



DEPARTMENTS OF THE ARMY AND THE AIR FORCE
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
GUAM NATIONAL GUARD
430 ARMY DRIVE, BLDG 300, RM 113
BARRIGADA, GUAM 96913-4421

May 31, 2023

The National Guard Association of the United States
ATTN: Awards Program
1 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001

SUBJECT: Harry S. Truman Award Nomination for Distinguished Service in Support of National Defense – Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero, Governor of Guam

I am honored to nominate the Honorable Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero, Governor of Guam, for the National Guard Association of the United States Harry S. Truman Award. As the leader of America's westernmost territory, Governor Leon Guerrero has been a prominent contributor to the defense and security of the most important strategic region in the world and that of the American homeland.

Governor Leon Guerrero was elected to her position in 2018 and is currently serving her second term. As Governor, she prioritized the need to fully engage with the Department of Defense by strengthening relationships with local military commands, the Indo-Pacific Command, and the Pentagon. Before being elected, Governor Leon Guerrero served five terms as a senator in the Guam Legislature, championing issues that enhanced the defense and security of Guam and the Nation.

As the leader of the westernmost United States territory, Governor Leon Guerrero has demonstrated consistent leadership and resolve in ensuring the safety and security of over 170,000 citizens of Guam while enabling America's competitive edge over its adversaries. Governor Leon Guerrero's most recent feat is her leadership in Guam's current recovery efforts after Category 4 Typhoon Mawar battered the island and the neighboring Northern Mariana Islands on May 24, 2023. Her efforts coordinated multiple governmental and non-governmental organizations to work towards bringing the island to normalcy.

STRENGTHENING AMERICA'S POSTURE THROUGH MILITARY PARTNERSHIP

Governor Leon Guerrero has embraced her role in ensuring the United States can compete with its peer adversaries and guarantee a safe and prosperous nation. Guam's strategic location in the Western Pacific, and as a part of the Second Island Chain, makes it a significant player in the defense and security of our Nation. The Secretary of Defense has described China as America's "pacing challenge." This makes her role as the leader of Guam's 170,000 citizens even more significant to the defense of America.

In addition to receiving threats from China, Guam has been singled out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) President Kim Jong Un with threats of attack. As the Commander in

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Chief of the Guam National Guard, Governor Leon Guerrero has ensured that the Guam Army National Guard plays an active role in providing the security forces to Task Force Talon for strategic protection against these threats with a Terminal High Altitude Air Defense (THAAD) missile system. To date, the Guam Army National Guard has provided six rotations of companies providing the security forces for Task Force Talon.

Governor Leon Guerrero is working with Joint Region Marianas and the Indo-Pacific Command to ensure the island of Guam obtains 360-degree defense coverage of Guam through the Guam Defense System. This will better secure the military assets on the island and posture the island to defend itself from any adversaries.

Governor Leon Guerrero has further advocated for and supported plans to enhance the region's security, and she was crucial in establishing Camp Blaz, the Marine Corps' first new base since 1952. Camp Blaz is part of the relocation of forces from Japan to Guam as part of an international agreement. This \$8.2 billion effort encompassed economic and environmental impacts and associated migrations. Camp Blaz provides the Marine Corps with a geographically distributed and operationally resilient posture in the Western Pacific and strengthens its ability to support international security as well as our allies and partners in the region.

In March 2020, Governor Leon Guerrero demonstrated the epitome of a compassionate leader during an unprecedented time in global history. Amid the first COVID-19 surge, she provided the sailors of the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt refuge on Guam. While underway, the aircraft carrier suffered an outbreak among the ship's 5,000-person crew. More than 1,200 sailors had tested positive for the virus, with one casualty and the risk of more to follow. Unwelcome at other ports and running out of options, the USS Roosevelt was offered respite by Governor Leon Guerrero. Docking in Apra Harbor, the Sailors quarantined in Guam hotels for two months to stop the spread of the virus and sanitize the vessel, which enabled the Roosevelt to return to duty with no additional casualties. Her selfless decision saved untold lives while protecting national security interests. For her efforts, U.S. Indo-Pacific Commander Admiral John Aquilino, on behalf of Acting Secretary of the Navy James E. McPherson, presented her with the Navy Distinguished Public Service award in May 2020. When asked by the media why she accepted the risks to her community to help the Roosevelt's crew, she responded, "We have to take care of those who defend us. It is the humane thing to do."

