



OFFICE OF SENATOR JAMES "JIM" C. MOYLAN

I MINA TRENTAI SINGKO NA LIHESLATORAN GUĀHAN | 35TH GUAM LEGISLATURE

December 23, 2019

STATEMENT FROM SENATOR JAMES MOYLAN ON BILL 181-35

I support the expeditious payment of war claims to our manamko who survived the atrocities of World War 2. However, I could not find it in my conscience to support legislation that is a combination of many unanswered questions and a semblance of empty promise. The mere ramrod of the measure during session this week, without allowing Senators to ask the right questions, understand the process, and/or make needed changes towards the legislation, further questions whether the bill was merely being passed for political gains and purposes.

The legislation does not provide a clear understanding if funds are even available to pay these claims, and if general funds are going to be used, then what entities or programs will be impacted? There is also the question on the timelines before the survivors receive their compensation, and what mechanisms are in play for adjudication purposes when and if the federal legislation (HR 1365) passes in the Senate and is enacted into law by President Trump. Also, we have to wonder if the Memorandum of Understanding can be achieved, and what discussions have been made between Adelup and the U.S. Treasury.

There are so many unanswered questions with Bill 181 that I felt that the responsible decision was to vote no, instead of giving our manamko a false sense of hope that claims checks will be issued by Christmas. If War Claims advocate, Auntie Irene Sgambelluri was to ask me when she can expect her check now that Bill 181 has passed, what would my response be? The reality is that not I, or any of my colleagues, would have that answer, and it would be unfortunate that she would be clinging on to this optimism because several politicians said "trust me." We need to be responsible with tax payer dollars, and more importantly, we need to be transparent to the community with our actions, and unfortunately neither is present in passing Bill 181-35.