

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
226-38 (COR)	Vincent A. V. Borja	AN ACT TO <i>ADD</i> A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND DISABILITY SERVICES.	11/17/25 10:15 a.m.	11/25/25	Committee on Education, Libraries and Public Broadcasting.	Request: 11/25/25 12/4/25	3/13/26 9:00 a.m.	9/16/26	



Office of Senator

Vincent A. V. Borja

I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan

DNA BUILDING
SUITE 502
238 ARCHBISHOP FLORES ST.
HAGATNA, GUAM 96910
TEL 671-969-8423

CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, LIBRARIES
AND PUBLIC
BROADCASTING

September 15, 2026

The Honorable Frank F. Blas Jr.

Speaker, *I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan*
163 W. Chalan Santo Papa
Hågatña, Guam, 96910

Via Honorable Vice Speaker V. Anthony Ada 
Chairman, Committee on Rules

RE: Committee Report on Bill No. 226-38 (COR), As Amended

Buenas yan Håfa Ådai Speaker,

Transmitted herewith for your consideration is the Committee Report on **Bill 226-38 (COR), As Amended by the Committee on Education, Libraries and Public Broadcasting** – Vincent A.V. Borja - , “AN ACT TO ADD A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, DISABILITY SERVICES AND CHAMORU LANGUAGE TEACHERS.”

Committee votes are as follows:

 2 TO DO PASS
 TO NOT PASS
 5 TO REPORT OUT ONLY
 TO ABSTAIN
 TO PLACE IN ACTIVE FILE

Sincerely,



Senator Vincent A.V. Borja

Committee on Education, Libraries, and Public Broadcasting
I Mina'trentai Ocho na Liheslaturan Guåha



COMMITTEE ON RULES

RECEIVED:

September 15, 2026 3:26 p.m.

Marie Crisostomo



Office of Senator

Vincent A. V. Borja

I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan

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CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, LIBRARIES
AND PUBLIC
BROADCASTING

COMMITTEE REPORT

Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

*As Amended by the Committee on Education, Libraries and
Public Broadcasting*

Introduced by: Vincent A.V. Borja

**“AN ACT TO ADD A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2
OF CHAPTER 6, TITLE 4, GUAM CODE
ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING
INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES
WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED
CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN
CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING
SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS,
DISABILITY SERVICES AND CHAMORU
LANGUAGE TEACHERS.”**



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Vincent A.V. Borja

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CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, LIBRARIES
AND PUBLIC
BROADCASTING

September 15, 2026

MEMORANDUM

To: All Members
Committee on Education, Libraries, and Public Broadcasting

From: Senator Vincent A.V. Borja
Chairperson, Education, Libraries, and Public Broadcasting

Subject: Committee Report on Bill No. 226-38 (COR), *As Amended*

Transmitted herewith for your consideration is the Committee Report on **Bill 226-38 (COR), *As Amended by the Committee on Education, Libraries and Public Broadcasting*** – Vincent A.V. Borja - , “AN ACT TO *ADD A NEW* §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, DISABILITY SERVICES AND CHAMORU LANGUAGE TEACHERS.”

This report includes the following:

- Copy of COR Referral of Bill 226-28 (COR)
- Notices of Public Hearing
- Copy of the Public Hearing Agenda
- Public Hearing Sign-in Sheet
- Copies of Submitted Written Testimony
- Committee Vote Sheet
- Committee Report Digest
- Copy of Bill 226-28 (COR), *As Introduced*
- Copy of Bill 226-28 (COR), *As Amended*
- Copy of Bill 226-28 (COR), *As Amended by the Committee (Markup)*
- Fiscal Note

Please take the appropriate action on the attached vote sheet. Your attention to this matter is greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Senator Vincent A.V. Borja

Committee on Education, Libraries, and Public Broadcasting
I Mina'trentai Ocho na Liheslaturan Guåhan



COMMITTEE ON RULES

Vice Speaker V. Anthony Ada, Chairperson
I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guahan
38th Guam Legislature

November 25, 2025

To: **Rennae V. C. Meno**
Clerk of the Legislature

Attorney Darleen Hiton
Legislative Legal Counsel

From: **Vice Speaker V. Anthony Ada** 
Chairperson, Committee on Rules

Subject: **Referral of Bill No. 226-38 (COR)**

Håfa Adai,

As per my authority as Chairperson of the Committee on Rules and subject to §6.01(d)(1), Rule VI of our Standing Rules, I am forwarding the referral of **Bill No. 226-38 (COR)** – Vincent A. V. Borja. – “AN ACT TO *ADD* A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND DISABILITY SERVICES.”

Please ensure that the subject bill is referred to the Committee on Education, Libraries, and Public Broadcasting chaired by Senator Vincent A.V. Borja. I also request that the same be copied to the Prime Sponsor of the subject bill and to Management Information Services (MIS) for posting on our website.

A copy of the bill is available on our legislative website.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Kamarin Nelson, Committee on Rules Director at 671-472-2461.





Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

FIRST NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING – MARCH 13, 2026

2 messages

Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>
To: phnotice@guamlegislature.gov

Thu, Mar 5, 2026 at 5:00 AM

March 5, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL SENATORS, STAKEHOLDERS, MEDIA

FROM: SENATOR VINCENT A. V. BORJA,
CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, LIBRARIES, AND PUBLIC BROADCASTING

RE: FIRST NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING – MARCH 13, 2026

Håfa Adai! The Committee on Education, Libraries & Public Broadcasting will conduct a Public Hearing on Friday, March 13, 2026, beginning at 9:00 A.M., in the Public Hearing Room of the Guam Congress Building.

The Committee will hear and accept testimony on the following:

I. **Bill No. 226-38 (COR)** – AN ACT TO *ADD* A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND DISABILITY SERVICES.

How to Participate: Written testimony may be delivered to the Office of Senator Vincent A. V. Borja, DNA Building Suite 502, 238 Archbishop Flores Street, Hagåtña, Guam 96910, or via email to contact@senatorvinceborja.com. The Committee requests that testimonies be submitted at least forty-eight (48) hours before the scheduled hearing.

Please confirm your attendance by contacting the office of Senator Vincent A. V. Borja via email at contact@senatorvinceborja.com or by voice call at (671) 969-8423

Special Accommodations: All government activities, programs, and services are accessible for people with disabilities in compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For assistance or special accommodations to fully participate in this public hearing, please contact the office of Senator Vincent A. V. Borja at (671) 969-8423 or via email at contact@senatorvinceborja.com

Watch Live/Record: The hearing will be broadcast live on local television (GTA, Channel 21, Docomo Channel 117) and streamed online via *I Liheslaturan Guåhan's* live feed on YouTube. After the hearing, a hearing recording will also be available online via Guam Legislature Media on YouTube.

Respectfully,

**Office of Senator Vincent A.V. Borja**

Committee on Education, Libraries, & Public
Broadcasting

38th Guam Legislature

Suite 502, DNA Bldg. 238 Archbishop Flores St.

Hagåtña, Guam 96910

T +1 (671) 969-8423

E contact@senatorvinceborja.com

 **FIRST NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING – MARCH 13, 2026 .pdf**
263K

Ed Pocaigue <sgtarms@guamlegislature.gov>
To: Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Thu, Mar 5, 2026 at 5:55 AM

Hafa adai and posted on the calendar.

[Quoted text hidden]

--

**Edward S. Pocaigue, Jr.**

Sergeant-at-Arms

I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guahan

Guam Congress Building, 1st Floor

163 Chalan Santo Papa

Hagåtña, Guam 96910



1-671-969-3514



sgtarms@guamlegislature.gov

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Office of Senator

Vincent A. V. Borja

I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan

DNA BUILDING
SUITE 502
238 ARCHBISHOP FLORES ST.
HAGATNA, GUAM 96910
TEL 671-969-8423

CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, LIBRARIES
AND PUBLIC
BROADCASTING

March 5, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL SENATORS, STAKEHOLDERS, MEDIA

FROM: SENATOR VINCENT A. V. BORJA,
CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, LIBRARIES, AND
PUBLIC BROADCASTING

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FIRST NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING – MARCH 13, 2026

FIRST NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING – MARCH 13, 2026

PUBLIC HEARING

 **Posted on:** 03/05/2026 07:35 AM

 **Posted by:** Caden Poblete

 **Public Hearing Date:** 03/13/2026 09:00 AM

 **Department(s):** GUAM LEGISLATURE (/notices?department_id=92)

 **Division(s):** OFFICE OF SENATOR VINCE BORJA (/notices?division_id=297)

 **Notice Topic(s):** PUBLIC HEARING (/notices?topic_id=74)

 **Types of Notice:** PUBLIC HEARING (/notices?type_id=7)

 **For Audience(s):** PUBLIC (/notices?public=1)

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arch 5, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL SENATORS, STAKEHOLDERS, MEDIA

FROM: SENATOR VINCENT A. V. BORJA,
CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, LIBRARIES, AND PUBLIC BROADCASTING

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I. **Bill No. 226-38 (COR)**

([https://guamlegislature.gov/38th_Guam_Legislature/Bill_History_38th/STATUS%20Bill%20No.%20226-38%20\(COR\).pdf](https://guamlegislature.gov/38th_Guam_Legislature/Bill_History_38th/STATUS%20Bill%20No.%20226-38%20(COR).pdf)) – AN ACT TO ADD A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND DISABILITY SERVICES.

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FIRST NOTICE of Public Hearing by Senator Vincent Borja
Published on Kandit on March 5, 2026

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Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

SECOND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING – MARCH 13, 2026

2 messages

Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>
To: phnotice@guamlegislature.gov

Tue, Mar 10, 2026 at 5:00 AM

March 10, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL SENATORS, STAKEHOLDERS, MEDIA

FROM: SENATOR VINCENT A. V. BORJA,
CHAIRPERSON, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, LIBRARIES, AND PUBLIC BROADCASTING

RE: SECOND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING – MARCH 13, 2026

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Respectfully,

**Office of Senator Vincent A.V. Borja**

Committee on Education, Libraries, & Public
Broadcasting

38th Guam Legislature

Suite 502, DNA Bldg. 238 Archbishop Flores St.

Hagåtña, Guam 96910

T +1 (671) 969-8423

E contact@senatorvinceborja.com



SECOND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING – MARCH 13, 2026 .pdf
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Ed Pocaigue <sgtarms@guamlegislature.gov>

Tue, Mar 10, 2026 at 5:33 AM

To: Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Hafa Adai,

Calendar updated.

[Quoted text hidden]

--

**Edward S. Pocaigue, Jr.**

Sergeant-at-Arms

I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan

Guam Congress Building, 1st Floor

163 Chalan Santo Papa

Hagåtña, Guam 96910



1-671-969-3514



sgtarms@guamlegislature.gov

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Office of Senator

Vincent A. V. Borja

I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan

DNA BUILDING
SUITE 502
238 ARCHBISHOP FLORES ST.
HAGATNA, GUAM 96910
TEL 671-969-8423

CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, LIBRARIES
AND PUBLIC
BROADCASTING

March 10, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL SENATORS, STAKEHOLDERS, MEDIA

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PUBLIC HEARING

 **Posted on:** 03/10/2026 07:00 AM

 **Posted by:** Caden Poblete

 **Public Hearing Date:** 03/13/2026 09:00 AM

 **Department(s):** GUAM LEGISLATURE (/notices?department_id=92)

 **Division(s):** OFFICE OF SENATOR VINCE BORJA (/notices?division_id=297)

 **Notice Topic(s):** PUBLIC HEARING (/notices?topic_id=74)

 **Types of Notice:** PUBLIC HEARING (/notices?type_id=7)

 **For Audience(s):** PUBLIC (/notices?public=1)

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March 10, 2026

MEMORANDUM

TO: ALL SENATORS, STAKEHOLDERS, MEDIA

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Public hearing on bill to provide incentive pay to certain GDOE employees Scheduled for March 13, 2026



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The Committee on Education, Libraries & Public Broadcasting will conduct a Public Hearing on Friday, March 13, 2026, beginning at 9:00 A.M., in the Public Hearing Room of the Guam Congress Building.

The Committee will hear and accept testimony on the following:

1. **Bill No. 226-38 (COR)** – AN ACT TO *ADD* A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND DISABILITY SERVICES.

How to Participate: Written testimony may be delivered to the Office of Senator Vincent A. V. Borja, DNA Building Suite 502, 238 Archbishop Flores Street, Hagåtña, Guam 96910, or via email to contact@senatorvinceborja.com. The Committee requests that testimonies be submitted at least forty-eight (48) hours before the scheduled hearing.

Please confirm your attendance by contacting the office of Senator Vincent A. V. Borja via email at contact@senatorvinceborja.com or by voice call at (671) 969-8423

Special Accommodations: All government activities, programs, and services are accessible for people with disabilities in compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For assistance or special accommodations to fully participate in this public hearing, please contact the office of Senator Vincent A.V. Borja at (671) 969-8423 or via email at contact@senatorvinceborja.com

Watch Live/Record: The hearing will be broadcast live on local television (GTA, Channel 21, Docomo Channel 117) and streamed online via *Liheslaturan Guåhan's* live feed on YouTube. After the hearing, a hearing recording will also be available online via Guam Legislature Media on YouTube.



Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Invitation to Provide Testimony for Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

1 message

Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Sat, Feb 21, 2026 at 8:00 AM

To: judith.wonpat@guam.gov

February 21, 2026**Dr. Judith T. Won Pat, Ed.D.**

Superintendent, Guam Department of Education
501 Mariner Ave.
Barrigada, Guam 96913
VIA EMAIL: judith.wonpat@guam.gov

Subject: Invitation to Provide Testimony for Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

Dear Dr. Won Pat,

As part of my commitment to engaging stakeholders in the legislative process, I am writing to invite your agency to participate in a public hearing regarding Bill No. 226-38 (COR) for March 3, 2026, at 9:00 AM.