The 2010 Record of Decision established the Civil-Military Coordination Council, and Governor Leon Guerrero inherited membership upon becoming Governor of Guam and became Co-Chair of the council. The CMCC was created to provide a process for making recommendations to the Department of Defense to revise current and future construction tempos, adjust the sequencing of construction activities in Guam, and provide other advice to directly influence workforce population levels to benefit the community and military missions. As Co-Chair, Governor Leon Guerrero has made tremendous strides in ensuring congressional legislation provides enough workers to complete military and community construction projects during this critical growth period. Additionally, her foreign relations have proven robust as she recently partnered with a delegation led by Rep. Ron P. Salo, chairperson of the Philippine House Committee on Overseas Worker Affairs, to expedite the approval process for H-2B visa applications. This partnership will

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result in better outcomes for local contractors and Guam’s growing labor force needs both inside and outside the fence.

GUAM NATIONAL GUARD LEADERSHIP

Under Governor Lou Leon Guerrero’s leadership, the Guam National Guard has made significant advancement toward prominence as the most forward National Guard and the only one west of the International Date Line. Her leadership led to the Guam National Guard’s successful completion of numerous deployments, including an enduring mission providing critical site security for the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missile site in Northern Guam; a Multinational Force and Observers mission in the Sinai Peninsula in support of the treaty of peace between Egypt and Israel; support to Customs and Border Patrol in the United States Southwest; response and recovery in the aftermath of Category 4 Typhoon Mawar in May 2023; and the National Capitol Response mission in Washington D.C. Additionally, under the purview of Governor Leon Guerrero, the Guam National Guard launched its first STARBASE program, hosting enrichment education in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) for local fifth-grade students.

Governor Leon Guerrero also strongly supports the Guam National Guard’s role in fostering strategic partnerships. The Guam National Guard conducts over 25 engagements with the Armed Forces of the Philippines annually. With the Republic of the Philippines lying in the First Island Chain and with no permanent U.S. military bases there, the GUNG’s partnership remains a vital component in maintaining military interoperability and continued access, basing and overflight with a country engaged in a Mutual Defense Treaty with the United States since 1951. Furthermore, the Guam and Hawaii National Guard’s state partnership with the Republic of the Philippines is the oldest in the Indo-Pacific Command’s Area of Responsibility. As a testament to Guam’s importance to the region and to Governor Leon Guerrero’s leadership, the Republic of Palau formally requested that the Department of Defense enter a National Guard state partnership with Guam.

When the COVID-19 virus was identified as spreading throughout Guam in March 2020, Governor Lou Leon Guerrero was the first governor among the 54 states and territories to activate both a National Guard Surgeon Cell and a Joint Task Force. In a matter of days, 312 Guard Soldiers and Airmen, with active-duty service members under dual-status command, were mobilized to support the Government of Guam agencies for COVID-19 response. Under Leon Guerrero’s command, the Guam National Guard operated the island’s main vaccination clinic and testing sites, quarantine and isolation facilities, and more. The success of innovative vaccination efforts such as Governor Leon Guerrero’s “Operation Liberate Guam” and “Operation Homebound” led to Guam consistently having the highest vaccination rate of any state or territory nationwide, both in the ranks and in the community, for the duration of the pandemic. During a visit to Guam, Major General Michael Place, Chief of Staff, Office of the Surgeon General and U.S. Army Medical Command and Deputy Commanding General (Support), U.S. Army Medical Command, said, “Guam has written the playbook for pandemic response for the rest of us to follow.”

