

Senator
Judith Paulette Guthertz, DPA



*I Mina' Bente Nuebi Na Libeslaturan Guaban
Twenty Ninth Guam Legislature*

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Assessment c/o Council on Environmental Quality
722 Jackson Place
Washington, D.C., 20503
oceans@ceq.eop.gov

Subject: Input on Federal Proposal to establish a Marine Monument for the Marianas Trench.

To Whom It May Concern:

Buenas Yan Hafa Adai!

As a former member (1998-2001) and Chair (2001-2003) of the Western Pacific Fisheries Management Council, I am very familiar with the area being considered for designation as a Marine Conservation Management Area. I am strongly opposed to such designation.

Guam is a non-self governing territory and is on the list of the remaining 16 such areas under the United Nations. Each year our State Department reports to the United Nations on what the United States is doing to bring Guam to self-government.

With this status, it would be unethical and imperialistic for the United States to place Guam's waters under a conservation regime without the approval of the people it is entrusted with leading to self-determination and self-government. The United States should be in the process of transferring authority and governance to the people of Guam, not taking authority away from the local government.

The Indigenous People of Guam have been fishing in those waters for about 4,000 years and have not damaged the natural resources. If anyone is over-fishing the area, it would be foreign fishing interests. It is an insult to all residents of Guam and the CNMI to take an action assuming that they cannot govern themselves.

If President Bush sincerely wants a legacy, he should have taken steps to further the development of self-determination and self-government for Guam. He has done absolutely nothing for the past eight

years. He should be ashamed of himself. His father made a grand statement near the end of his term in favor of statehood for Puerto Rico if that is what the people of Puerto Rico desired.

President Bush still has time to make a similar contribution and establish a legacy in this regard. He could announce that the United States Government will accept whichever political status option is desired by the Chamorro people as expressed in a United Nations observed plebiscite.

Just looking at a map in an office inside the beltway and dreaming of a "Blue Legacy" is a ridiculous exercise in imperialism. If the people of Guam and the CNMI desire such a designation, they will be sure to let you know. Until then, please resist the temptation to interfere in our business.

Senseramente,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JP Guthertz', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Judith P. Guthertz
Senator