I. Bill 226-38 (COR) - AN ACT TO ADD A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND DISABILITY SERVICES.

Your agency's insights and expertise are invaluable in shaping the discussion around this important topic.

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We would like to have a representative from your agency present to provide testimony and engage with other participants. If you have any questions or require additional information, feel free to contact my office at 671-969-8423 or contact@senatorvinceborja.com.

Thank you for considering this invitation. I look forward to your positive response and to an engaging discussion on March 3, 2026, at 9:00 AM.

Respectfully,



Office of Senator Vincent A.V. Borja

Committee on Education, Libraries, & Public
Broadcasting

38th Guam Legislature

Suite 502, DNA Bldg. 238 Archbishop Flores St.

Hagåtña, Guam 96910

T +1 (671) 969-8423

E contact@senatorvinceborja.com



Dr. Won Pat.pdf
417K



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Office of Senator

Vincent A. V. Borja

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SUITE 502
238 ARCHBISHOP FLORES ST.
HAGÁTNA, GUAM 96910
TEL 671-969-8423

February 21, 2026

Dr. Judith T. Won Pat, Ed.D.

Superintendent, Guam Department of Education

501 Mariner Ave.

Barrigada, Guam 96913

VIA EMAIL: judith.wonpat@guam.gov

Subject: Invitation to Provide Testimony for Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

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TEL 671-969-8423

Thank you for considering this invitation. I look forward to your positive response and to an engaging discussion on March 3, 2026, at 9:00 AM.

Best Regards,

Senator Vincent A.V. Borja

Chairman

Committee on Education, Libraries & Public Broadcasting



Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Invitation to Provide Testimony for Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

2 messages

Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Sat, Feb 21, 2026 at 8:00 AM

To: [REDACTED]

February 21, 2026**Dr. Judith Guthertz**

Chairwoman, Guam Education Board
501 Mariner Ave.
Barrigada, Guam 96913

VIA EMAIL: [REDACTED]**Subject: Invitation to Provide Testimony for Bill No. 226-38 (COR)**

Dear Dr. Guthertz,

As part of my commitment to engaging stakeholders in the legislative process, I am writing to invite your agency to participate in a public hearing regarding Bill No. 226-38 (COR) for March 3, 2026, at 9:00 AM.

I. Bill 226-38 (COR) - AN ACT TO ADD A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND DISABILITY SERVICES.

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Respectfully,



Office of Senator Vincent A.V. Borja

Committee on Education, Libraries, & Public
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38th Guam Legislature

Suite 502, DNA Bldg. 238 Archbishop Flores St.

Hagåtña, Guam 96910

T +1 (671) 969-8423

E contact@senatorvinceborja.com

 **Dr.Guthertz.pdf**
420K

judi guthertz <[REDACTED]>
To: contact@senatorvinceborja.com

Mon, Feb 23, 2026 at 8:08 AM

thankyou kindly. judith guthertz.
Sent from my iPhone

On Feb 21, 2026, at 10:01 AM, Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]
<Dr.Guthertz.pdf>



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Office of Senator

Vincent A. V. Borja

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SUITE 502
238 ARCHBISHOP FLORES ST.
HAGÁTNA, GUAM 96910
TEL 671-969-8423

February 19, 2026

Dr. Judith Guthertz

Chairwoman, Guam Education Board

501 Mariner Ave.

Barrigada, Guam 96913

VIA EMAIL: [REDACTED]

Subject: Invitation to Provide Testimony for Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

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Vincent A. V. Borja

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TEL 671-969-8423

Thank you for considering this invitation. I look forward to your positive response and to an engaging discussion on March 3, 2026, at 9:00 AM.

Best Regards,

Senator Vincent A.V. Borja

Chairman

Committee on Education, Libraries & Public Broadcasting



Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Invitation to Provide Testimony for Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

1 message

Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Sat, Feb 21, 2026 at 8:00 AM

To: "Timothy R. Fedenko" <tfedenko@gftunion.com>

February 21, 2026**Timothy R. Fedenko**

President, Guam Federation of Teachers
P.O. Box 2301
Hagåtña, Guam 96932
VIA EMAIL: tfedenko@gftunion.com

Subject: Invitation to Provide Testimony for Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

Dear President Fedenko,

As part of my commitment to engaging stakeholders in the legislative process, I am writing to invite your agency to participate in a public hearing regarding Bill No. 226-38 (COR) for March 3, 2026, at 9:00 AM.

I. Bill 226-38 (COR) - AN ACT TO ADD A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND DISABILITY SERVICES.

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Thank you for considering this invitation. I look forward to your positive response and to an engaging discussion on March 3, 2026, at 9:00 AM.

Best Regards,

Respectfully,



Office of Senator Vincent A.V. Borja

Committee on Education, Libraries, & Public
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38th Guam Legislature

Suite 502, DNA Bldg. 238 Archbishop Flores St.

Hagåtña, Guam 96910

T +1 (671) 969-8423

E contact@senatorvinceborja.com



President Fedenko.pdf

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HAGÁTNA, GUAM 96910
TEL 671-969-8423

February 21, 2026

Timothy R. Fedenko

President, Guam Federation of Teachers

P.O. Box 2301

Hagåtña, Guam 96932

VIA EMAIL: tfedenko@gftunion.com

Subject: Invitation to Provide Testimony for Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

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Best Regards,

Senator Vincent A.V. Borja

Chairman

Committee on Education, Libraries & Public Broadcasting



Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Invitation to Provide Testimony for Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

3 messages

Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Sat, Feb 21, 2026 at 8:00 AM

To: Edward.Birn@doa.guam.gov

February 21, 2026**Edward Birn**

Director, Department of Administration
590 S. Marine Corps Drive, ITC Building
Tamuning, Guam 96913
VIA EMAIL: Edward.Birn@doa.guam.gov

Subject: Invitation to Provide Testimony for Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

Dear Director Birn,

As part of my commitment to engaging stakeholders in the legislative process, I am writing to invite your agency to participate in a public hearing regarding Bill No. 226-38 (COR) for March 3, 2026, at 9:00 AM.

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Respectfully,

**Office of Senator Vincent A.V. Borja**

Committee on Education, Libraries, & Public
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38th Guam Legislature

Suite 502, DNA Bldg. 238 Archbishop Flores St.

Hagåtña, Guam 96910

T +1 (671) 969-8423

E contact@senatorvinceborja.com

 **Director Birn.pdf**
417K

Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>
To: "lolasita.perez@doa.guam.gov" <lolasita.perez@doa.guam.gov>

Thu, Mar 12, 2026 at 8:36 AM

Håfa Adai,

Please see the attached email regarding Bill 226 for your review and consideration. We look forward to your response.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

[Quoted text hidden]

2 attachments

 **Director Birn.pdf**
417K

 **Bill No. 226-38 (COR)-31.pdf**
813K

Lolasita A. Perez <lolasita.perez@doa.guam.gov>
To: Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Thu, Mar 12, 2026 at 8:39 AM

Hafa adai!

Confirmed receipt of your email. Thank you.

Best Regards,

Lola Perez

Administrative Officer

Department of Administration

Director's Office

Tel: 671.475.1250

Email: lolasita.perez@doa.guam.gov



 **Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.**

From: Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 12, 2026 10:36 AM
To: Lolasita A. Perez <lolasita.perez@doa.guam.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Invitation to Provide Testimony for Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Government's Network. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

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Office of Senator

Vincent A. V. Borja

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DNA BUILDING
SUITE 502
238 ARCHBISHOP FLORES ST.
HAGÁTNA, GUAM 96910
TEL 671-969-8423

February 21, 2026

Edward Birn

Director, Department of Administration
590 S. Marine Corps Drive, ITC Building
Tamuning, Guam 96913

VIA EMAIL: Edward.Birn@doa.guam.gov

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Senator Vincent A.V. Borja

Chairman

Committee on Education, Libraries & Public Broadcasting



Office of Senator

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CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON
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PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA
Friday, March 13th, 2026
Guam Congress Building, Public Hearing Room

AGENDA FOR 09:00:

1.) Bill 226- 38 (COR) AN ACT TO ADD A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE, ACCESS, AND DISABILITY SERVICES.

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Chairperson on Education, Public Broadcasting & Libraries
Vincent Anthony V. Borja
I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan

DNA BUILDING
SUITE 502
238 ARCHBISHOP FLORES ST.
HAGÁTNA, GUAM 96910
TEL 671-969-8423

PUBLIC HEARING SIGN-IN SHEET
Friday, March 13, 2026 – 9:00 AM
Public Hearing Room, Guam Congress Building

Bill No. 226-38 (COR)- AN ACT TO ADD A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND DISABILITY SERVICES.

NAME:	AGENCY/ ORGANIZATION	POSITION	TESTIMONY	CONTACT INFORMATION
1. Peter Ada	Guam Education Board	SUPPORT ☐ OPPOSE ☐	WRITTEN ☐ ORAL ☐	
2. Timothy Fedenko	Guam Federation of Teachers	SUPPORT ☐ OPPOSE ☐	WRITTEN ☐ ORAL ☐	
3. Stephen D. Willman	Special Ed Teacher GDOE	SUPPORT ☐ OPPOSE ☐	WRITTEN ☐ ORAL ☐	
4. Julene Isezaki	Special Ed Teacher GDOE	SUPPORT ☐ OPPOSE ☐	WRITTEN ☐ ORAL ☐	
5. Attorney Daniel Somerfleck	Special Ed Teacher GDOE	SUPPORT ☐ OPPOSE ☐	WRITTEN ☐ ORAL ☐	
6.		SUPPORT ☐ OPPOSE ☐	WRITTEN ☐ ORAL ☐	
7.		SUPPORT ☐ OPPOSE ☐	WRITTEN ☐ ORAL ☐	
8.		SUPPORT ☐ OPPOSE ☐	WRITTEN ☐ ORAL ☐	
9.		SUPPORT ☐ OPPOSE ☐	WRITTEN ☐ ORAL ☐	



Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Bill 226-38 (COR) Testimony

1 message

Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Tue, Mar 10, 2026 at 8:03 AM

To: jachargualaf@gdoe.net, jpcabrera@gdoe.net, jbpilarca@gdoe.net, lscooper-nurse@gdoe.net, John Wesolowski <jwesolowski@gdoe.net>, mamflores@gdoe.net, dccastro@gdoe.net, daroberto@gdoe.net, mdcgarcia@gdoe.net, adsalas@gdoe.net, mhperez@gdoe.net, rccastro@gdoe.net, ettaisipic@gdoe.net, claguon@gdoe.net, jkpunongbayan@gdoe.net, jsreyes@gdoe.net, nadelacruz@gdoe.net, svvalencia@gdoe.net, nrplimtiaco@gdoe.net, elscapeda@gdoe.net, tbmoylan@gdoe.net, bnperez@gdoe.net, ebmanibusan@gdoe.net, emgofigan@gdoe.net, saccoletta@gdoe.net, dbfullo@gdoe.net, adrosete@gdoe.net, rlflores@gdoe.net, Carla Benita Masnayon <cdmasnayon@gdoe.net>, "Michael G. Meno" <mgmeno@gdoe.net>, Sophia Duenas <ssnduenas@gdoe.net>, "Eliza U. Paulino" <eupaulino@gdoe.net>, hmgutierrez@gdoe.net, mdmafnas@gdoe.net, drsantos@gdoe.net, mtlujan@gdoe.net, aaguerrero@gdoe.net, dmantanona@gdoe.net, fsarii@gdoe.net

Håfa Adai, Stakeholders,

On behalf of the Office of Senator Vincent Borja, we would like to invite you to attend our public hearing regarding Bill 226-38 (COR), scheduled for **March 13, 2026, at 9:00 AM**.

Your attendance would be greatly appreciated. If you are unable to attend, we kindly ask that you submit written testimony via email on this bill to assist in the legislative process.

Attached is Bill 226-38 (COR).

Please contact our office if you have any questions.

Si Yu'os Ma'åse',**Caden Nathaniel Ong Poblete***Office of Senator Vincent A.V. Borja*

671-969-8423

caden.poblete@guamlegislature.gov

DNA Building Suite 502, Hagatna

**Bill No. 226-38 (COR).pdf**

813K

March 12, 2026

HON. VINCE BORJA, *Senator*

DNA Building, Suite 502

238 Archbishop Flores St.

Hagåtña, Guam 96910

Phone | (671) 671) 969-8423

Email | office.senatorborja@guamlegislature.gov

Re: Written Testimony on Bill 226-38;

AN ACT TO *ADD* A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND DISABILITY SERVICES.

Håfa Adai Senator Borja,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony on Bill 226-38 on the record. I write as a private constituent and stakeholder as well as an advocate who has spent many years working alongside interpreters, educators, and professionals who support students with disabilities and language access needs. My perspective comes from direct experience observing the persistent gaps in service delivery and the urgent need for a stronger, more sustainable workforce in these critical areas.

Guam continues to face severe shortages of qualified professionals in special education, disability services, and language access. These shortages are not theoretical, it is a reality, and it affects students every day. Families wait months for services. Teachers and language access specialists such as sign language interpreters are stretched beyond capacity. Students who rely on specialized support services often go without access they are legally entitled to. Bill 226-38 acknowledges these realities and offers a meaningful step forward.

The incentive pay structure proposed in this bill is practical and necessary. However, it is essential that this bill also functions not only as an incentive, but as a pipeline strategy that intentionally grows the workforce from within.

From my personal vantage point, I want to highlight that Guam Community College (GCC) is uniquely positioned to serve as a workforce pipeline for the very shortage areas identified in this bill. GCC already offers structured pathways in fields such as interpreting, education support, and other technical programs that directly align with GDOE's needs.