DIPLOMACY

Governor Leon Guerrero executes an exemplary level of diplomacy in all her endeavors. Her steadfast and diplomatic leadership has paved the way for addressing issues and concerns in a

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rapidly evolving strategic environment. She maintains an excellent relationship with the leaders of allied and partner nations in the Pacific. She embraces the need to be a helpful friend and neighbor to Pacific governments struggling to provide basic needs for their small populations scattered across thousands of islands.

Governor Leon Guerrero also works to strengthen America's existing partnerships with Pacific democracies. In doing so, Governor Leon Guerrero has helped to enhance the Micronesian Island Forum; she joined the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders and is moving to improve Guam's status in the Pacific Islands Forum.

Through her partnership with Pacific Island leaders, she continues to contribute a solutions-oriented approach to some of the most challenging issues facing the Pacific islands, such as climate change, which manifests itself with an increase in rising tides, droughts, and storms that threaten food and water security for many Pacific islanders. The lack of trade and job opportunities are additional factors that can destabilize island democracies, leaving them vulnerable to overtures from China that often result in devastating debt and loss of control over systems and environmental resources, which further threaten a free and open Indo-Pacific.

COMPACT OF FREE ASSOCIATION STATES (COFA)

Governor Leon Guerrero is proactive in keeping America's interests aligned with the Compact of Free Association States, including the Republic of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. These small island nations are critical to maintaining American interests in the Pacific region, particularly with the Republic of China's persistence in exerting its political and economic influence here. Governor Leon Guerrero works to maintain the COFA nations' favorable relationship with Guam and the United States through our support to build and strengthen their democratic way of life. In addition, many islanders from COFA nations have joined the US military to serve our nation admirably. Their experiences are valuable to their developing democracies.

Guam spends \$150 million annually on social services for islanders that immigrate from the Freely Associated States (FAS), yet the U.S. government only reimburses \$14 million annually. By absorbing the health and education costs of islanders who have migrated from the FAS, we are freeing up those governments to concentrate their resources on building up their economies as fishing nations that can capture more revenue from the tuna caught in COFA waters. Guam's relief to the COFA nations has helped them focus on creating the regulatory and legal frameworks that have quadrupled fishing revenue in the last decade.

Governor Leon Guerrero remains steadfast in her commitment to balancing the challenges facing Western Pacific Island nations' peoples, cultures, and environments with the challenges facing the United States government and its military branches regarding their roles in protecting U.S. interests - and islanders' interests. Over her four and a half years as Governor of Guam, she has also demonstrated that she is infinitely capable of balancing these often-conflicting interests for the mutual benefit of all parties concerned.

For all her accomplishments in support of American strategic objectives, we must appropriately recognize Governor Leon Guerrero's significant efforts and dedication to our Nation's defense. It

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is with my highest personal endorsement that we hope Governor Lourdes Aflague Leon Guerrero will be selected for the prestigious 2023 Harry S. Truman Award.



MICHAEL W. CRUZ
Brigadier General, Guam National Guard
The Adjutant General

Attachments:

1. Commandant of the Marine Corps Endorsement
2. Indo-Pacific Command Commander's Endorsement
3. Missile Defense Agency Director's Endorsement
4. Assistant Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Operations, Plans and Strategy Endorsement
5. Joint Region Marianas Commander's Endorsement
6. East-West Center President's Endorsement
7. Photographs of Governor Lourdes Leon Guerrero

Attachment 1



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
3000 MARINE CORPS PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20350-3000

IN REPLY REFER TO
1000
CMC
27 Apr 23

From: General David H. Berger, Commandant of the Marine Corps
To: Board of Directors, NGAUS Awards Program

