

I Mina'trentai Siette Na Lihelaturan Guåhan
BILL STATUS

BILL NO.	SPONSOR	TITLE	DATE INTRODUCED	DATE REFERRED	CMTE REFERRED	FISCAL NOTES	PUBLIC HEARING DATE	DATE COMMITTEE REPORT FILED	NOTES
304-37 (COR)	Sabina Flores Perez	AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE FIVE MILLION DOLLARS (\$5,000,000) FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO GUAM WATERWORKS AUTHORITY TO FUND A CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO SAFEGUARD OUR WATER RESOURCE THROUGH WATER CONSERVATION AND FACILITATE REPAIRS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY	5/9/24 2:39 p.m.						

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

Bill No. 304-37 (COR)

Introduced by:

Sabina Flores Perez /SFP

AN ACT TO *APPROPRIATE* FIVE MILLION DOLLARS (\$5,000,000) FROM THE GENERAL FUND TO GUAM WATERWORKS AUTHORITY TO FUND A CUSTOMER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM TO SAFEGUARD OUR WATER RESOURCE THROUGH WATER CONSERVATION AND 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 El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) plays a significant role in
4 precipitation and water availability for Guam. A prolonged El Nino 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 of years. The year of 2023 was one of the wettest years on record, and
8 according to testimony provided by WERI, if historical trends continue Guam is
9 likely expected to enter a dry spell, if not drought conditions.

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
14 precious water resource, pose economic hardships for certain low-income
15 households and add to non-revenue water loss, thus financial loss to GWA.

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

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

20 *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* intends to appropriate the sum of Five Million Dollars
21 (\$5,000,000) to fund a Customer Assistance Program that allows GWA to work with
22 low-income customers to address water leaks on private property in a timely manner
23 in order to ensure access to clean drinking water for all, significantly reduce water
24 loss and associated costs for the ratepayer, and protect our precious water resources.

25 **Section 2. Appropriation to Guam Waterworks Authority (GWA).**

26 The sum of Five Million Dollars (\$5,000,000) from the Fiscal Year 2024
27 General Fund revenues collected in excess of the adopted level enumerated in Public
28 Law 37-42 is hereby appropriated to the Guam Waterworks Authority for the express

1 purpose of funding a customer assistance program that shall include financial
2 assistance for eligible customers that can include the following: a volumetric
3 discount for water and wastewater services, leak detection and repair services,
4 supplemental bill assistance for hardship; the reduction or waiver of fees, including
5 late fees; water conservation inspection and assessment services; rebates or
6 discounts for the use of water conserving fixtures; education and information on
7 water conservation practices and resource management. This appropriation shall not
8 lapse and shall continue to be available until fully expended.

9 **Section 3. Effective Date.** This Act shall be effective upon enactment.