



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

Ralph DLG. Torres
Governor

Victor B. Hocog
Lieutenant Governor

January 4, 2016

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

With the untimely passing last week of the late Honorable Governor Eloy S. Inos, I write today as follow-up and to re-assert an official action which Governor Inos initiated just before his death - Section 902 Consultation pursuant to the Covenant to Establish a Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands in Political Union with the United States of America.

In October, Governor Inos wrote to you requesting we start formal consultation about two critically important matters affecting the relationship between the United States and the CNMI.

The issues identified in Governor's Inos' letter which remain of great concern to the CNMI are:

- (i) an approaching expiration of the CNMI-Only Transitional Worker (CW) visa classification; and
- (ii) the United States Department of Defense's intentions to acquire new properties in the Northern Mariana Islands for defense related purposes (and to unilaterally modify an agreed-to use of land already under federal lease).

These two issues are critically important and ripe for consultation.

As of January 1, 2016, private sector employers operating in the CNMI were required to cease or cut-back business activities given the federal government's delay in approving CW worker renewals. The timely processing of the CW workers requires immediate attention or our businesses will continue to suffer. With respect to military activities, we now understand that Department of Defense agencies plan to restart their work next month to alter agreed-to uses of land already under federal lease or acquire additional real property interests in the CNMI.

Accordingly, we recognize through informal communication that the Section 902 process is under consideration by the White House (or, in preliminary stages of planning). However, we are unaware of any official response and as the New Year begins - I respectfully ask if there is any information you can share for our planning purposes or anything that can be done to immediately help our private sector business operators.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ralph DLG. Torres', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and includes a large initial 'R'.

RALPH DLG. TORRES
Governor