Subj: LETTER OF ENDORSEMENT FOR THE NGAUS HARRY S. TRUMAN AWARD IN
CASE OF GOVERNOR LOURDES A. L. GUERRERO

1. It is my personal honor to recommend Governor Lourdes Guerrero for recognition as 2023 National Guard Association of the United States Harry S. Truman Award. Governor Guerrero's nearly four decades of public service, and notably her substantial contributions to our Nation's defense and security, make her an ideal candidate for this prestigious honor.
2. Since first being elected to the Guam Legislature in 1994, Governor Guerrero has served the people of Guam with utmost dedication, spirited leadership, and keen intuition. However, it is her staunch and sustained support of the U.S. Department of Defense that leads me to offer her my highest recommendation for this award.
3. Governor Guerrero is an insightful leader who recognizes Guam's unique place in the defense of our Nation and has proven to be one of the strongest advocates for enhanced defense capabilities and facilities. She continually ensures that Guam is a gracious host to members of our Armed Forces, and she has shown an unparalleled dedication to building relationships between all branches of the military and the local community.
4. As a key proponent of establishing Camp Blaz, the Marine Corps' first new base since 1952, Governor Guerrero has worked tirelessly with our Marine leadership to bring this vital base to Guam. Camp Blaz provides our Corps a geographically distributed and operationally resilient posture in the Indo-Pacific that strengthens our ability to support international security as well as our allies and partners in the region. Governor Guerrero was critical to making this possible. This is just a sample of her invaluable contributions to our Nation's defense. I offer her my highest endorsement for the Harry S. Truman Award and believe this honor would be an excellent way to express the appreciation of our Nation and military for her sustained support of our Armed Forces.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. H. Berger", is located below the text of the letter.

D. H. BERGER



Attachment 2

**U.S. INDO-PACIFIC COMMAND
(USINDOPACOM)
CAMP H M SMITH, HAWAII 96861-4028**

May 5, 2023

MEMORANDUM FOR THE NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION

SUBJECT: Endorsement for the National Guard Association Recipient of the Harry S. Truman Award

1. Governor Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero has my strongest personal endorsement for selection as the recipient of this year's Harry S. Truman Award.
2. Governor Leon Guerrero consistently supported the DoD in every aspect of both daily operations and integration of new national defense initiatives on Guam. Her support has had far-reaching deterrence effects on our pacing threats in the United States Indo-Pacific Command area of responsibility.
3. Governor Leon Guerrero has steadfastly supported our troops during events such as the USS ROOSEVELT COVID-19 response early in the pandemic. She also signed a resolution designating April as Month of the Military Child in support of DoD dependents.
4. The Governor has also worked tirelessly on coordinating land usage on Guam with our Joint Region Marianas commander, RDML Benjamin Nicholson, to ensure not only that we had the required space for the Guam Defense System, but also DoD training to ensure readiness of our operational forces. This action has directly enhanced our military capability needed to deter our regional competitors from malignant actions.
5. Governor Guerrero has secured community support for a plethora United States security initiatives. She has been instrumental in the ongoing coordination of the Defense Policy Review Initiative and the establishment of Camp Blaz, as well as the Pacific Deterrence Initiative activities at Anderson Air Force Base and Naval Base Guam. She further secured the support for a Republic of Singapore Fighter Detachment at Anderson Air Force Base. Guam's support of this important U.S. partner's detachment is a major contribution to strengthening the needed network of aligned allies and partners in the region.
6. Brigadier General Michael Cruz is right on the mark with his nomination. We must honor those civic leaders that partner with us and support our forces so strongly. The magnitude of her contributions cannot be overstated. Governor Guerrero has strengthened our nation, fortified our defenses, and is highly deserving of this award!
7. The point of contact is Mr. Austin Bryant at austin.d.bryant.civ@us.navy.mil or (808) 477-9495.


