

GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN  
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND LABOR  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD, ELEMENTARY  
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COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INSULAR AFFAIRS, OCEANS AND WILDLIFE  
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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 27, 2010

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Mr. Anthony M. Babauta  
Assistant Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C St. N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Babauta:

Thank you so much for the \$4,873,520 Capital Improvement Project grant for water improvements in the Northern Mariana Islands, which you signed today.

As I wrote to you in August and as we have discussed before, the lack of 24-hour, potable water to all households on Saipan has to be a top concern for all of us who are working to fulfill the promise of the Covenant to assist the Northern Mariana Islands to achieve a progressively higher standard of living for its people. Your announcement today acknowledges in word that this is a "top priority" and in deed with the significant grant of financial assistance.

And this is a significant grant. Today's *Saipan Tribune* reported that the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation estimates it needs \$17 million to resolve all water issues, including installation of working meters. Your \$4.9 million grant represents 29 percent of those needed funds—a major step forward that puts the goal of 24-hour water closer than ever.

Not to be overlooked, too, is the stimulative effect of these funds. At a time when the Commonwealth's economy continues to lag, a grant for construction means job opportunities for workers and professional people and business opportunities for those engaged in shipping, materials supply, and other ancillary services.

You have made a wise and welcome use of your authority as Assistant Secretary. Once again, on behalf of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, I thank you.

Sincerely,

GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN  
Member of Congress