I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan
BILL STATUS

BILL NO.	SPONSOR	TITLE	DATE INTRODUCED	DATE REFERRED	CMTE REFERRED	FISCAL NOTES	PUBLIC HEARING DATE	DATE COMMITTEE REPORT FILED	NOTES
395-38 (COR)	V. Anthony Ada	AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE ONE MILLION FIVE HUNDRED FOUR THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED FORTY-FOUR DOLLARS ($1,504,744) FROM THE TWO MILLION DOLLAR ($2,000,000) APPROPRIATION FOR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, MITIGATION, AND RECOVERY ASSOCIATED WITH TROPICAL DISTURBANCE INVEST 96W TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO SUPPLEMENT ITS FISCAL YEAR 2027 PERSONNEL AND OPERATIONS, AND TO MAKE CONTINUALLY AVAILABLE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ANY FUNDS APPROPRIATED FOR THE FARMER'S ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW NO. 38-135 THAT REMAIN AFTER RECOVERY ASSISTANCE HAS BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO FARMERS.	11/20/26 10:25 a.m.						

I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2026 (SECOND) Regular Session

Bill No. 395-38 (COR)

Introduced by: V. Anthony Ada

AN ACT TO APPROPRIATE ONE MILLION FIVE HUNDRED FOUR THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED FORTY-FOUR DOLLARS ($1,504,744) FROM THE TWO MILLION DOLLAR ($2,000,000) APPROPRIATION FOR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS, RESPONSE, MITIGATION, AND RECOVERY ASSOCIATED WITH TROPICAL DISTURBANCE INVEST 96W TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE TO SUPPLEMENT ITS FISCAL YEAR 2027 PERSONNEL AND OPERATIONS, AND TO MAKE CONTINUALLY AVAILABLE TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE ANY FUNDS APPROPRIATED FOR THE FARMER'S ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PURSUANT TO PUBLIC LAW NO. 38-135 THAT REMAIN AFTER RECOVERY ASSISTANCE HAS BEEN DISTRIBUTED TO FARMERS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF GUAM:

Section 1. Legislative Findings and Intent. *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* finds that the divisions of the Department of Agriculture (Department) are understaffed, which slows the issuance of permits, compliance activities, grant administration, and field response. The Department's General Fund appropriation for operations has been essentially flat to declining. Operations were funded at Four Million Nine Hundred Twenty-Six Thousand Four Hundred Fourteen Dollars ($4,926,414) in Fiscal Year 2025 pursuant to Public Law No. 37-125; decreased to Four Million Five Hundred Forty-Six Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty-Two Dollars ($4,546,732) in

Fiscal Year 2026 pursuant to Bill No. 44-38 (COR), a decrease of Three Hundred Seventy-Nine Thousand Six Hundred Eighty-Two Dollars ($379,682); and only partially recovered to Four Million Eight Hundred Eighty-Five Thousand Nine Hundred Eighty-Four Dollars ($4,885,984) in Fiscal Year 2027, an increase of Three Hundred Thirty-Nine Thousand Two Hundred Fifty-Two Dollars ($339,252) over Fiscal Year 2026 but still Forty Thousand Four Hundred Thirty Dollars ($40,430) below the Fiscal Year 2025 level. Such funding has not kept pace with the Department's operating costs and organic growth, and is not sufficient to cover essential operating costs, including utilities, fuel, vehicle maintenance, and contractual services such as trash collection and copier services.

I Liheslaturan Guåhan further finds that critical divisions of the Department, including the Forestry and Soil Resources Division, the Animal Health Division, and Agricultural Development Services, urgently require additional staff. The workload of these divisions grows each year, including wildland fires fought, firebreaks cut, trees planted, and stray dogs captured, spayed, and neutered, and the Department is losing experienced employees because they lack adequate support.

I Liheslaturan Guåhan further finds that Agricultural Development Services has four (4) staff supporting approximately five hundred (500) bona fide farmers, and requires administrative support for farmer registrations, procurement, compliance tracking, and grants, as well as field technicians for inspections, technical assistance, nursery operations, research, and post-disaster crop damage assessments. The Crop Loss Compensation Program, which was activated twice within two (2) months, is administered by four (4) personnel who must assess, inspect, and process more than one hundred fifty (150) commercial farm operations after each storm while continuing to perform grant implementation, procurement, administrative, and grant reporting duties.