J. C. AQUILINO
Admiral, U.S. Navy

Attachment:
Community Defense Liaison Office's Nomination letter

Attachment 3



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
MISSILE DEFENSE AGENCY
5700 18TH STREET
FORT BELVOIR, VIRGINIA 22060-5573

April 25, 2023

From: VADM JON A. HILL, DIRECTOR, MISSILE DEFENSE AGENCY

To: NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES


Subj: Letter of Endorsement for Governor Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero

It is my distinct pleasure to endorse Governor Leon Guerrero for the National Guard Association of the United States' Harry S. Truman Award for distinguished service in support of national defense. Governor Guerrero and I have worked to bolster the security of our Nation by strengthening the protection of Guam and its citizens from attack by developing and fielding layered defenses to counter advanced missile threats.

Governor Guerrero has been instrumental in working with the Department of Defense, the Missile Defense Agency, U.S. Army, and U.S. Navy to identify appropriate sites to support a "360-degree" missile defense capability to defend the people and infrastructure of Guam from the rapid evolution of missile threats. She has been critical to our ability to work with the citizens of Guam and facilitate collaboration with the Defense Department on site selections while preserving Guam's natural and cultural resources. The Governor and her office helped us undertake the necessary and urgent planning for an increased demand in construction workforce, coordinating with Indo-Pacific Command, the Joint Regional Marianas Commander, and the Guam Chamber of Commerce in support of improving the defenses for the territory. Governor Guerrero has worked with our Defense of Guam program office through Joint Region Marianas to ensure defenses are developed to meet the demand.

Guam is an operational linchpin of our efforts to maintain a free and open Indo-Pacific area, and given its strategic importance for power projection in the region, the Department of Defense is taking appropriate steps to protect that territory. The missile threat to Guam continues to rapidly evolve. Governor Guerrero has been instrumental in assisting our work with the Commander of Indo-Pacific Command to meet the requirement for a persistent layered missile defense capability on Guam against simultaneous raids of cruise, ballistic, and hypersonic missile threats and to field an operational capability by the end of this decade.

Governor Leon Guerrero has been a key team member fully supportive of improving the defenses for Guam. I strongly recommend that she be recognized for her outstanding service and contributions to U.S. national defense. She is most deserving of the National Guard Association of the United States' Harry S. Truman Award.


J. A. HILL
Vice Admiral, USN
Director

Attachment 4



**Assistant Deputy Chief of Naval Operations
for
Operations, Plans and Strategy**

18 April 23

From: RADM John V. Menoni, Assistant Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Operations, Plans and Strategy (N3/N5B)

Subj: GOVERNOR LEON GUERRERO NOMINATION HARRY S. TRUMAN AWARD

1. Governor Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero is exceptionally deserving of the National Guard Association of the United States' Harry S. Truman Award as recognition for her sustained contribution to the exceptional and far-reaching defense and security of the United States. During my tenure as Commander, Joint Region Marianas, Governor Leon Guerrero was steadfast in her support to the joint force and their families during normal operations and during crisis.
2. When unforeseen threats arose, Governor Leon Guerrero personally committed to full engagement between the Governor's staff and our military planners, enabling unity of effort and positive outcomes. In each case, Governor Leon Guerrero's early, continuous, transparent dialogue with me indicated her devotion to the citizens of Guam and genuine concern for military personnel and their families. Specifically Governor Leon Guerrero fully supported a whole government recovery effort following typhoons Mangkhut on Guam and typhoon Yutu on Commonwealth of Marianas islands.
3. Undoubtedly, Governor Leon Guerrero's leadership was critical to the unprecedented effort to restore the operational readiness of USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN 71) following the U.S. Navy's first large-scale outbreak of the Coronavirus 2019 disease. By galvanizing support of the government and local business to open hotels to serve as quarantine facilities for some of the 4,850 members of the crew, DoD and the crew was able to complete recovery operations. Due to the unknown and dangerous nature of the disease, additional medical facilities were dispatched to support Theodore Roosevelt and the Marianas Islands. Governor Leon Guerrero again personally ensured support of the government and population as we deployed a 180 bed, 12 acre Expeditionary Medical Facility for DoD and the Marianas Islands. Throughout this period from March to May 2020, Governor Leon Guerrero displayed exceptional leadership, sincerity, and personal commitment to the military personnel assigned to the operational units and supporting forces. Governor Leon Guerrero fully supported DoD operations by allowing defense personnel to arrive and depart Guam though the island was closed to travel as she understood the strategic importance of Guam to National Security.
4. When new threats to regional security emerged, Governor Leon Guerrero advocated for and supported plans to enhance security of the region and military forces. The Marine Corps planned significant relocation of forces from Japan to Guam as part of an international agreement. This \$8.2 billion effort encompassed both economic and environmental impacts and associated mitigations. Governor Leon Guerrero supported the initiative and synchronizing government activities to ensure that impacts to Guam were properly addressed by DoD.
5. Governor Leon Guerrero's unwavering contributions to the Navy, the defense and security of the region, and the United States makes her the ideal choice for this prestigious award.

