

*I Mina'trentai Siette Na Liheslaturan Guåhan*  
**BILL STATUS**

BILL NO.	SPONSOR	TITLE	DATE INTRODUCED	DATE REFERRED	CMTE REFERRED	FISCAL NOTES	PUBLIC HEARING DATE	DATE COMMITTEE REPORT FILED	NOTES
273-37 (COR)	Sabina Flores Perez Therese M. Terlaje Chris Barnett	AN ACT TO ADD A NEW § 14104(g) TO ARTICLE 1, CHAPTER 14, DIVISION 1 OF TITLE 12, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO AUTHORIZING GUAM WATERWORKS AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH A CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO PROMOTE WATER CONSERVATION AND TO FACILITATE REPAIRS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY.	4/17/24 3:59 p.m.						

***I MINA'TRENTAI SIETTE NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN***  
**2024 (SECOND) Regular Session**

**Bill No. 273-37 (COR)**

Introduced by:

Sabina Flores Perez *SFP*  
Therese M. Terlaje *TMT*  
Chris Barnett *CB*

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**AN ACT TO *ADD* A NEW § 14104(p) TO ARTICLE 1, CHAPTER 14, DIVISION 1 OF TITLE 12, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO AUTHORIZING GUAM WATERWORKS AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH A CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO PROMOTE WATER CONSERVATION AND TO FACILITATE REPAIRS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY.**

1 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF GUAM:**

2 **Section 1. Legislative Findings and Intent.** *I Liheslaturan Guåhan*  
3 finds that the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) plays a significant role in  
4 precipitation and water availability for Guam. A prolonged El Niño event from 1991  
5 to 1995 resulted in the island's water system's inability to meet demands during  
6 abnormally dry spells. The historical trend is that drought conditions usually follow  
7 the wettest year. 2023 was one of the wettest years. WERI testified, if historical  
8 trends continue, Guam is expected to experience a dry spell, if not drought  
9 conditions, in the future.

10 *I Liheslatura* further finds that the importance of repairing or replacing  
11 leaking pipes are critical to protect our water resource from depletion, especially  
12 during periods of drought. Additionally, the delayed discovery of and response to  
13 water leaks on private property of residents can impact the availability of our water

1 resource, pose economic hardships for some low-income households, and add to  
2 non-revenue water loss, which consequently leads to financial loss to the Guam  
3 Waterworks Authority(GWA).

4 *I Liheslatura* further finds that assisting residents who have economic  
5 difficulty in addressing water leaks on private property and facilitating efficient use  
6 of water would mitigate these economic hardships and conserve our water resources.  
7 Additionally, reducing water waste on the private property side is an important  
8 measure in water resource management, a responsibility all residents of Guam and  
9 one which both *I Liheslatura* and GWA, support in the interest of the ratepayers of  
10 Guam.

11 *I Liheslatura* finds that enabling GWA to enhance its customer assistance  
12 initiatives to facilitate leak detection, leak repair, and water conservation activities  
13 for low-income customers is essential to the public welfare. Such measures should  
14 include access with the consent of the property owner to detect and address leaky  
15 pipes in a timely manner, conduct water conservation inspections and assessments,  
16 and assist with the procurement and use of water conserving fixtures. Customer  
17 assistance initiatives are being implemented in other jurisdictions across the nation  
18 in alignment with water utility industry’s recommendations, and these measures will  
19 aid GWA’s implementation of a customer assistance program for low-income  
20 households that supports affordable access to clean drinking water, facilitates water  
21 conservation education, and promotes the protection of our water resource.

22 *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* intends to authorize GWA to assist residential  
23 customers through the establishment of an enhanced Customer Assistance Program  
24 which, among other things, allows GWA to work with low-income customers to  
25 address water leaks on private property in a timely manner in order to ensure access  
26 to clean drinking water for all, significantly reduce water loss and associated costs  
27 to the ratepayer, and protect our precious water resources.

1           **Section 2.** A new § 14104(p) is *added* to Article 1, Chapter 14, Division 1  
2 of Title 12, Guam Code Annotated, to read:

3           “(p) Customer Assistance Program.

4                   (1) The Guam Waterworks Authority shall establish a  
5                   Customer Assistance Program to provide financial and other assistance  
6                   to eligible ratepayers that shall be funded through grants and/or  
7                   Legislative appropriation.

8                   (2) The Guam Waterworks Authority shall establish income  
9                   eligibility standards for a residential class ratepayer to receive financial  
10                   assistance under this subsection that also includes providing discounts  
11                   or credits for hard-to-reach low-income customers and/or their  
12                   landlords.

13                   (3) Financial assistance provided under this subsection shall  
14                   include:

15                           (i) a volumetric discount for water and wastewater  
16                           services;

17                           (ii) leak detection and repair services;

18                           (iii) supplemental bill assistance for hardship; and

19                           (iv) the reduction or waiver of fees, including late fees.

20                   (4) Other assistance provided under this subsection shall  
21                   include:

22                           (i) water conservation inspection and assessment  
23                           services;

24                           (ii) rebates or discounts for the use of water conserving  
25                           fixtures; and

26                           (iii) education and information on water conservation  
27                           practices and resource management.

1                   (5) The Guam Waterworks Authority shall submit an annual  
2                   report to the *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* on the program's performance,  
3                   including the number of beneficiaries, the amount of assistance  
4                   provided, and an assessment of the program's impact on water  
5                   conservation and financial relief for low-income households.”

6           **Section 3. Severability.** If any provision of this Act or its application to  
7 any person or circumstance is found to be invalid or inorganic, such invalidity shall  
8 not affect other provisions or applications of this Act that can be given effect without  
9 the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this Act are  
10 severable.

11           **Section 4. Effective Date.** This Act shall be effective upon enactment.