I Liheslaturan Guåhan further finds that the Animal Health Division has only four (4) Animal Control Officers serving the entire island after one (1) officer was reassigned to office duties, and requires administrative staff to process permits, payroll, timesheets, and procurement.

I Liheslaturan Guåhan further finds that the Forestry and Soil Resources Division administers twenty-seven (27) federal grants valued at approximately Twelve Million Dollars ($12,000,000) without dedicated administrative staff, a deficiency cited in a program review by the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service. Four (4) Forestry Aide positions are federally funded only until April 2027 and require local funding to retain staff who have received approximately twenty-four (24) months of training. Together with seven (7) locally funded Forestry Aides, these positions allow the Division to field two (2) response teams and respond to as many as four (4) fires in a single day.

I Liheslaturan Guåhan further finds that, with ten (10) conservation apprentices transitioning into Conservation Recruits, the Conservation Law Enforcement Division must promote Conservation Officers into supervisory positions so that such recruits may continue to be trained and formally supervised.

I Liheslaturan Guåhan further finds that the Office of the Director provides administrative support to Agricultural Development Services, the Forestry and Soil Resources Division, the Animal Health Division, the Conservation Law Enforcement Division, and the Division of Aquaculture. The Office lost its Administrative Assistant in 2025, after which a single Administrative Aide carried the Office's full workload until that employee resigned. The Office also supports the Invasive Species Council and the Aquaculture Advisory Board, and requires an Executive Secretary to provide administrative and operational support to both bodies, including the documentation and transcription of quarterly meeting minutes, the monitoring of and reporting on directed actions, and procurement for public

meeting notices. Further, the Department employs more than one hundred (100) personnel and requires a dedicated Human Resource Manager to oversee personnel actions, performance evaluations, payroll, and other human resources functions.

I Liheslaturan Guåhan further finds that Public Law No. 38-135 appropriated Two Million Dollars ($2,000,000) to the Department's Farmer's Assistance Program to assist local farmers in recovering from typhoons that damaged or destroyed crops. Once recovery assistance has been distributed to eligible farmers, any balance of such appropriation that remains should not lapse, but should remain available to the Department to sustain the personnel and operations that deliver assistance to farmers, so that the Department is prepared to respond when the next storm strikes.

Therefore, it is the intent of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* to make available One Million Five Hundred Four Thousand Seven Hundred Forty-Four Dollars ($1,504,744) from the Two Million Dollars ($2,000,000) appropriated for Emergency Preparedness, Response, Mitigation, and Recovery Associated with Tropical Disturbance Invest 96W to supplement the Department's Fiscal Year 2027 budget, so that the Department may recruit, hire, promote, and retain the personnel, and meet the operating costs, necessary for the successful operation of its divisions; and further, to make continually available to the Department any funds appropriated for the Farmer's Assistance Program pursuant to Public Law No. 38-135 that remain after recovery assistance has been distributed to farmers, to complement the appropriation made in this Act.

Section 2. Appropriation. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the sum of One Million Five Hundred Four Thousand Seven Hundred Forty-Four Dollars ($1,504,744) is hereby appropriated from the Two Million Dollars ($2,000,000) appropriated pursuant to Public Law No. 38-144 for Emergency Preparedness, Response, Mitigation, and Recovery Associated with Tropical

Disturbance Invest 96W, to the Department of Agriculture to supplement its Fiscal Year 2027 appropriation, to be expended as follows:

(a) Personnel, as provided in Section 3 of this Act: Nine Hundred Eighty Thousand Four Hundred Fifty-Five Dollars ($980,455); and

(b) Operations, as provided in Section 4 of this Act: Five Hundred Twenty-Four Thousand Two Hundred Eighty-Nine Dollars ($524,289).

Section 3. Personnel. The sum of Nine Hundred Eighty Thousand Four Hundred Fifty-Five Dollars ($980,455) appropriated in Section 2(a) of this Act shall be expended for the salaries and benefits of twenty (20) positions, consisting of seventeen (17) new hires and three (3) promotions, as follows:

(a) Agricultural Development Services, One Hundred Thirty-Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety-Three Dollars ($137,993), for:

(1) one (1) Administrative Aide: Forty-Five Thousand Three Hundred Fourteen Dollars ($45,314);

(2) one (1) Agricultural Management Technician I: Forty-One Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty-Six Dollars ($41,966); and

