



OFFICE OF SENATOR
Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao

38th Guam Legislature | *I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan*

MEDIA STATEMENT

February 26, 2026

Senator Shawn Gumataotao issued the following statement after concluding this afternoon's Oversight Hearing regarding the Department of Parks and Recreation, Park Protection Service/Park Patrol Division:

“With the establishment of the DPR Park Protection Service 36 years ago, policymakers warned that neglecting our public parks would discourage families and visitors to the island from appreciating these community spaces. Our beaches and public parks are high touch points as they often serve as the preferred venues for family gatherings, wellness programs, and a host of other recreational activities.

By ensuring visibility and engaging regularly with beachgoers and others who utilize our Park System, Territorial Park Patrol Officers serve a critical role in making sure our public areas and facilities remain safe and available for all to enjoy. Because their jurisdiction is vast across our 19 districts, ensuring law enforcement presence especially during weekends and special occasions can be challenging. Moreover, leadership must step forward to explore every possibility, every option, and every idea put forward to support our Park System including through park adoption programs and public-private partnerships.

DPR, along with seven other departments, was asked by BBMR in 2008 to prepare for Performance-Based Budgeting. Today's discussion regarding the resource challenges facing the Park Protection Service compels this Committee to consider the urgency of including the important work required of our Territorial Park Patrol Officers in any Performance-Based Budgeting pilot program developed for next fiscal year.

Like other publicly supported infrastructure such as our airport and roadways, beaches and parks represent the value - or disregard - that we as decision-makers place on community spaces that our people and guests will undoubtedly utilize at some point in their life or visit to Guam. Accordingly, it is our responsibility as a Legislature to prioritize taxpayer resources where it matters most.”

For more information, please contact Senator Gumataotao's office at (671) 647-1409/1411 or via email at office.senatorshawn@guamlegislature.gov.