GOV L-G
IS A GREAT
"BATTLE BUDDY"
FOR DOD!


J. V. MENONI



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
JOINT REGION MARIANAS
PSC 455 BOX 211
FPO AP 96540-1000

1650
Ser J00/0250
May 8, 2023

The National Guard Association of the United States
One Massachusetts Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

SUBJECT: MEMORANDUM OF ENDORSEMENT OF THE HARRY S. TRUMAN AWARD

It is my distinct honor to provide this letter of support for Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero, Governor of Guam for the prestigious Harry S. Truman Award in Support of National Defense. I have worked closely with Governor Leon Guerrero since June 2021. Our relationship has always been guided by a mutual and prevailing effort to reinforce the strong relationship between the Department of Defense (DoD) and the people of Guam.

Today, China's growing weight in the international system is bending institutions, rules, and norms in its preferred directions. The repressive regimes of the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DRPK) threaten democracy throughout the region. Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of Palau (Palau) comprise the American territories and Compact of Free Association (Compact) sovereignties of the second island chain in the western Pacific. The DoD, under U.S. law, provides for Homeland defense of each territory and the Compact nations covering an area of the Pacific slightly larger than the continental United States. Over the past 80 years, the relationships among these islands and with the DoD have remained strong and these relationships are vital to maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

Governor Leon Guerrero has distinguished herself as an advocate for freedom and democracy and a champion for the greater Pacific islands family. I would like to highlight three outstanding examples of her leadership in support of national defense.

USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN 71)

The COVID-19 pandemic presented challenges on Guam that required close coordination to protect and treat thousands of infected people. Governor Leon Guerrero and her administration worked in lock-step with then Joint Region Marianas Commander, Rear Admiral Menoni and U.S. Naval Hospital Guam. Medical resources were stretched to the limits throughout the island as Guam Memorial Hospital began to run out of beds and isolation facilities. On March 22, 2020 the first Sailor on the USS THEODORE ROOSEVELT (CVN 71) (TR) was diagnosed positive for COVID and in the next three days, a total of five Sailors tested positive and airlifted from the carrier to Guam. Within a few days the TR was ordered to moor in Guam. On April 1, 2020, the TR was ordered to evacuate most of the ~5,000 person crew to Naval Base Guam. By May 15, 2020 roughly 2,900 TR Sailors had tested positive for COVID-19 and the ship underwent deep sanitation efforts with the minimal crew remaining on-board. The number of evacuated TR Sailors overwhelmed Naval Base Guam and solutions for lodging, quarantine and monitoring were desperately needed outside of the Navy's lifelines.

SUBJECT: MEMORANDUM OF ENDORSEMENT OF THE HARRY S. TRUMAN AWARD

Running out of options, RDML Menoni called Governor Leon Guerrero to ask if she would support using hotels in Tumon, the islands tourism district, as quarantine facilities. Governor Leon Guerrero did not hesitate to support the Navy offering that the Sailors are America's defenders and Guam's children, noting that several TR Sailors were from Guam. She stated that it was unquestionably the right thing to do. Governor Leon Guerrero referred RDML Menoni to the Guam Hotel and Restaurant Association to negotiate with several willing large hotels to exclusively house thousands of TR Sailors. The Governor was well aware of the risk to the civilian population that would come with these accommodations and the political opposition by some local senators. As a trained nurse herself, she made the decision she believed was right and the Navy is forever grateful for her example of service and leadership. Her steadfast support was key to getting the stricken TR back underway expeditiously to defend the nation.