Even though I am an adjunct instructor at GCC for the sign language interpreting program, I reiterate that I am offering this observation solely as a private individual. I have seen firsthand how GCC's programs can strengthen Guam's workforce when paired with intentional coordination and support. With the incentives in Bill 226-38, GDOE employees could pursue certifications through existing GCC programs, creating a sustainable, homegrown pipeline of qualified professionals. GCC's programs can serve as an accessible, local training route for employees seeking to upskill. When paired with the incentives in Bill 226-38, GCC can help create a sustainable, homegrown workforce that reduces long-standing shortages.

A localized pipeline is essential because Guam does not have a large pool of Special Education paraprofessionals, certified interpreters, assistive technology specialists, or disability-services professionals ready to fill vacancies. Recruitment and incentives alone cannot solve this problem. The workforce GDOE needs must be developed intentionally, with clear pathways and support for current employees and aspiring employees who are also willing to step into these roles.

The bill already includes strong language requiring active utilization and annual verification. This is an excellent foundation. The success of the program, however, will depend on GDOE implementing it as a workforce-development pipeline rather than simply a pay differential.

One area that I believe this bill needs to strengthen is Language Access, particularly for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing students and families with limited English proficiency - contrary to popular belief, American Sign Language (ASL) is not actually English, ASL is its own language. These are federally protected rights. When GDOE lacks interpreters, translators, or accessibility-trained staff, they are not just understaffed, they are out of compliance. This bill is a good starting point.

The reporting and review requirements in the bill are strong, and the sunset provision is a responsible safeguard. But the long-term success of this program will depend on whether GDOE treats it as a strategic investment in human capital.

I respectfully urge the Legislature to implement Bill 226-38 with long-term workforce development in mind. Incentive pay is the spark, but the pipeline is the engine. Our students deserve a system that plans for the future, not one that continually reacts to shortages.

Si Yu'os Ma'åse' for your time and for your commitment to Guam's students.

/s/

KEVIN J. LIZAMA-REYES

Senator Vincent A.V. Borja
Chairperson, Committee on Education, Libraries and Public Broadcasting
38th Guam Legislature
163 Chalan Santo Papa
Hagatna, Guam 96910

March 13th, 2026

RE: Testimony in Support of Bill 226-38 - An Act To Add A New §6236 To Article 2 Of Chapter 6 Title 4, Guam Code Annotated, Relative To Establishing Incentive Pay For Certain Guam Department Of Education Employees Who Obtain And Utilize Specialized Certifications Or Training In Critical Shortage Areas, Including Special Education, Language Access, And Disability Services.

Dear Senator Borja and members of the Committee on Education, Libraries and Public Broadcasting,

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on Bill 226-38.

We admire this bill for its attempts in establishing increased language accessibility for Guam Department of Education (GDOE) students. As the bill states, student success can be dependent on the quality of education. The vitality of having certified educators, paraprofessionals, service providers, and interpreters is a federal right—as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

This bill serves as an incentive for GDOE employees to become certified in Special Education, Language Access, and Disability Services. Incentive Pay can encourage the retention of employees and service providers. Overall, GDOE has a limited, waning number of educational interpreters. As self-reported at a GDOE Roundtable in December 2025, there are only four educational interpreters, and two school aides who also serve interpreting roles. This bill, in bridging gaps of service for students with disabilities, has the potential to support the training and professional development of the GDOE staff, and boosting retention. This bill also recognizes funding sources for its continuation from IDEA, special education appropriation, and the Government of Guam's General Fund.

Offering incentives for employees who pursue additional certifications fosters a culture of professional growth and motivates individuals to expand their expertise. When organizations like GDOE recognize and reward these efforts, it demonstrates a clear commitment to valuing

advanced knowledge and skills. This investment in employee development ultimately leads to an increase in efficiency and improves outcomes for the entire community.

The nature of this bill is a pivotal step to increased accessibility for the whole community—serving not only students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, but the quality of education for all students.

However, many concerns can be identified from the bill's language.

As listed in §6236 (c)(2)(a), the certification of the GDOE employee is to be “valid and current.”

§6236 (d), for Certification Approval, notes that “GDOE shall maintain and annually update a list of approved certifications and training programs. Such lists shall include local, national, or online programs meeting recognized professional standards applicable to GDOE roles. The list shall be published on the GDOE website and distributed to all employees upon update.” As of today, there is no preview of the approved local, national, or online programs on the GDOE website.

Guam does have local programs for these certifications, such as the Guam Community College's (GCC) two-year program for Sign Language Interpreting. However, Guam does not have an agency or organization dedicated to interpreting services, like many states in the mainland do. There is no center dedicated to Deaf and Hard of Hearing services. Most interpreters that leave the local programs with their certifications are forced to work through freelance.

The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) is the national certifying organization for ASL interpreters in the United States. National certification can value upwards to \$1,000—as it comprises two exams, for knowledge and for performance.

The current language of the bill does not indicate the levels of certification GDOE employees must meet to be eligible for the Incentive Pay—for if graduation from the local programs will suffice in lieu of national certification. Local programs must be considered at the forefront, as they are the most accessible means of certification for GDOE employees.

Once employees are recognized for their certifications, it's essential to clarify how their specialized skills will be integrated and utilized within the school system to maximize student support and educational outcomes.

This bill, although identifying funding sources for the incentive pay, does not go into the root of the issue, of which is the retention. Although pushing for quality services and education, as it reads now, it is catered to the benefit of individuals who come from off-island, rather than supporting the local certification programs.

This bill is a big step in the direction of increased language accessibility in the community, starting with education. The consideration of the local schools, such as the University of Guam and the Guam Community College, and how they can be the pipeline for workforce innovation for GDOE employees, must be considered at the forefront too.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Anna Jo Halmi and Sophie Nochefranca

Senator Vince A.V. Borja
Chairperson, Committee on Education, Libraries, and Public Broadcasting
38th Guam Legislature
163 Chalan Santo Papa
Hagatna, Guam 96910

March 13, 2026

RE: Testimony in Support of Bill 226-38 - An Act To Add A New §6236 To Article 2 Of Chapter 6 Title 4, Guam Code Annotated, Relative To Establishing Incentive Pay For Certain Guam Department Of Education Employees Who Obtain And Utilize Specialized Certifications Or Training In Critical Shortage Areas, Including Special Education, Language Access, And Disability Services.

Dear Senator Borja and members of the Committee on Education, Libraries, and Public Broadcasting,

Thank you for introducing Bill 226-38 and for your commitment to improving language access and support services for students in Guam's public schools. I respect and admire the intent of this bill to strengthen services for students who require specialized support. Ensuring that every student has equitable access to education is essential, and student success must remain our number one goal.

Guam is currently facing a severe shortage of educational interpreters and specialists. At present, there are only four educational interpreters serving students across the island's public schools. This shortage directly affects students with disabilities and those who require language access services, limiting their ability to fully participate in classroom instruction and make meaningful academic progress.

Providing incentive pay for specialized certifications and training is a practical strategy to recruit, retain, and support educators who develop the additional skills necessary to meet students' needs. Clear compensation for these qualifications encourages professional development while helping the Guam Department of Education fill critical roles and reduce reliance on a small number of overburdened staff members.

Guam Community College (GCC) is well positioned to serve as a workforce development partner in this effort. GCC already provides certification and workforce training programs and can help create accessible, practical pathways for GDOE teachers and staff. Strengthening collaboration between GDOE and GCC could include tuition support, scheduled course offerings designed for working educators, and recognition of GCC credits and certificates for incentive pay eligibility. Such partnerships would help expand local capacity in communication access, sign language interpreting, special education techniques, and disability services.

However, several important issues should be clarified to ensure the bill functions effectively. Guam currently does not offer an opportunity to obtain full national Interpreter Certification. As drafted, the bill does not clearly define which certifications or levels of training will qualify for incentive pay. Establishing clear standards for acceptable certifications and minimum competencies will be essential for fair and consistent implementation.

In addition, Guam Community College certifications should qualify for eligibility under this bill if they meet established standards. The legislation should explicitly recognize locally available GCC certifications and create a process for approving additional local training pathways. Without this clarification, the bill may unintentionally favor credentialing pathways available in the continental United States, which may be financially or logistically inaccessible to many educators in Guam.

For this reason, the bill should also prioritize local training opportunities to ensure Guam residents benefit first through affordable and accessible pathways to certification.

I respectfully urge the Committee to pass Bill 226-38 with several key amendments: clearly define the certifications eligible for incentive pay, explicitly recognize Guam Community College certifications that meet those standards, and support local training partnerships that strengthen Guam's workforce in critical shortage areas.

With these clarifications, this bill has the potential to significantly improve educational access and outcomes for students who rely on communication access, special education services, and other specialized support. Strengthening the local workforce in these areas will help ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
Natalya Williams-Duenas

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of Natalya Williams-Duenas.



GFT, AFT Local 1581
Together We Win!

Timothy Fedenko, President
Corazon Mucho, Secretary

Sanjay Sharma, Vice President
Mary Jean Vigilante, Treasurer

March 12, 2026

**Honorable Vincent A.V. Borja and
Members of the 38th Guam Legislature**

I Mina'trentai Singko Na Liheslaturan Guahan
Guam Congress Building 163 Chalan Santo Papa
Hagatna, Guam 96910

RE: Opposition to Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

Honorable Chairperson and Members of the Guam Legislature, my name is Sanjay Sharma, PhD, and I am the Vice-President of GFT, AFT Local 1581. I submit this testimony in opposition to Bill No. 226-38 (COR). I do not agree with this Bill, and I ask you not to pass it.

Unfair by Design.

This Bill is unfair. It creates extra pay for a select group of employees while most employees get nothing. It will divide workers who already carry heavy workloads. It will damage morale across our schools.

Selective Incentives Create Division.

This Bill offers either a biweekly stipend of USD 100 to USD 180, or a pay differential of 5 percent to 10 percent of base salary, for specific certifications in specific shortage areas. That means two employees can work in the same school, face the same stress, and serve the same community, but only one gets more pay. This creates resentment. It discourages teamwork.

Not Equitable and Not the Easiest Path.

Time after time, the Legislature addresses problems in complicated and narrow ways, but does not move pay in a broad and equitable manner. This Bill follows that pattern. It adds another layer of unequal pay instead of fixing the foundation. The easiest and most equitable solution is clear. Match our pay scales to national average pay.

National Average Pay Is the Equitable Standard.

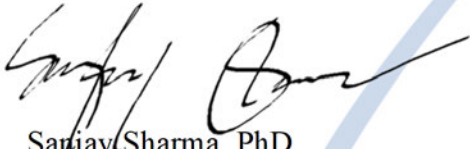
Instead of this bill, I urge the Legislature to pursue an alternative bill that supports a move to match pay with the national averages for our pay scales. This approach treats employees as one

workforce. It strengthens recruitment and retention across all roles. It improves morale because everyone moves forward together.

Request to the Legislature.

I respectfully ask you to not pass Bill No. 226-38 (COR). I ask you to introduce and pass an alternative bill that moves GDOE pay scales to the national averages in a clear and measurable way. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Sincerely,



Sanjay Sharma, PhD
Vice-President
GFT, AFT Local 1581





Judith T. Won Pat, Ed.D.
Acting Superintendent of Education

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

www.gdoe.net
501 Mariner Avenue
Barrigada, Guam 96913
Telephone: (671)472-0462/300-1547 • Fax: (671)472-5003
Email: jtwonpat@gdoe.net



WRITTEN TESTIMONY BILL NO. 226-38 (COR)

TO:
Honorable Senator Vincent A. V. Borja
Author, Bill No. 226-38 (COR)
I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan

SUBMITTED BY:
Dr. Judith T. Won Pat
Superintendent of Education
Guam Department of Education

DATE:
March 9, 2026

Dear Senator Borja,

Håfa Adai! Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Bill No. 226-38 (COR), relative to establishing a Specialty Certification Incentive Pay Program for employees of the Guam Department of Education. The Guam Department of Education appreciates your continued commitment to strengthening services for students in specialized areas such as special education, language access, and disability services.

SUPPORT FOR THE INTENT OF THE BILL

GDOE recognizes the important role that workforce incentives can play in addressing shortages in critical service areas. Programs that encourage employees to obtain specialized certifications and training may strengthen service delivery, enhance professional development, and support improved outcomes for students who require specialized educational services.

The Department supports the intent and policy objective of Bill No. 226-38 (COR), particularly as it relates to strengthening capacity in programs that directly support students with specialized needs.

CURRENT WORKFORCE AND COMPLIANCE REALITIES

The Department continues to face operational challenges in recruiting and retaining specialized personnel in areas such as special education, therapy services, language access, and student support services. These workforce shortages place additional pressure on the Department's ability to maintain compliance with federal mandates, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), while ensuring equitable services across all schools.

CONCERNS REGARDING UNFUNDED MANDATES

While supportive of the bill's intent, the Department must respectfully express concern regarding legislative acts that establish new compensation programs without secured funding sources. The Department is currently operating within fiscal constraints while continuing to meet statutory and contractual obligations.

- Compliance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) with the Guam Federation of Teachers
- Compliance with the Adequate Public Education Act and the Fourteen Points requirements
- Ongoing efforts to address staffing shortages across specialized positions
- Maintaining operational stability within existing appropriations

Given these obligations, the Department must ensure that any new compensation program is fully funded and sustainable so that it does not inadvertently impact existing commitments to employees and students.

FEDERAL FUNDING AND SUPPLANTING CONSIDERATIONS

The bill references the potential use of federal funding sources, including IDEA and other federal programs. While we understand the intent behind identifying federal funds as a possible funding source, once a program is mandated by statute, federal funds generally cannot be used to support that requirement.

Under federal grant regulations, the use of federal funds for a mandated program may be considered supplanting rather than supplementing local funding. As a result, once the program becomes a statutory requirement, GDOE may no longer be able to utilize federal grant funds for this purpose.