(3) one (1) Agricultural Management Technician II: Fifty Thousand Seven Hundred Thirteen Dollars ($50,713);

(b) Animal Health Division, Two Hundred Seventy-One Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety-Five Dollars ($271,795), for:

(1) one (1) Administrative Aide: Forty-Five Thousand Three Hundred Fourteen Dollars ($45,314);

(2) one (1) Clerk Typist II: Forty-One Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty-Six Dollars ($41,966);

(3) three (3) Animal Control Officer I positions at Forty-Four Thousand Three Hundred Eighteen Dollars ($44,318) each, for a total

of One Hundred Thirty-Two Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty-Four Dollars ($132,954); and

(4) one (1) Animal Control Officer II, by promotion: Fifty-One Thousand Five Hundred Sixty-One Dollars ($51,561);

(c) Forestry and Soil Resources Division, Two Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Sixty-Eight Dollars ($225,068), for:

(1) one (1) Administrative Assistant: Fifty-Eight Thousand Forty-Eight Dollars ($58,048); and

(2) four (4) Forestry Aide I positions at Forty-One Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty-Five Dollars ($41,755) each, for a total of One Hundred Sixty-Seven Thousand Twenty Dollars ($167,020);

(d) Conservation Law Enforcement Division, One Hundred Forty-Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty Dollars ($149,760), for:

(1) one (1) Administrative Assistant: Fifty-Eight Thousand Forty-Eight Dollars ($58,048); and

(2) two (2) Conservation Officer II positions, by departmental promotion, at Forty-Five Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty-Six Dollars ($45,856) each, for a total of Ninety-One Thousand Seven Hundred Twelve Dollars ($91,712);

(e) Office of the Director, One Hundred Ninety-Five Thousand Eight Hundred Thirty-Nine Dollars ($195,839), for:

(1) one (1) Human Resource Manager: Seventy-Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Forty-Three Dollars ($79,743);

(2) one (1) Administrative Assistant: Fifty-Eight Thousand Forty-Eight Dollars ($58,048); and

(3) one (1) Executive Secretary: Fifty-Eight Thousand Forty-Eight Dollars ($58,048).

Section 4. Operations. The sum of Five Hundred Twenty-Four Thousand Two Hundred Eighty-Nine Dollars ($524,289) appropriated in Section 2(b) of this Act shall be expended for the operations of the Department of Agriculture as follows:

(a) Power utility: One Hundred Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars ($175,000);

(b) Water utility: Seventy-Three Thousand Dollars ($73,000);

(c) Telephone utility: Ten Thousand Dollars ($10,000);

(d) Travel, for the contractually obligated annual continuing education of the Territorial Veterinarian: Ten Thousand Dollars ($10,000);

(e) Contractual services, for trash collection and copier services: Thirty-Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Forty-Five Dollars ($39,945);

(f) Supplies, including uniform stipends and office supplies: Ninety-Four Thousand One Hundred Thirty-Six Dollars ($94,136);

(g) Equipment: Thirty-Nine Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty Dollars ($39,850);

(h) Capital outlay, for a vehicle for the Division of Aquaculture: Sixty-Seven Thousand Dollars ($67,000); and

(i) Miscellaneous: Fifteen Thousand Three Hundred Fifty-Eight Dollars ($15,358).

Section 5. Continuing Availability of Farmer's Assistance Program Funds.

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, including any lapse provision of Public Law No. 38-135 or of any general appropriations act, any funds appropriated to the Department of Agriculture for the Farmer's Assistance Program pursuant to Public Law No. 38-135 that remain unexpended and unobligated after all recovery assistance under such program

has been distributed to eligible farmers shall not lapse, and are hereby made continually available to the Department of Agriculture until expended.

(b) Funds made continually available pursuant to Subsection (a) of this Section shall be expended by the Department of Agriculture for:

(1) the salaries, benefits, and operating costs described in Sections 3 and 4 of this Act, to supplement the appropriation made in Section 2 of this Act and to sustain the positions authorized in Section 3 of this Act in subsequent fiscal years; and

(2) the personnel and operating costs of administering the Crop Loss Compensation Program and other farmer assistance, including inspections, post-disaster crop damage assessments, and the processing of claims.

Section 6. Effective Date. This Act shall be effective upon enactment.

Section 7. Severability. If any provision of this Act or its application to any person or circumstance is found to be invalid or contrary to law, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this Act that can be given effect without the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this Act are severable.