MISSILE DEFENSE

The second example of Governor Leon Guerrero's steadfast support for national defense is her support and insistence for a missile defense system to protect Guam. The political atmospherics in Guam make this a contentious and potentially unpopular agenda item. Select activists and politicians are anti-military, anti-military buildup and there is limited appetite for military expansion or growth, regardless of the mission or threat.

Governor Leon Guerrero is aware the current plans for a missile defense mission may require additional acreage from public and private lands for missile defense sites to complete the 360-degree defense coverage of Guam. This acquisition will be challenged and opposed by some political leaders and direct action groups. This defense mission will be viewed as the result of PRC targeting of an island already over developed with military activities. Land issues involving the military are highly sensitive, but Governor Leon Guerrero supports the defense mission and is willing to work through tough issues to accommodate military growth on Guam which is a pivotal strategic location in the Indo-Pacific.

COUNTERING PRC INFLUENCE THROUGHOUT THE REGION

Finally, Governor Leon Guerrero has exhibited strong support for national defense and democracy in Micronesia and the broader Pacific to counter the PRC's malign influence. On May 20, 2022, FSM President David Panuelo wrote a letter to the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) members (twenty-two Pacific island leaders including Governor Leon Guerrero and three other U.S. island governors) detailing the threats posed by the PRC in what he described as "Political Warfare" consisting of Chinese bribery and bullying of Micronesian leaders. The letter made headlines in the Pacific media and ruffled feathers among certain Pacific leaders. President Panuelo was accused of being a whistle-blower.

Governor Leon Guerrero wrote back to President Panuelo on July 19, 2022 thanking him for his letter and offering her support to his "position in opposing the plans of China is proposing" for the region. The overarching concern at the time was the PRC's proposals known as the *China-Pacific Island Countries Development Vision* and the *China-Pacific Five Year Action Plan on Common Development (2022-2026)*. Governor Leon Guerrero went on to state:

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“Mr. President, I would also add to the collective body of wisdom and perspective you have started sharing. Guam also has a unique relationship with the United States. Often coined as the “tip of the spear” by the U.S. military, Guam is its most defended footprint in the Indo-Pacific region. The island of Guam is in the midst of the largest peacetime military buildup in U.S. history, so we also have a perspective to share. We see first-hand the urgency the U.S. is exerting to showcase its military force and willingness to keep Pacific sea lanes open for peaceful free-flowing trade among nations.”

**PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM (PIF):
COOPERATION BETWEEN COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES OF OCEANIA**

It should also be noted that Governor Leon Guerrero’s regional engagements are viewed with some skepticism. Some PIF leaders are wary of hidden agendas and perceived collusion between the Governor and officials of the U.S. Government with regard to foreign affairs and influence in the Pacific. The Governor and her advisors are steadfast that they are under no influence and that their interests are grounded in engagements with PIF member countries on a number of regional issues inclusive of climate change resilience, regional cooperation and the general welfare of Pacific Island nations. Governor Leon Guerrero’s administration has applied for a change in PIF status for Guam from observer to associate membership. This change in status request represents a sincere desire to unite with other island nations for the common good, something the U.S. promotes as part of a “free and open Indo-Pacific.” The U.S. enjoys unhindered access across the Pacific in international water and through Compact waters and air space. The PRC desires access economically, but also strategically to avail of similar advantages including to exploit regional natural resources as stated by Governor Leon Guerrero when she wrote to President Panuelo committing that “Guam stands with you and your efforts to minimize China’s efforts to control the Pacific governments, assets, and resources.” At this critical point in time the United States has no greater advocate for U.S. national security than the like-minded sovereign countries that are founded on democracy and free will across the Blue Continent. Governor Leon Guerrero is a great example of this advocacy.

In closing, I cannot stress enough how leaders of these small Pacific islands can help defend American interests on a global scale through foreign policy, a rules-based system of governance and the wise use of natural resources to guarantee the prosperity of future generations. These ideals backed by the deterrence of a highly capable and present military force working along allies and partners is the surest guarantee of international peace. Governor Lou Leon Guerrero champions these principals and ideals without prompting. Her humanity and leadership instincts in these critical times is exemplary. Together we are stronger and America can count on Governor Leon Guerrero.

Your kind consideration of my nomination support for Governor Leon Guerrero is highly appreciated.



B. R. NICHOLSON
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy

Attachment 6

1601 East-West Road
Honolulu, Hawaii 96848-1601
Telephone: 808.944.7103



Fax: 808.944.7106
Email: ewcinfo@EastWestCenter.org
Web: www.EastWestCenter.org

April 28, 2023

OFFICE OF THE
PRESIDENT

RE: Endorsement for Governor Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero for the National Guard Association of the United States' Harry S. Truman Award

Dear Selection Committee:

It is my honor and pleasure to write this letter of endorsement for the nomination of Guam Governor Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero. As a retired Army National Guard General Officer who served at US Indo-Pacific Command for over 5 and ½ years as the Mobilization Assistant to Admiral Davidson, I was able to work closely with the Governor of Guam on key and critical issues impacting national security and defense. Currently as the President of the East-West Center, I have been able to partner with Governor Leon Guerrero's team on many issues related to the Pacific where we see environmental and strategic competition challenges.

Guam plays a strategic role in U.S. national defense and deterrence of the nation's number one pacing threat, the People's Republic of China and their activities, not only in the first island chain, but in the Pacific. Consequently, Guam has been the host of a sustained posture buildup of the U.S. Joint Force and its allies that will continue over the next ten years. She has been an advocate for the Guam Defense System and has conducted outreach to key Congressional leaders to advocate for the security of the people of Guam, the nation, and the region. She supported the USS Theodore Roosevelt's COVID-19 crisis when other locations were unwilling to support. Further, she has supported the integration of the Guam National Guard in the security activities with the Joint Force and has supported families of all military forces in Guam to ensure their health and welfare. Governor Leon Guerrero has done all of this and so much more while maintaining positive community relationships with the military, foreign allies and partners, and the people of Guam.

In my current role, I have had the distinct pleasure of participating in the first ever White House Pacific Islands Summit in Washington D.C. where I moderated a dialogue with Secretary of State Anthony Blinken and Pacific Islands leaders. Secretary Blinken invited Governor Leon Guerrero to demonstrate the fact that the U.S. is a Pacific nation and the key role that Guam plays in ensuring peace and security from an indigenous lens. I was also able to witness her leadership at the Our Oceans Conference in Palau with Secretary John Kerry, where she led a breakout session with the Micronesian leaders. She is a leader for the Micronesian Community in the region and is a key advocate for the issues that we face in the Pacific. Her role as a member of the Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders, as only one of the four US-affiliated states and territories in the region, is critical at a time when there is a definite spotlight on the Pacific.

Governor Leon Guerrero exemplifies the character of the Harry S. Truman Award and is an inspiration to all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne P. Vares-Lum".

Suzanne (Suzy) Puanani Vares-Lum
President

Attachment 7



Governor Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero and
General David H. Berger,
Commandant of the Marine Corps



Governor Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero and
General, Charles Q. Brown Jr.,
Chief of Staff of the Air Force



Governor Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero and
Ms. Suzanne Vares-Lum, President,
East-West Center



Governor Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero at the
Guam Liberation Day Wreath-Laying Ceremony,
Washington, D.C.