For this reason, it is important that the Department and the Legislature work together to ensure that reliable and sustainable funding sources are identified prior to implementation.

NEED FOR ADDITIONAL REVIEW AND COORDINATION

GDOE respectfully requests additional time to work collaboratively with your office and the Legislature to review the proposed program to ensure it does not duplicate existing incentive programs, remains consistent with the Government of Guam pay framework, and includes clearly identified and sustainable funding sources.

COMMITMENT TO COLLABORATION

The Guam Department of Education remains committed to working collaboratively with the Legislature and stakeholders to strengthen recruitment, retention, and professional development in critical shortage areas.

CONCLUSION

GDOE supports the intent of Bill No. 226-38 (COR). However, given current fiscal conditions and existing obligations, the Department respectfully requests additional time to work with your office to ensure no duplication with existing incentive programs and to secure sustainable funding prior to implementation.

Si Yu'os Ma'åse' for the opportunity to provide these comments.

Senseramente,



Dr. Judith T. Won Pat
Acting Superintendent of Education
Guam Department of Education

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Submitted by the Special Education Team

Jose Rios Middle School, Guam Department of Education

In Support of Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan

Håfa Adai Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Si Yu'os Ma'åse' for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of **Bill No. 226-38 (COR)**, which proposes to establish a *Specialty Certification Incentive Pay Program* for Guam Department of Education employees working in critical shortage areas such as special education, language access, and disability services.

As the Special Education team at **Jose Rios Middle School**, we see firsthand the urgent need for this legislation. The bill recognizes that GDOE continues to face “**significant staffing shortages in specialized areas critical to student success**” and that incentivizing employees to obtain specialized training can “**address immediate needs and enhance service delivery.**”

We can attest that these findings reflect the daily reality in our classrooms.

Challenges in Serving Students With Special Needs

1. Severe Shortage of Para Educators (Disability Aides or 1:1 aides) Aides

Our school currently faces a **glaring shortage of para educators**, even though many of our students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) require direct, individualized support for safety, communication, behavior regulation, and academic access.

Without adequate aides:

- SPED teachers must divide their attention between entire caseloads and students who require constant supervision;
- Students with high needs are sometimes unable to participate fully in general education settings;
- Safety risks increase, especially for students with mobility challenges, behavioral needs, and/or the potential to leave the classroom; and/or
- Instructional time is lost because teachers must step into roles meant for aides.

This shortage directly undermines the intent of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the bill's emphasis on addressing **federal compliance risks** in shortage areas.

2. Resource Room Realities

Our resource rooms serve students with a wide range of disabilities, intellectual disabilities, emotional/behavioral disorders, learning disabilities, and communication impairments. These rooms require:

- Specialized instructional materials
- Adapted, adjusted curriculum
- Behavior intervention tools
- Assistive technology
- Visual supports and structured learning systems

Most of these are **not provided by GDOE**, or the materials available are **not relevant or aligned to local student needs**.

3. Teachers Paying Out of Pocket

Because our students cannot wait for procurement cycles or unavailable materials, SPED teachers routinely spend their own money on:

- Evidence-based instructional programs
- Visual schedules and communication boards
- Sensory tools and calming materials
- Behavior intervention resources
- Specialized lesson plans and adapted texts

These purchases are not luxuries; they are essential for students to access their education.

The bill acknowledges the importance of and need for employees to obtain specialized training. However, without incentives or support, teachers shoulder the financial burden themselves.

Online training and certification courses paid for by GDOE allow for teachers to move forward with teaching and supporting our students with diverse, special needs; however, these courses and trainings need to be completed during teacher's personal time outside teacher contract hours; potentially increasing burnout and teacher shortages, with little to no incentive.

Why Bill #226-38 (COR) Matters

1. Incentive Pay Will Strengthen Special Education Capacity

The bill proposes a stipend or differential for employees who obtain approved certifications:

“A biweekly stipend... or a percentage differential... while the skills are actively applied in the employee’s assigned duties.”

This is exactly what is needed to:

- Encourage more staff to pursue SPED-related certifications
- Retain experienced SPED teachers and aides

- Improve service delivery for students with disabilities; and
- Reduce burnout and turnover overall

2. It Supports Compliance and Student Outcomes

The bill's intent to improve educational outcomes and reduce shortages aligns with our daily mission. When staff are trained and supported, students receive the services they are entitled to legally. In general, filling positions in the Guam Department of Education can sometimes prove difficult based on credentials, certifications, and degrees. It is important to incentivize specialized educators, as well as paraeducators, while also keeping the options open for prospective employees who work with students with special needs.

3. It Creates a Sustainable Workforce Pipeline

This bill ensures workforce development and sustainability for the future of Special Education teams in the Guam Department of Education. We are well aware of the shortages that the GDOE faces, however it should not be at the expense of compliance, workforce sustainability, and student learning outcomes that affect the future of our island.

Conclusion

The Special Education team at Jose Rios Middle School strongly supports Bill No. 226-38 (COR). Our students deserve educators and support staff who are trained, supported, valued, and appropriately compensated. This bill is a meaningful step toward stabilizing the special education workforce and ensuring that students with disabilities receive the high-quality services they need, deserve, and are entitled to legally by the IDEA.

We respectfully urge the Legislature to pass this bill.

Si Yu'os Ma'åse' for your time and commitment to Guam's students,

Jose Rios SPED Team,

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1) Allyson K. Iseke | 2) Georginia Cruz |
| 3) Sophia Colarusso | 4) Julene Isezaki |

Senator Vincent A.V. Borja

Chairperson, Committee on Education, Libraries and Public Broadcasting

38th Guam Legislature

163 Chalan Santo Papa

Hagatna, Guam 96910

March 23rd, 2026

RE: Testimony in Support of Bill 226-38 - An Act To Add A New §6236 To Article 2 Of Chapter 6 Title 4, Guam Code Annotated, Relative To Establishing Incentive Pay For Certain Guam Department Of Education Employees Who Obtain And Utilize Specialized Certifications Or Training In Critical Shortage Areas, Including Special Education, Language Access, And Disability Services.

Dear Senator Borja and members of the Committee on Education, Libraries and Public Broadcasting,

Thank you for providing the opportunity to comment on Bill 226-38. I value the time you took to put this bill together, trying to create a temporary solution for our decrease of special education aides. I am in full support of the concept and intent of this bill, it is a great start in the right direction towards accessibility for our students. However as Senator Shelly Calvo stated there isn't a "perfect bill" there is much to improve on this bill. Right now it would say it's a 6/10 and we can work towards a 9.5/10 on the bill which to me sounds good close to "perfect"

As mentioned during the hearing a concern of raising the pay scale rather than incentive pay was brought up. Since this incentive pay is a short-term solution for a long term challenge here is what I suggest.

In placing a quarter check in with schools and their "developmental aides", paraprofessionals, etc. that will be receiving this stipend must be required to submit a reflection upon the each quarter of the school year. Check in reflections given directly to superintendent to ensure there is no interference.

Or a pay raise would be a permanent solution to ensure longevity and retention of aides in this position. As Mr. Steven Williams mentioned students require predictability and structure, without that it can throw the student off schedule. Perhaps if they suddenly switch aides, that alone may make the day a little more challenging than usual.

As mentioned there are probably about 128 special needs students. With that comes many types of disabilities from a spectrum of autism, blindness, absolute deafness or hard of hearing, etc. which will require an a variety of skill set to handle the individual or in this case the student.

Utilizing our local colleges like UOG and GCC to pipeline those studying in these fields to the work force at GDOE. Allowing for a proper amount of training and knowledge to use actively in the classroom with our special needs students.

Although there may be a few kinks to work out, it is definitely a step in the right direction. I look forward to seeing where this bill goes and how we progress in the path to accessibility for our students.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Ryae Anne Cosca



Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Support for Bill No. 226-38

2 messages

Jenna Dacalio [REDACTED]
To: contact@senatorvinceborja.com

Mon, Mar 23, 2026 at 7:03 PM

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee,

I am submitting this testimony in support of Bill No. 226-38 (COR), introduced by Senator Vincent A. V. Borja.

I appreciate the intent behind this measure and believe it addresses a very real need within our public education system. There are critical shortage areas, such as special education and language access services, where schools continue to face challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified professionals. These roles require specialized training, and the educators who serve in them often take on significant responsibilities to support students with diverse needs.

By providing incentive pay to employees who obtain and apply specialized certifications, this bill offers a practical way to both encourage professional development and recognize the additional expertise these roles require. It also helps strengthen retention by giving educators a meaningful reason to continue serving in high-need areas.

Importantly, this measure supports not only educators but also students. Ensuring that qualified and properly trained personnel are available in critical areas helps improve the quality of instruction and services provided to some of our most vulnerable student populations.

Overall, Bill No. 226-38 (COR) represents a thoughtful investment in the capacity of our education system. For these reasons, I support this measure and respectfully encourage its advancement.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Jenna Baker

Office of Senator Vince Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>
Reply-To: Office of Senator Vince Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Tue, Mar 24, 2026 at 5:39 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Håfa Adai Ms. Baker,

Our office confirms receipt of your email and thanks you for providing testimony on Bill No. 226-38 (COR).

Please contact our office if you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,



Office of Senator Vincent A.V. Borja

Committee on Education, Libraries, & Public
Broadcasting

38th Guam Legislature

Suite 502, DNA Bldg. 238 Archbishop Flores St.

Hagåtña, Guam 96910

T +1 (671) 969-8423

E contact@senatorvinceborja.com

[Quoted text hidden]



Office of Senator

Vincent A. V. Borja

I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan

DNA BUILDING
SUITE 502
238 ARCHBISHOP FLORES ST.
HAGATNA, GUAM 96910
TEL 671-969-8423

CHAIRPERSON
COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION, LIBRARIES
AND PUBLIC
BROADCASTING

COMMITTEE VOTE SHEET

Bill No. 226-38 (COR) *As Amended* – Vincent A.V. Borja – “AN ACT TO ADD A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, DISABILITY SERVICES AND CHAMORU LANGUAGE TEACHERS.”

Committee Members	INITIAL	TO DO PASS	TO NOT PASS	TO REPORT OUT ONLY	TO ABSTAIN	TO PLACE IN INACTIVE FILE
Senator Vincent A.V. Borja <i>Chairperson</i>		✓				
Senator Tina Muña Barnes <i>Vice Chairperson</i>	E-VOTE 9/15/26			✓		
Speaker Frank F. Blas, Jr. <i>Member</i>	E-VOTE 9/15/26			✓		
Vice Speaker V. Anthony Ada <i>Member</i>						
Legislative Secretary Sabrina Salas Matanane <i>Member</i>	E-VOTE 9/15/26			✓		
Senator Shelly Calvo <i>Member</i>	E-VOTE 9/15/26	✓				
Senator Christopher Duenas <i>Member</i>	E-VOTE 9/15/26			✓		
Senator Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao <i>Member</i>	E-VOTE 9/15/26			✓		
Senator Joe S. San Agustin <i>Member</i>						
Senator Chris Barnett <i>Ex-Officio Member</i>						



Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

URGENT REQUEST FOR E-VOTE Bill 226-38 (COR)

7 messages

Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Tue, Sep 15, 2026 at 9:56 AM

To: "Frank Blas Jr." <speakerblas@guamlegislature.gov>, "Vice Speaker V. Anthony Ada" <vicespeakertonyada@guamlegislature.gov>, "Joe S. San Agustin" <senatorjoessanagustin@gmail.com>, Office Senator Bri <office.senatorbri@guamlegislature.gov>, Senator Tina Muna Barnes <senator.munabarnes@guamlegislature.gov>, Chris Duenas <senator.duenas@guamlegislature.gov>, Office of Senator Shelly Calvo <officeofsenatorshellycalvo@guamlegislature.gov>, Senator Shawn Gumataotao <office.senatorshawn@guamlegislature.gov>

Buenas yan Håfa Adai, Honorable Committee Members,

Please see the attached Committee Report of **Bill No. 226-38 (COR) – AN ACT TO ADD A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6, TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, DISABILITY SERVICES AND CHAMORU LANGUAGE TEACHERS.**

Please indicate your preferred action, based on the following options:

- **TO DO PASS**
- **TO NOT PASS**
- **TO REPORT OUT ONLY**
- **TO ABSTAIN**
- **TO PLACE IN INACTIVE FILE**

Please submit your response **ASAP**. Your responses will be logged into the vote sheet which will be submitted as part of the final Committee Report to the Committee on Rules.

Si Yu'os Ma'åse',



Caden Nathaniel Ong Poblete
Office of Senator Vincent A.V. Borja
671-969-8423
caden.poblete@guamlegislature.gov
DNA Building Suite 502, Hagatna

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Senator Shawn Gumataotao <office.senatorshawn@guamlegislature.gov>

Tue, Sep 15, 2026 at 10:10 AM

To: Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Cc: "Frank Blas Jr." <speakerblas@guamlegislature.gov>, "Vice Speaker V. Anthony Ada" <vicespeakertonyada@guamlegislature.gov>, "Joe S. San Agustin" <senatorjoessanagustin@gmail.com>, Office Senator Bri <office.senatorbri@guamlegislature.gov>, Senator Tina Muna Barnes <senator.munabarnes@guamlegislature.gov>, Chris Duenas <senator.duenas@guamlegislature.gov>, Office of Senator Shelly Calvo <officeofsenatorshellycalvo@guamlegislature.gov>

To Report Out Only

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Office of Senator Eulogio Shawn Gumataotao
Chairman, Committee on Public Safety, Emergency Management, and Guam National Guard
38th Guam Legislature
[120 Father Duenas Avenue](#) Capitol Plaza Building, Suite 103, Hagåtña, Guam 96910
(671) 647-1409/1411

Joe S. San Agustin <senatorjoessanagustin@gmail.com>

Tue, Sep 15, 2026 at 10:43 AM

To: Senator Shawn Gumataotao <office.senatorshawn@guamlegislature.gov>

Cc: Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>, "Frank Blas Jr." <speakerblas@guamlegislature.gov>, "Vice Speaker V. Anthony Ada" <vicespeakertonyada@guamlegislature.gov>, Office Senator Bri <office.senatorbri@guamlegislature.gov>, Senator Tina Muna Barnes <senator.munabarnes@guamlegislature.gov>, Chris Duenas <senator.duenas@guamlegislature.gov>, Office of Senator Shelly Calvo <officeofsenatorshellycalvo@guamlegislature.gov>

To report out.

The Office of Senator Joe S. San Agustin*I Mina'trentai Ocho na Liheslaturan Guåhan*

38th Guam Legislature

Guam Congress Building, 163 Chalan Santo Papa, Hagåtña, Guam 96910

T: (671) 989-5445 F: (671) 969-6737 E: senatorjoessanagustin@gmail.comWebsite: www.senatorjoessanagustin.com

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Speaker Frank Blas Jr. <speakerblas@guamlegislature.gov>

Tue, Sep 15, 2026 at 11:08 AM

To: "Joe S. San Agustin" <senatorjoessanagustin@gmail.com>

Cc: Senator Shawn Gumataotao <office.senatorshawn@guamlegislature.gov>, Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>, "Vice Speaker V. Anthony Ada" <vicespeakertonyada@guamlegislature.gov>, Office Senator Bri <office.senatorbri@guamlegislature.gov>, Senator Tina Muna Barnes <senator.munabarnes@guamlegislature.gov>, Chris Duenas <senator.duenas@guamlegislature.gov>, Office of Senator Shelly Calvo <officeofsenatorshellycalvo@guamlegislature.gov>

To Report Out Only



Speaker, Frank F. Blas, Jr.

I Mina'trentai Ocho na Liheslaturan Guahan 38th Guam Legislature

Guam Congress Building, 163 Chalan Santo Papa, Hagatña

(671)969-6456

speakerblas@guamlegislature.gov

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Office of Legislative Secretary Senator Sabrina Salas Matanane

<office.senatorbri@guamlegislature.gov>

Tue, Sep 15, 2026 at 11:10 AM

To: "Speaker Frank Blas Jr." <speakerblas@guamlegislature.gov>

Cc: "Joe S. San Agustin" <senatorjoessanagustin@gmail.com>, Senator Shawn Gumataotao <office.senatorshawn@guamlegislature.gov>, Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>, "Vice Speaker V. Anthony Ada" <vicespeakertonyada@guamlegislature.gov>, Senator Tina Muna Barnes <senator.munabarnes@guamlegislature.gov>, Chris Duenas <senator.duenas@guamlegislature.gov>, Office of Senator Shelly Calvo <officeofsenatorshellycalvo@guamlegislature.gov>

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Office of Legislative Secretary

SENATOR SABRINA SALAS MATANANE

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

Chairperson, Committee on Health and Veterans Affairs

163 W. Chalan Santo Papa, Hagatña, Guam 96910

office.senatorbri@guamlegislature.gov

671-989-2572

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Senator Tina Rose Muña-Barnes <senator.munabarnes@guamlegislature.gov>

Tue, Sep 15, 2026 at 11:11 AM

To: Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

Cc: "Frank Blas Jr." <speakerblas@guamlegislature.gov>, "Vice Speaker V. Anthony Ada" <vicespeakertonyada@guamlegislature.gov>, "Joe S. San Agustin" <senatorjoessanagustin@gmail.com>, Office Senator Bri <office.senatorbri@guamlegislature.gov>, Chris Duenas <senator.duenas@guamlegislature.gov>, Office of Senator Shelly Calvo <officeofsenatorshellycalvo@guamlegislature.gov>, Senator Shawn Gumataotao <office.senatorshawn@guamlegislature.gov>

to report out

On Tue, Sep 15, 2026 at 11:57 AM Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com> wrote:

[Quoted text hidden]

Office of Senator Shelly Calvo <officeofsenatorshellycalvo@guamlegislature.gov>

Tue, Sep 15, 2026 at 11:27 AM

To: Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com>

To Do Pass

Respectfully,
Esmeralta Samuel



Office of the People | Senator Shelly V. Calvo

Majority Whip & Chairwoman

*Committee on Child Welfare, Youth Affairs, Senior
Citizens, Women's Affairs, Disability Services, the Arts,
Culture, Historic Preservation & Hagåtña Restoration*

38th Guam Legislature

163 Chalan Santo Papa, Hagåtña, Guam 96910

T [+1 \(671\) 989-5682](tel:+16719895682)

E officeofsenatorshellycalvo@guamlegislature.gov

On Tue, Sep 15, 2026 at 11:57 AM Office of Senator Borja <contact@senatorvinceborja.com> wrote:

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COMMITTEE REPORT DIGEST

Committee on Education, Libraries and Public Broadcasting

Senator Vincent A.V. Borja

I. OVERVIEW:

The **Committee on Education, Libraries and Public Broadcasting** convened a Public Hearing on **Bill No. 226-38 (COR)** on **Friday, March 13, 2026 at 9:00 AM** in the Guam Congress Building's Public Hearing Room.

PUBLIC NOTICE REQUIREMENTS

Public Hearing notices were disseminated via electronic mail to all senators and media outlets on **March 5, 2026 (First Notice)**, and again on **March 10, 2026 (Second Notice)**. Notices were also made available via Kandit News Group, the Guam Legislature's website, the legislative calendar, and the Government of Guam's Public Notice Portal.

SENATORS PRESENT

Senator Vincent A.V. Borja, Chairman

Senator Shelly V. Calvo, Member

Senator Joe S. San Agustin, Member

Senator Chris Barnett, *Ex Officio* Member

ORAL TESTIMONY

Mr. Peter Alecxis D. Ada, Member, Guam Education Board

Mr. Timothy R. Fedenko, President, Guam Federation of Teachers

Mr. Stephen D. Willman, Special Education Teacher, Simon Sanchez High School

Ms. Julene Isezaki, Special Education Teacher, Jose Rios Middle School

Atty. Daniel S. Somerfleck, Executive Director, Guam Legal Services Corporation - Disability Law Center

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

Dr. Judith Won Pat, Acting Superintendent, Guam Department of Education

Mr. Timothy R. Fedenko, President, Guam Federation of Teachers

Mr. Kevin J. Lizama-Reyes, Disability Advocate

Ms. Anna Jo Halmi, Constituent, Guam Department of Education

Ms. Sophie Nochefranca, Constituent, Guam Department of Education

Ms. Natalya Williams-Duenas, Constituent, Guam Department of Education

Ms. Allyson K. Iseke, Jose Rios Middle School Special Education Team

Ms. Sophia Colarusso, Jose Rios Middle School Special Education Team

Ms. Georginia Cruz, Jose Rios Middle School Special Education Team

Ms. Julene Isezaki, Jose Rios Middle School Special Education Team

Ms. Ryae Ann Cosca, Constituent, Guam Department of Education
Ms. Jenna Baker, Constituent, Guam Department of Education

II. SUMMARY OF TESTIMONY & DISCUSSION:

The public hearing was called to order at **9:00 AM**.

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Good afternoon. Thank you, everybody, for being here with us today. Today's date is **March 13, 2026**. This afternoon's public hearing held by the Committee on Education, Libraries, and Public Broadcasting is called to order. The time is now **9:01 AM**.

Before we begin, there's some housekeeping matters that I'll briefly discuss so we can get to work.

The **First Notice** of this Public Hearing was disseminated to all senators and media outlets on **March 5, 2026**, with its **Second Notice** disseminated on **March 10, 2026**. Notices of this hearing were also made available on Kandit News Group, the Guam Legislature's website, our legislative calendar, and the Government of Guam's public notice portal. Today's public hearing is being broadcast live on the Guam Legislature's YouTube channel, and the transcript will be filed with the Committee on Rules and be made available on the Guam Legislature's website.

Today, we will be hearing testimony on:

[Bill No. 226-38 \(COR\) - AN ACT TO ADD A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND DISABILITY SERVICES.](#)

And at this time, I'd like to welcome my colleagues who are joining us this afternoon: Senator Barnett.

Before we begin, I'd like to remind everybody in attendance of *Liheslaturan Guåhan's* General Rules of Conduct. Individuals testifying shall first be recognized by the chairperson before speaking and shall state their full name for the record. Questions and testimony shall be confined to the substance or nature of today's agenda. Personal inferences to the character or motive of any senator or individual testifying is not permitted. Pursuant to Section 11.07 of the 38th Guam Legislature standing rules, the chairperson may order the removal from the hearing of a

committee or subcommittee of any person who is not a member of the legislature and who fails to observe proper decorum. Any violation of this general rule of conduct will result in immediate removal from this public hearing room.

With that said, we'll now proceed to hear testimony for the item on the agenda. We're hearing Bill 226-38, introduced by myself, "An Act to Add a new §6236 to Article 2 of Chapter 6, Title 4, Guam Code Annotated, Relative to Establishing Incentive Pay for Certain Guam Department of Education Employees who Obtain and Utilize Specialized Certifications or Training in Critical Shortage Areas, including Special Education, Language Access, and Disability Services." And I'll go ahead and start with my opening remarks.

Good morning, and everybody, thank you for coming down today. Uncle Pete Ada from the Guam Education Board, Mr. Tim Fedenko from the Guam Federation of Teachers, and all those that are testifying. Thank you for being here today to provide testimony. Before getting into this bill itself, I want to share where this legislation came from.

This proposal was shaped by conversations with people who are inside our schools every day. Disability aids, special education teachers, regular classroom teachers, teacher assistants, and other staff who often step in whenever they're needed to just keep classrooms functioning and students supported. I've also heard from individuals who used to work in the department who still deeply care about our schools. And what we hear from both current and former employees is that we face a very real challenge when it comes to supporting students who require specialized services.

Right now, GDOE is short more than 128 for students with disabilities alone. When these positions aren't filled, that responsibility doesn't disappear. It shifts onto teachers, TAs, and other staff who are already doing everything they can to support their students. At the same time, concerns about proposals to train regular aids to take on one-on-one aid responsibilities without any additional incentive, those roles require specialized skills and training, and if we expect employees to step into them, we should also recognize that responsibility.

The bill is an attempt to address that challenge. It creates a specialty certification incentive pay program that encourages current GDOE employees to obtain certifications in high-need areas and provides a stipend or differential for those using those specialized skills in their work. Instead of waiting for new hires who may or may not come, this bill focuses on investing in the people who are already serving our students every day.

Now, I want to be clear. This proposal may not be the perfect solution. It may not even be the right long-term solution, but is an attempt to address the real issue that many people inside our

schools are raising right now. If the department or my colleagues have better ideas, I welcome everyone to come to the table. The goal here is not to push one idea. The goal is to solve the problem. This bill may not fix everything overnight, but it helps stabilize the workforce we already have and supports the people already stepping up for our students. Then it is a step in the right direction.

Thank you, and I look forward to hearing testimony today. I also like to recognize my colleague, Senator Shelly Calvo. Thank you for joining us, Senator.

And now we'll open up the floor for testimony. Mr. Peter Ada, if you'd like to. Mr. Stephen Willman, will you be testifying today? Providing oral testimony? And Mr. Tim Fedenko, if you'd like to come up to the panel. Thank you. You can go ahead and start with your name and if you're representing an organization. Thank you.

[START OF TESTIMONIES FOR BILL NO. 226-38][5:47]

MR. PETER ALECXIS D. ADA, MEMBER, GUAM EDUCATION BOARD:

Good morning, senators. Senator Borja, Senator Barnett, and Senator Calvo, good morning to all of you. I really wish that the other twelve senators were here to listen to this very important issue. I'm going to make my talk brief, short, and right to that point. I might be able to do it in two sentences. I am in full support of this legislation, Bill Number 226. But also, later on, you might want to consider that math and science is a very difficult topic to fill positions. Now that the new legislation that retired teachers certification is lifetime, that helps. So, again, I'm here to support Bill Number 226 without any hesitation. I've been pushing for this for many, many, many years.

I better cut it short because the three gentlemen, two gentlemen, and the one lady in the back, I think Ms. Isezaki probably has more detailed information of what to say regarding Bill 226. Again, thank you. Thank you so much.

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Thank you, Mr. Ada. Mr. Willman, if you can proceed. Were you going to testify as well because he didn't, then have it checked off? If you like, you can come up to the panel...

MR. STEPHEN D. WILLMAN, SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER, SIMON SANCHEZ HIGH SCHOOL:

Okay. How do I start? What do I need to do here?

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

You can go ahead and provide your testimony.

MR. STEPHEN D. WILLMAN, SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER, SIMON SANCHEZ HIGH SCHOOL:

Oh, okay. I'm Stephen Willman. I'm a teacher at Simon Sanchez High School. I don't know what else you need. What else would you like? What questions do you have for me?

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Normally, you come in and you're here to testify in support or provide comment or opposition maybe on the bill, provide recommendations. So today's public hearing is to discuss this bill.

MR. STEPHEN D. WILLMAN, SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER, SIMON SANCHEZ HIGH SCHOOL:

Okay. I just didn't know where to start with the whole process. Yes, I support the bill. I just read it a couple days ago. And from what it looks like, I support it. I don't know what else.

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

That's the end of your testimony, sir?

MR. STEPHEN D. WILLMAN, SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER, SIMON SANCHEZ HIGH SCHOOL:

Oh, okay. This reminds me of when I went to a friend's funeral and I was supposed to give the eulogy. And I thought it would be at the end of the Mass, but I was the first one up. So it was a little uncomfortable. So I wasn't expecting that. I was hoping there would be a little buffer in between.

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Well, there may be some questions from my colleagues and myself after everybody submits their oral testimony. So we'll go ahead and move to the next person. And then if there's any additional comments, you can always ask to add context to the discussion.

MR. STEPHEN D. WILLMAN, SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER, SIMON SANCHEZ HIGH SCHOOL:

Sure. I guess I would be a little more comfortable with that and just let things flow a little bit first and then speak as it goes along.

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Thank you, sir. Thank you, Mr. Willman. Mr. Fedenko. Or we'll go ahead and go with Ms. Isezaki.

MS. JULENE ISEZAKI, SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER, JOSE RIOS MIDDLE SCHOOL:

Hi. Thank you for having me. My name is Julene Isezaki, and I am a special educator at Jose Rios Middle School. So I come before you speaking firsthand of the challenges that we are facing as educators, and particularly in the special education field. My colleagues, I think the school overall, we struggle. Our resources are dwindling, and we try to make do with what we have because we are serving our children. And I don't know, you know, but our population of our children with disabilities are increasing or are increasing, but our resources are decreasing, if not dwindling. Moreover, we're seeing a lot of our professionals leave the field because they feel unsupported. And it really is just hard to make a living, I think, as a professional in the field when we are constantly giving back.

And I think it is by nature, you know, whatever our children need, if we don't get it from the school, we go out and we get it. We spend out of pocket. But I think we've come to this point where our professionals are leaving, and we are really asking if we can have whatever support. And I think the BRIP is a stepping point to support the educators who are ready in the field to sustain us and entice others to come because it's really disheartening when students show up to the classroom, and there's no one there to read them.

So I am in support, we are in support, our school is in support of the bill. Thank you.

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Thank you, Mr. Isezaki. Mr. Fedenko, you may proceed.

MR. TIMOTHY R. FEDENKO, PRESIDENT, GUAM FEDERATION OF TEACHERS:

Thank you, Senators. Senator Calvo, Senator Borja, Senator Barnett. I stand before you. The intention is there, and I like that, but I think it needs a little work. And here's why.

As a 33-year retired teacher in the system, I've seen school aides come and go, and there's a lot of reason why they're leaving is because the pay, as you are dressing with this bill, doesn't quite meet it. The other problem is that the problem I have with the bill, I like the pay, don't get me wrong, to help entice people to join 125 school aides short. That's just in the special ed division, correct? One to one. We're also short on the other side of that, the regular school aides. And the problem is, several things, and this is just my opinion, the old retirement system isn't there. That's one thing you could look at, getting people back into the government of Guam workforce. The pension plan kept people in that pan, and those people are now at the end of their term, 33, 45, or 35 years, and there's a mass retirement because of that. That could cause part of the shortage, were the senators who changed that plan, correct? And maybe you want to relook at

that. The reason I don't like BRIP is because it's made by administrators, right? The training part of that is vital, and to support the money for the training for our school aides is vital.

But an average school aide, a one-to-one school aide versus a regular school aide, they flip-flop back and forth. Some of those school aides cover three kids at a time. So with this bonus pay, would they get three times the bonus pay for covering three kids, right? The other school aides that may not get this specialized training, they get thrown into a one-to-one aide too, as you know. School aides cover everything. School aides, and then we get to the point in the summertime, does the incentive pay therefore go away? When the school aides are painting the school in the summertime, which they shouldn't be, trust me, I've been to the schools, the paint jobs are horrible. School aides are not painters.

Sorry, no offense to our brothers and sisters that are school aides, but that's not what they're trained to do. They're there to prepare the school classrooms. They're there to get supplies out. They're there to work with teachers on what to set up for next year. Not painting a school, not fixing a faucet, not changing light bulbs. So we ask that you lift all the school aides up and get the incentive pay to hire more school aides that way, because we know that some school aides are left in the classroom substituting teachers for a whole year because we don't have substitute teachers. A school aide teaching a class for an entire year. So there's a lot of problems. I appreciate the effort, Senator Borja, in doing this, but I think it needs a little more work.

So we stand against it, and we have written testimony sent to your offices. Thank you.

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Thank you, Mr. Fedenko.

MR. PETER ALECXIS D. ADA, MEMBER, GUAM EDUCATION BOARD:

Can I just add to what President Fedenko said? I have spoken with Mr. Tim about this several weeks ago. I think it's time. This might be the right time to start finding out, are these one-to-one aides going to continue, or are they planning to transfer or resign from their position? You know, we have to expect that there will be some last-minute changes. But this is a good time to announce the positions you have in this listing. And in that listing, you should notify that this position will begin training. The word training, by June, I don't know if it was July, so that when school begins, they have already been trained and ready to take on the job.

It is very difficult, Senator, very, very difficult to have a school aide that can become a one-to-one aide if they have had no training. There's a big difference. I also have difficulty understanding the shortage of hearing from one school aide to about two or three students. That's hard, very, very hard. So I just thought I'd plug that in, that we really should start announcing the

positions come May, begin the process of who's qualified in June, and then the third week of July, begin the training so that when school begins, they've already been properly trained. Thank you very much.

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Thank you, Mr. Ada. Mr. Somerfleck, if you're going to provide some testimony before we move to questions, please come up to the panel. Thank you.

ATTY. DANIEL S. SOMERFLECK, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GUAM LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION-DISABILITY LAW CENTER:

I would opine after reviewing this bill, the primary question I have is why aren't we adjusting the pay scales? You know, if someone obtains an additional certification, that should, like with teachers, change them in their pay category. The one thing that surprised me the most about the Department of Education, it's the one government agency where upon obtaining additional certifications, for example you go from a bachelor's degree to a master's degree. It's not, it's an automatic increase in pay. It's not something that you apply for. It's not an incentive. Here's my certification. I go up a pay scale. Same thing if they go from a master's to a doctor. I have great concern when we put so much discretion to give anywhere between \$100 or \$180 every two weeks without tying it to an actual certification and making that part of the pay scale.

Does that mean the next year that the Department of Education can end that stipend? It's a stipend. And then who gets the stipend? Anyone who has an additional certification in any of the listed areas would receive an additional pay. To me, and I'm a firm believer in the civil service, and that our employees of the Government of Guam are covered by the civil service. And I believe that when we implement changes in pay, those need to be implemented in such a way that the employee's position changes. Not something that can be arbitrarily given or not given. And that's what concerns me about the bill.

Who decides who gets incentives? Is it all the paraeducators who work with autistic children? And then what happens if someone's been working with autistic children all along, but they're not the favorite of the principal? Then do they not get the incentive pay? Do they get transferred to work with non-autistic children so that someone who is a favorite of the principal gets to work with the autistic children and gets the incentive pay for taking a 40-hour class? To me, and again, I'm a strong believer in the Civil Service Commission and the civil service employees. And to me, this is almost defeating the civil service and the efforts that went into when we did the hay study.

Do I think that they deserve more pay? That's unquestionable. A para-educator that spends his entire day working with a potentially non-communicative student who may be aggressive.

Should that person get an incentive pay? Yes. But not as an incentive pay, a recognition of their position. And this is why I believe and I support the shift from the concept of saying one-to-one aid to paraprofessionals.

And this bill, I believe, supports that concept that there are paraprofessionals out there that have advanced training. And we should recognize that. I don't dispute that at all. I'm not here to say let's not give what should be given to the employees of the Department of Education who are in these fields that are very difficult. Then the question becomes, what about all the special ed teachers? Should they be on a different pay scale from a regular ed teacher? You know, my wife is a former teacher while she was going through school. One of her master teachers said to her, "you should really look at special ed, but don't plan on staying there very long because you'll become special ed if you stay too long."

Well, it is a difficult role. I mean, I would encourage you to visit our resource rooms and look at what we're exposing our teachers to. And I think there is a difference between a teacher that has taken the training to become a special ed teacher from a regular ed teacher, and I think that they should receive additional pay. Would they be under this plan? No, not that I can see.

So I would encourage the legislature to keep moving along these lines, but I would also encourage them to not make it a gimme. Make it something that is installed into our civil service, make it part of the pay study, look at what the national averages are, and I would imagine that in all of our areas dealing with children with special needs, we're underpaying under the national average. I haven't researched it, so when the question came, do I support or oppose this bill? I didn't check the box because I do support the concept behind the bill. I just think that if it can be mistreated, it will be mistreated. And legislation that does not affect an employee's civil service standing is something that's arbitrary. And very quickly, you're going to have people coming up to you saying they didn't include me in the incentive pay, and I should have been because we've left it kind of loosey-goosey here.

And I don't mean to be critical that I think that it can be corrupted, but I'm fairly confident it will be corrupted. So that's what would be my comments on the bill. I do support the principle behind it wholeheartedly. I think that we need to look at how we're paying these specialized areas, you know, the ASL interpreters, you know, how are they paid? And are we doing what I consider the downfall of our employment system, are we doing contracts? You know, "Oh, we'll contract you when we need you, and you can come in for three hours or four hours, but you're not an employee, you don't have any benefits, and you have zero job security. We might need you this week, we won't need you next week, we might not need you for another month, and then we're going to say, oh, we need you every day this month." An employee should be an employee, and I think the government should stand forward against the concept of contract employees.

That's why we have a Civil Service Commission, that's why we have classified employees, and that provides job security to employees. I've kind of gotten on a high horse, so I'd bring up a couple other comments about this, because it is a current working trend, where people contract people for so many hours, and provide no benefits, and provide no security. I think we should be better than that as employers.

So I thank you very much for your time, I apologize, I diverted on some other issues. Do I oppose the bill? I don't oppose the principle at all. Do I have great concern about how I'll be implemented? Yes, I do. Thank you.

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Thank you, Mr. Somerfleck. And I'm going to recognize my colleague who just joined us, Senator Joe S San Augustin, thank you for joining us, Senator.

You know, I was very clear at the beginning in regards to the intent. I mean, the intent is we need special ed and shortages are not, I mean, even as I paid attention to the issues of the department over the last five, ten years, right, it's something that is not new. And I think for me, the word this came from was, we need to try, we need to figure out something. And again, you know, this, hence this public hearing and the intent, you know, we'll definitely take all this into consideration. What I do know, and just, you know, and I'm not saying that this is like the military, but I will tell you the conversations of some of the teachers who have some students, it's kind of like the military when dealing with students that really need a lot of attention, you know, or more. And in the military, and again, I'm not saying this is the military, but in the military when you're going to do a job, because you have soldiers, right, and everybody carries a gun and you're supposed to be able to go to the front line and have basic combat skills. And then when you're asked to do something that is maybe a little bit more dangerous or more hazardous than they have incentive pay, and that's where, and I'm not saying again that this is the military, but it's, that's how they get people to come over to those specific fields that are a little bit more strenuous, a little bit more, you know, time consuming sometimes or requires a specialty to perform in those roles.

And what I'm hoping, and again, even in the bill, it's not a permanent, there is a sunset, because we need what we're trying to do with the committee and is trying, and it's a short-term fix, I get it, there's a lot of all these other things that we have to consider in regards to equity, equitable adjustment across the department with other fields, other positions. But when we look at the special ed, there's a cry in Mr. Fedenko. You know, a lot of the things I've seen in here obviously comes from like for the school, Mr. Fedenko, my wife's a school counselor, you know, the other day in the oversight hearing, I shared about going to a school where there was a classroom with

five or six special ed students in the classroom with two, I don't even know if they were disability aides or just, you know, regular TAs, right? TAs are not supposed, they're not necessarily school aides, but just in a classroom with just these, the kids, really much, for me, like as an outsider, just looking, it looked like they were just trying to contain them so that they weren't out running onto the road or running throughout the schools. And that's, you know, like I told the superintendent the other day, that's, for me, I mean, that's one school. I can imagine the bigger schools with a larger population and the constraints that they have. I mean, 120, if you look across the department, I'm sure there's worse situations compared to what I saw there at the school.

And so, you know, the beginning of the conversation will continue to engage, you know, you guys who will probably have a lot more expertise in the area and making sure that we come up with a long-term solution. But thank you for your time and coming down today. I'll go ahead and open up the floor to my colleagues for questions. Senator Barnett, if you can.

SENATOR CHRIS BARNETT, EX OFFICIO MEMBER:

Thank you Mr. Chair for the opportunity to speak. Good morning again to our audience who's watching on our YouTube channel, our Docomo and GTA stream.

Thank you again to the panel for your testimony, Ms. Isezaki. Thank you for your service in the classroom and your very honest and frank testimony.

Mr. Fedenko, I tend to agree, and I know that the chair said that this was a kind of a short term fix to address a problem that has really been here, not for lack of effort, I mean, and if I could just go through the evolution of this school-aid issue. So when I first got into office, a lot of the aides were basically fired at the end of the school year, and then they had to go through a re-application process, and that of course meant that we weren't recruiting, we weren't retaining a lot of these people because most of them were just doing it because they love working with the kids. So when I got in, I tried to work with Superintendent Swanson to ensure that that employment continued through the summer, but what ended up happening, Mr. Fedenko, you're right about this, is that we took these school aids, one-to-one aides in different positions, and we sent them out to do carpentry and painting to meet the mandates, and you know, I think they're good painters. You know, we might not agree with each other a lot, but I'm going to say that we got some good painters, some real Picassos out there in the district.

And so we kind of solved that problem, and in the background of all this, there was an intention, a stated intention on the record with the Special Education Division that they were going to attempt to reclassify these position titles through training and partnership with the Guam Community College. And I know an individual who was a school aid, a one-to-one aide, and was

recently reclassified as a developmental disability aide. And so that's kind of the title that I think they're migrating a lot of these positions to, but long story short, they changed the title, but the increase, the incentive, if you will, was only a dollar more and some cents in pay. And I think more troubling was that employees have maintained their limited term employee status, which in my understanding means they're not protected by the merit system and the Civil Service Commission, as Mr. Somerfleck had raised.

So I absolutely support the intent. I understand what the chair is trying to do in being surgical with this. But I think there is, you know, it's a double-edged sword. There are a lot of other shortages. You know, we're short 27 Chamorro teachers. We're short in a lot of other critical areas. So this incentive tool could be beneficial if it's applied correctly. But, you know, like Mr. Somerfleck, I think that there is a tendency for some in the Guam Department of Education to kind of play favorites. So I think the real solution is to institute a tide that is going to lift all the boats. And that is hard work. And it requires us to look at the pay scales and to really, I think, make more specific some of these positions and make sure that they come with, you know, a realistic increase in pay and benefits and realistic job security. And I think, you know, while we do these incentives year to year, we have to, as members of the legislature, kind of establish something more fixed, something more permanent and something that will be in place from fiscal year to fiscal year to fiscal year.

And you know, Atty. Somerfleck, we meet a lot. And I think what I've seen with the Special Education Division is, we are just constantly trying to put out these little systemic fires. So maybe it's time that we have a conversation about changing the system. You know, there are many issues with SPED. Recently, you have the breach of contract, right, where we have these IEP, these individual learning education programs for special education students. And many of these mandate that these students will have a one-to-one aid or some type of developmental disability aid. And you hear different things from the SPED Division. The narrative has been over the last couple years that, "oh, everybody wants an aid, but, you know, tough because, you know, not everyone should get one." In the meantime, I hear from parents who have never got aid for their student, even though the IEP specifically lays it out.

So there are many issues with special education, and I think that the establishment, or maybe the Committee on Education could establish a task force or something to look at all of the issues in special education and address them all, you know, with urgency and an emergency. I'm not saying declare a state of emergency because that's really just semantics, you know, but to really kind of go down the line, you know, similar to what we did with the public health guidelines for the schools. You just got to go in there and you got to get it done. And so, you know, as always, they stand committed and ready to work to address these issues. And I thank you, Mr. Fedenko,

for kind of, you know, bringing up what's a little bit behind the bill and what you believe that we could do to make it better.

So I don't really have any questions. Unless, Mr. Isezaki, you wanted to share anything else about what it's like to be on the front lines.

MS. JULENE ISEZAKI, SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER, JOSE RIOS MIDDLE SCHOOL:

I think I said it earlier. We are facing the challenges. We are doing the best we can. I agree with Mr. Somerfleck and Mr. Fedenko. There are things that we need to fix so we can bring everyone up because it's not just the teachers. It's our aides, too. But, you know, we really are trying at the school. I mean, the teachers, we really are trying everyone. And this is something that we just need to do to sustain ourselves, to get us moving forward, and then fix the process along the way. I think, you know, we support it.

SENATOR CHRIS BARNETT, EX OFFICIO MEMBER:

Thank you again to the panel for their testimony. And thank you, Mr. Chair, for the opportunity to speak this morning.

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Thank you, Senator Barnett. Senator Calvo.

SENATOR SHELLY V. CALVO, MEMBER:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hafa Adai, Buenas everyone. Thank you for all your testimonies. I appreciate that. I don't really have many questions, but there are three items that I wanted to bring in on the table. There are kind of questions, and if anybody wants to address it, feel free to do so.

But, like I always say, there is no perfect bill. But this bill's intent is very clear. It's really to fill the void, and to encourage more participation, and to resolve some outstanding issues that have been there for a long time already. But these things that I will bring up could actually, Mr. Chair, tighten the bill in the process, because, obviously, everyone's opinion, and that's why we deliberate like this in the public hearing, because everyone's opinion is important. So, my thought process is, obviously, with regards to the bill, what is the projected annual cost under low, medium, and high uptake scenarios? And what funding source will sustain it? I'm not really expecting any answers right now, but these are things that I think we also need to consider.

Another thing is, how will the program recognize prior experience and out-of-state certifications to avoid barriers for qualified hires? Something to also look into, because, to be honest, I fully

support the intent of the bill. And I'd like to see this bill progress where everybody can be happy, and it could address things that are needed, much needed in our community at the moment. And the last thing is, how will language access needs be prioritized so multilingual families receive consistent communications and support? So, these are just a few things that I'm, in my thought process, as I listen to everyone state their testimonies, and put in their position with regards to the bill.

But, Mr. Chair, I appreciate the time that I was given to speak. And please note that I support the very intent of this bill, and I look forward to working with you to tighten this and to progress it. And on that note, I'd like to say, thank you, once again, to everyone in the panel, and thank you for my colleagues that are here today. Thank you.

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Thank you, Senator Calvo. Senator San Agustin. Wait, are you trying to respond?

MR. STEPHEN D. WILLMAN, SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER, SIMON SANCHEZ HIGH SCHOOL:

Unless the senator would like to go first... Okay. Okay, I'm ready for my eulogy now, if you were listening earlier. Now I'm ready.

Okay, and after listening to folks speak, President Fedenko made some very good points. Atty. Somerfleck made some very good points, as did Chairperson Ada, as did everybody. And I guess, in preparation for this, I read the bill, and I agree that the intent is very good, and is where we need to be. Whether or not the bill needs to be changed and modified as it goes along, it's a starting point. And as Attorney Somerfleck said, you know, the intent of the bill is honorable and heading in the right direction.

I can only give testimony as to what my position is and my view of just glancing at it. This is my thirty-first or second year working with Simon Sanchez, in the Division of Special Education, where I taught reading and language arts that entire time at Simon Sanchez, in whatever form it is and will be. The big picture is I've seen a lot. Let's put it that way. Over thirty-one years, I can speak to many things, but right now I can only speak to what my job is as a special educator that's been in the system for thirty-one years, and what makes it work and what may need improving. And I hope I'm not being too long-winded about this, but more than anything to be an effective special educator, you have to provide structure, you have to provide predictability, you have to provide consistency, and you have to provide immediate positive reinforcement for students because that is really what makes a classroom work. So what I'll just do is I'm just going to read a little part of a personal reflection. We're required to do these personal reflections at the

end of every school year. And this is a few years ago, but it gives you some idea as a special education teacher what's entailed if you do this job correctly.

So an important part of delivering special education services and meeting unique needs of students are required meetings and staff meetings that occur each year. And this is just a part of the job to kind of give you an idea of what's required to do this job effectively, as I said earlier. With each meeting, every student is required to have an individualized education plan meeting. I'm not going to give you a lecture on what special education is and all the laws involved with it, but this just gives you a snapshot of what is involved with it, if you're doing it correctly. With each meeting.

So throughout the school year, we have meetings for each individual student in which, with each meeting, whether attended by myself or not, is attached to a substantial amount of work and time that are involved for each meeting. After receiving a meeting notice, it is essential to enter the meeting on a planner and to be organized, obviously. Pick an appropriate time to assess the particular student that the meeting's for. Analyze the data after you assess the student and complete the necessary input for the meeting. This input includes the student's present level of performance, historical-current attendance, social skill information, executive function information, historical grades, service learning hours, these are some of the things that weren't involved when I wrote this a couple of years ago, work habits, preparedness, and overall citizenship. Along with historical and current achievement test data, a progress report on previously set goals, new goals based on current data and any necessary modifications necessary to meet student needs all need to be assessed in these meetings. All input must be delivered to these consulting resource teachers, and these are the folks that run the meetings, they schedule the meetings, they run the meetings, and we've done that on Guam as long as I've been there.

And I can only speak for the three CRTs, the consulting resource teachers. I'm just a little aside. And I discussed this yesterday before I told them I was coming to talk, so I wanted to get their input also because I didn't really see any language about them in there. But I want to include them because if you have a good consulting resource teacher, they are like gold. They really are because they schedule the meetings, and they are the glue that keeps the department together. I've been very fortunate for the last, I believe it's seventeen years, to have at least two of the people have been consistent that I've worked with. And I can't even tell you how much stuff that they do that is not within their job description, extra things they do just to make things work. And so I really want to emphasize that if you have one or two or all good consulting resource teachers within a class or within a system or within a school, these are people you want to keep and recognize. And part of keeping them would be paying them appropriately.

So that's a little bit of an aside because as I'm talking about these meetings, they really are the people that make these work. If they are qualified and they're really trained well and they know what they're doing, they are, like I said, they are essential. Okay, so I'll get back to what I'm talking about. So when you have, so all input for these meetings must be delivered to the CRTs, as I mentioned earlier, in a timely manner and must be easily understood by all members of the particular committee, which is made up of teachers, service providers, parents, and anybody else that's involved with the student that is required to attend the meeting. And in all, the preparation and attendance for individual meetings takes approximately, this is just speaking for myself, approximately two to three hours for each meeting. In addition, required to attend a meeting, a lesson plan must be provided for a substitute. So if I have to attend a meeting during the school day, which I always have to, I have to make sure that I have a lesson plan and I have a sub that's there for the class. And so the class needs to continue working while I'm in this meeting. So a review of the year that I wrote this yielded some interesting results as far as the numbers because they're a little sneaky.

In all, using a conservative estimate of two hours for a non-attended meeting, if I don't attend a meeting but I still have to give input, and three hours for an attended meeting, including the meeting, and sometimes these meetings go, and Atty. Somerfleck will tell you he's attended many IEP meetings, they can go on for a while, depending on what's happening within the meeting. So here are some numbers that I came up with when I turned this in a few years ago. So the total number of meetings that I attended, in this particular year, and it varies from year to year, but this is a good snapshot, and it's about the same number. It varies. The total number of meetings in this particular year that I attended were 69, and the total number of meetings that I attended were 38, so that's about 55% of the meetings. And that means of those meetings, those were meetings that I had to have a sub in that classroom, a good qualified sub if possible, but most often it's whoever's available. And the total number of hours used to prepare the estimate, and this kind of shocked me when I did this math, was 173 hours. And so that's the equivalent of approximately, if you're going by seven hours, about twenty-five work days, on top of actually teaching the class and working with the students.

So the point being is that if you're doing this correctly, and you're assessing students appropriately, and you're providing pertinent input for the particular student, it's a lot of... I don't consider it extra work because I've been doing it for so long, it's just part of the job for me. But once you sit down and you think about it, you're teaching a class of students, and you're also preparing for these meetings. And again, it's a lot of extra, I don't know if it's extra work, but it is what the job is. And I'll get to my conclusion right now, and just like in these meetings, you know, they go on a little bit.

So to effectively teach special education and achieve superior results, it requires excellent organizational skills, excellent attendance, and a great depth of knowledge in the field. You can tell I'm writing this for my principal when I wrote this. Excellent attendance, great depth of knowledge in the field, excellent classroom management, the ability to collaborate and consult with peers and parents, the ability to build rapport with students and parents, and hard work. Special education also has the most stringent federal rules and regulations governing it, and often services the most academically and behaviorally challenged students with various disabilities. And you all mentioned that before also.

So in closing, and I was talking to Chairman Ada or Chairperson Ada, is that the correct term? I talked to him before. Okay. So we were talking briefly before the meeting, and he asked me when I'm going to retire, and I said, well, there's not that many shopping days till Christmas, because I've been doing it a long time. Actually, I've got thirty-six years total, because I taught for a few years in the States before I came here. And if I was to retire, and we were talking about retirement, and if I was to retire at the end of a particular year, it would be interesting to see who would replace me, and that would be a major concern of mine. And if this bill, or a modified version of this bill, or it evolves into something else that's more specific or covers more people and works, and something that is going to be more effective, basically, if you want to keep a person with experience and people that have been in the system a long time around for a while, adjusting the pay salary and paying everybody involved with it is a step in the right direction in keeping them around. So in my particular case, if I was to stick around a little longer, this wouldn't hurt doing that, keeping me around for a while at the end of my career.

Also, I would also just like to say in closing that really the last three years have been a challenge for everybody at Simon Sanchez, and you know the story, and everybody knows the story. But I just have to acknowledge that in my current position, it's taken a long time to establish our program at our particular school. And it certainly, as I alluded to before, it's a team effort. It's the classroom teacher, it's the consulting resource teachers that run the meetings and are the glue that keeps the department together, and also, as mentioned before, are the school aides that work with the individual kids. And we happen to have excellent school aides, and I'm probably the exception that we have excellent school aides. We've got excellent consulting resource teachers.

And in the big scheme of things, you've got to remember that our administrators have put up with a lot since everything we've gone through the last few years. And my particular administrator that I work with, I don't know if we're supposed to use people's names, but has been absolutely supportive and excellent, and so is all our administration at Simon Sanchez. And then furthermore, just the resilience of our kids to have to, well, they're from Yigo and then having to go to Tamuning, and you've heard this story before, especially the kids that I work with, it's remarkable the way that they have adjusted to the situation and they continue to adjust

to it. And really, if you have high expectations and low tolerance, things will work out and the kids are resilient. Now, again, hopefully we can get this resolved as soon as possible, but in closing, really, the intent of the bill, as everybody kind of alluded to before, the intent of the bill is excellent, and if it needs to be changed and modified, that's great as long as people know more about exactly what the wording should be on the bill. That would be great if it turns out to be something that benefits everybody.

And again, it's a step in the right direction for keeping qualified people in these positions which are extremely hard to fill. And hopefully it works out, and hopefully we'll see something in the future, and hopefully you can keep people around that should stay around and train people and elevate everybody as a result. If you have any questions, I think I've gone on long enough. You can tell I'm a special education teacher because I deliver these results in meetings, so I will go on a little bit. So that's it. If you have any questions. Thank you.

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Thank you, Mr. Willman. Senator San Agustin please.

SENATOR JOE S. SAN AGUSTIN, MEMBER:

All right, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your statement, sir.

You know, I apologize for running late, but I was watching on YouTube exactly all the discussion. But you know what? It's similar to what the Chairman mentioned earlier, being prior service. You don't cut and paste things. They're going to do it right, and this is something that will probably tell you this, that if you want to do it right, then start from the basic. Change the job description. If you're going to get the special pay when you leave the position, it's kind of like you get it today, you leave tomorrow, you lose it tomorrow, and you just keep going. But we've got to make sure that giving the special pay is pretty much a no-brainer. Do it. Take care of the people doing the job. But let's make sure, too, that it's protected by civil service. Change the job description. Put all the mechanics in there so that lawyers don't get involved and have a field in, just tear it up. We've got to make sure that the I's are dotted, the T's are crossed, and make sure that when the bill is passed, we're not looking at somebody saying, "well, you know, I should have gotten that paid to. Oh, wait a minute now. We've got to pace it down a little bit."

You, sir, you've been doing it. Then we identify what other specialized field you've done, but we've got to categorize everything. It can't be tomorrow. You're going to say, "well, you know what? I also got this one. When did that show up? Just today? But you've had it for ten years." Everything's got to be categorized. Because in the military, like the Chairman said, you get your basic, you're all in infantry, then you go to your special field, then the special field will identify the incentive paid as long as you stay in that field. As soon as you walk out, it's gone. That's got

to be understood. And for special ed, pretty much, when you mention some of the things that you go to when you put the paper together, like you said, you write to the principals. In many of those parts, there's no training for it. It's something that they learn through time. You could have somebody who's good at organization, but he does not have an organizational certificate. So how do you measure it? So you've got to be very careful how the bill moves forward. And we make sure we're not just cutting and painting. No, no. Let's make it structural. Let's make sure it's solid. And for the special ed aides, I've been promoting this. They should be full-time as an aide, but they have the specialty for special ed. And then they shift. If someone stops, they go back to this program and they keep going. So they don't have to be rehired. That's got to change at the Department of Education. It should be all full-time, but then work on this.

But like I said earlier, I've been listening to everything that's being said, and I'll communicate with the chair with what changes we need. We've got to be very careful how we change it, because people will complain. There's always somebody that will say, "you know what? I have this too." Well, you know, everything's got to be worded up front.

MR. STEPHEN D. WILLMAN, SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER, SIMON SANCHEZ HIGH SCHOOL:

I agree with you. If you make the rules and the guidelines as specific as possible and as clear as possible so that nobody gets confused as to who qualifies for what incentive. And really, that's the part that needs to be hashed out and worked out so that there's no question as to who qualifies for it if it does happen. And over the past thirty-one years, again, once the difficulty with special education is getting good people in that position and then keeping them. Because, you know, like I stated before, the amount of paperwork that's involved and the amount of organization, the difficulty working, well not difficulty working but the challenges of working with the students, that's why it's hard to have people in these positions, because in my opinion, and I'm biased because I've done it forever, is that it is the most difficult position. And to keep people in that position, paying them appropriately and providing them with the proper training is a real step in the right direction if you want to keep good people. And like I said, in the last thirty-one years, I've seen a few come and go. So that's from experience.

SENATOR JOE S. SAN AGUSTIN, MEMBER:

Now, other than the teachers, sir, do you know the special ed, the aides? Do they get, you know, when they get all the training and then they let go at the ninth month and then they start up again? Are they going to get any extra pay? I mean, you know, those are the things I'm very concerned about because today they got it, then you dump them on the ninth month, then three months later you're saying, "hey, can you come back? Well, you should have kept me." That's what I worry about. You know, continuity, when you start breaking that, you change the smoking.

MR. STEPHEN D. WILLMAN, SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER, SIMON SANCHEZ HIGH SCHOOL:

Exactly right. And I don't know exactly how all those staffing patterns happen. All I know is that this afternoon I have a meeting and I'm hoping that a particular school aide, who may or may not be paired with a one-to-one student that has to cover my class, I'm hoping it's one or two or three individuals that I know are extremely competent and will take care of that classroom like it's my own. And again, I may be the exception, but we have excellent school aides at our school and the administrator I deal with, so I'm very fortunate with that. But the challenge, like you said, Senator, is getting those people and keeping those people and then recognizing that they are really effective and keeping them and making it a work situation in a work environment where they want to stay.

And they really take ownership, and I guess that's another point I wanted to make, is really the thing that's made it work for me the last thirty-one years is taking ownership of the whole situation. And again, I can tell you all kinds of stories, but really that's what it boils down to is taking ownership and then it also, like I said, if you want to keep good people around, recognizing that you know that their job is important and they're doing a good job, and figuring out a way also to evaluate that, whether they are being effective and recognizing them for that. But having it where there's no favoritism involved and having it clear cut, and that's really kind of the challenge, the devil's in the detail, so to speak.

SENATOR JOE S. SAN AGUSTIN, MEMBER:

Yes, sir. And that's why I'm happy you said that, because let's say there's a special ed, A, brought in. Today, he doesn't go to any additional training because he's good or she's good. The nine-month break, they're gone. They don't get any incentive pay or anything. They come back, same thing. And you never hear them really asking for, can I get paid more? There's no means to give them an increase. But the bill says additional training. I'm saying if the person is good, there's got to be a mechanism in place to make sure that they get the pay. But they got to be kept on board, because nine months doesn't cut it. And then you get insurance and say, "wait a minute, we need to figure this out." And that's why I say we got to not cut and paste. Put in the job description, make it permanent, then move from there. Because the mechanism is in place to pay them. You just have to make sure that there's consistency. All right? Okay, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Thank you, Senator San Agustin.

Any last comments before we wrap up? Mr. Fedenko, did you have something to add?

MR. TIMOTHY R. FEDENKO, PRESIDENT, GUAM FEDERATION OF TEACHERS:

Yeah. I'm glad everyone's testifying and expressing their things. I'd like to just say to Senator Calvo, thank you for bringing up the ESL situation. Because every year, we get Micronesian students who've not even been in the classroom and don't speak a word of English. So that means thank you and chukis. And that's another thing you might want to consider if you're going to go down that road of incentive pay. When we lost our school aide, which they left because they found a better job, she was a fluent speaker of Micronesian chukis language. And I would always converse with her in what they're saying. And I learned some profanity along the way, too, because the kids were saying that as well. And she would correct them, and that's a vital, important part of what you're getting to. So you might want to consider that for your Brit pay. Thanks.

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Thank you, Mr. Fedenko. So in closing, you know, thank you to everybody who's come to join us today to provide testimony. To teachers, Mr. Ada from the board, Mr. Fedenko, Atty. Somerfleck. Really appreciate all the advocacy that you do for our students with disabilities. Today's hearing is, again, the start of a conversation. The issues raised here are important, and they help guide us as we look for ways to better support our students and the people who serve them every day.

For the record, we also receive written testimony from Acting Superintendent Won Pat. Appreciate her submission and understand she wasn't able to attend today. But moving forward, we'll also be convening a special education roundtable on April 14th at 2 PM, if you guys could join us, to continue the discussion with stakeholders and work towards solutions.

[END OF TESTIMONIES FOR BILL NO. 226-38][1:06:36]

SENATOR VINCENT A.V. BORJA, CHAIRMAN:

Thank you again today for your time and participation. This will now conclude today's hearing. With the committee, we continue to accept written testimony on this bill, Bill number 226-38 within seven days from today, which will be addressed to myself, Senator Vincent A.V. Borja, Chairman of the Committee on Education, Libraries, and Public Broadcasting, or delivered to DNA Bldg. Suite 502, 238 Archbishop Flores Street, Hagatna, Guam, 96910. You can also send testimonies via e-mail to contact@senatorvinceborja.com. This morning's hearing is now adjourned. The time is now **10.07 AM**. Have a good day, everyone.

[END OF PUBLIC HEARING FOR BILL NO. 226-38] [1:07:30]

III. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee on Education, Libraries, and Public Broadcasting therefore reports Bill No. 226-38 (COR), *As Amended by the Committee on Education, Libraries, and Public Broadcasting* - Introduced by Senator Vincent A.V. Borja - *AN ACT TO ADD A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND DISABILITY SERVICES* - with the recommendation **TO REPORT OUT ONLY.**

I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2025 (FIRST) Regular Session

Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

Introduced by:

Vincent A.V. Borja 

**AN ACT TO *ADD A* NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6
TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO
ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN
AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING
IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL
EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND DISABILITY
SERVICES.**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF GUAM:

Section 1. Legislative Findings and Intent.

The Legislature finds that the Guam Department of Education (GDOE) continues to experience significant staffing shortages in specialized areas critical to student success, including special education services, language access for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP), and support for students who are deaf, hard of hearing, or otherwise disabled. While formal education pathways remain vital, incentivizing current GDOE employees to obtain relevant certifications or training can address immediate needs and enhance service delivery.

It is the intent of this Act to establish a Specialty Certification Incentive Pay Program specifically for GDOE employees who obtain and apply approved certifications in these shortage areas, thereby improving educational outcomes and supporting professional development.

1 **Section 2.** A new §6236 is hereby *added* to Article 2 of Chapter 6, Title 4,
2 Guam Code Annotated, to read as follows:

3 **“§6236. Specialty Certification Incentive Pay Program for Guam**
4 **Department of Education Employees.**

5 (a) Establishment. There is hereby established a Specialty Certification
6 Incentive Pay Program for employees of the Guam Department of Education who
7 obtain and actively utilize approved certifications or training in critical shortage
8 areas, as defined in subsection (b), in the performance of their duties.

9 (b) Eligible Areas. Eligible shortage areas for GDOE employees *shall* include,
10 but not be limited to:

11 (1) Special Education services (e.g., paraprofessional certification,
12 applied behavioral analysis training, SPED classroom support);

13 (2) Language Access services (e.g., certified interpreters, translators,
14 bilingual proficiency certifications, American Sign Language interpretation);

15 (3) Disability Services (e.g., assistive technology certification,
16 accessibility coordination, ADA compliance training).

17 The Superintendent of the Guam Department of Education, in consultation
18 with the Guam Director of Administration and relevant stakeholders (including
19 GDOE employee representatives and the Guam Federation of Teachers), may
20 designate additional shortage areas based on documented GDOE needs, such as
21 vacancy rates exceeding 15% or federal compliance risks. The Guam Education
22 Board shall review and approve or modify the proposed list of additional eligible
23 shortage areas at least annually, with designations effective within 60 days of
24 approval unless otherwise specified.

25 (c) Incentive Pay

26 (1) Employees who obtain and actively utilize an approved certification
27 *shall* receive either:

1 (a) A biweekly stipend not less than One Hundred Dollars
2 (\$100.00) and not more than One Hundred Eighty Dollars (\$180.00);
3 or

4 (b) A percentage differential of not less than five percent (5%)
5 and not more than ten percent (10%) of base salary, as determined by
6 the pay grade and step under the GovGuam Unified Pay Schedule.

7 (2) Incentive pay shall remain in effect only while:

8 (a) The certification is valid and current; and

9 (b) The skills are actively applied in the employee's assigned
10 duties, as certified annually by the Superintendent of Education. Active
11 utilization shall be verified via a simple annual attestation form,
12 including examples such as caseload assignments or program
13 implementation logs.

14 (d) Certification Approval. The Guam Department of Education shall
15 maintain and annually update a list of approved certifications and training programs.
16 Such list shall include local, national, or online programs meeting recognized
17 professional standards applicable to GDOE roles. The list shall be published on the
18 GDOE website and distributed to all employees upon update.

19 (e) Funding. Incentive pay for GDOE employees shall be funded through:

20 (1) Available federal funds, including Individuals with Disabilities
21 Education Act (IDEA) or other applicable grants;

22 (2) Special education or language access appropriations; or

23 (3) General Fund appropriations as authorized by I Liheslaturan
24 Guåhan, not to exceed \$500,000 annually without prior legislative approval.

25 (f) Reporting. The Guam Department of Education shall submit an annual
26 report to I Liheslaturan Guåhan and I Maga'hågan/Maga'låhen Guåhan, no later than
27 September 30th, detailing:

1 (1) The number of employees receiving certification incentive pay;
2 (2) The amount expended on incentive pay; and
3 (3) The impact of the program on reducing staffing shortages in GDOE,
4 including metrics such as vacancy fill rates, retention in eligible areas,
5 (g) Review. This Program shall be subjected to periodic reviews as follows:

6 (1) Interim Review. No later than two (2) years after the effective date
7 of this Act, the Guam Department of Education shall submit a comprehensive
8 interim report to I Liheslaturan Guåhan incorporating data from the annual
9 reports required under subsection (f). The interim report shall assess
10 preliminary program effectiveness, including participant enrollment, cost per
11 certification, initial impacts on vacancy rates in eligible shortage areas, and
12 any barriers to implementation.

13 (2) Full Review and Sunset. No later than five (5) years after the
14 effective date of this Act, the Guam Department of Education, in consultation
15 with the Guam Education Board, shall conduct a full evaluation of the
16 Program's overall effectiveness, total costs, return on investment (e.g.,
17 retention rates and compliance with federal mandates such as IDEA), and
18 long-term impact on GDOE workforce capacity. The evaluation shall be
19 submitted as a report to I Liheslaturan Guåhan, who may amend, reauthorize,
20 or allow the Program to sunset based on the findings. If not reauthorized by
21 legislation prior to the five-year mark, the Program shall terminate on the sixth
22 anniversary of the effective date, with any active incentive payments phasing
23 out over six (6) months.

24 **Section 3. Severability.** If any provision of this Act or its application to any
25 person or circumstance is found to be invalid or inorganic, such invalidity shall not
26 affect other provisions or applications of this Act that can be given effect without

1 the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this Act are
2 severable.

3 **Section 4. Effective Date.** This Act shall be effective upon enactment.

I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2025 (FIRST) Regular Session

Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

*As Amended by the Committee on Education,
Libraries and Public Broadcasting*

Introduced by:

Vincent A.V. Borja

**AN ACT TO *ADD* A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6
TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO
ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN
AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING
IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL
EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, DISABILITY SERVICES
AND CHAMORU LANGUAGE TEACHERS.**

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF GUAM:

Section 1. