for the rights of our own U.S. citizens? American veterans residing in Guam and other U.S. territories have served tirelessly for generations now, advocating with force of arms to protect our rights. Whose voices are raised for their rights?

Mr. President, you and I are both proud members of the Party of Lincoln. We shoulder a sacred charge to protect our nation, to safeguard the rights of our citizens. Will we also remember our American veterans, patriots who suffered and died to preserve our rights?





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It is time to work for social change and progress for our American citizens. President of *all* Americans, Donald J. Trump, I call on you to join me in bringing democratic equality to all Americans. "A Veteran, A Vote!"

Senseramente (sincerely),

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I Maga'lahaen Guahan
Governor of Guam

cc: John McCain, U.S. Senate Committee on Armed Forces
Johnny Isakson, U.S. Senate Committee on Veteran's Affairs
Mac Thornberry, U.S. Congress Committee on Armed Forces
David Roe, U.S. Congress Committee on Veterans Affairs
Trey Gowdy, U.S. Congress Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
James Mattis, Secretary of Defense
Ryan Zinke, Secretary of the Interior
Robert Wilkie, Secretary of Veterans Affairs
John Kelly, Chief of Staff to the President of the United States
Ted Cruz, U.S. Senate
Lisa Murkowski, U.S. Senate
Elizabeth Warren, U.S. Senate
Nancy Pelosi, U.S. House of Representatives
Maxine Waters, U.S. House of Representatives
Madeleine Bordallo, U.S. House of Representatives
Gregorio Sablan, U.S. House of Representatives
Amata Coleman Radewagen, U.S. House of Representatives
Stacey Plaskett, U.S. House of Representatives
Jenniffer González-Colón, U.S. House of Representatives
Ricky Rosselló, Governor of Puerto Rico
Lolo Matalasi Maliga, Governor of American Samoa
Kenneth Mapp, Governor of the U.S. Virgin Islands
Ralph Torres, Governor of the Northern Mariana Islands

America, My Irony

I know a place, America,
That fights in foreign lands,
For human rights, a voice and vote,
Democracy's expanse.

And in this place, America,
Where sun first hits the land,
An island meets the coral beach
Of white Pacific sand.

And at the center of the Isle,
A garden is maintained,
Where Stars and Stripes are flown sky-high
Above four thousand graves.

Beneath each stone, a patriot sleeps,
Where memories decay,
Of war and bloody bludgeoning,
On foreign shores away.

And stacked four high, in concrete crypts,
The U.S. soldiers lie,
No voice or vote for president:
Democracy denied.

As sunset caps tonight, the Light,
On Guam, the Colony,
This garden sleeps, four thousand deep:
No vote for them tonight.

by Joseph W. Duenas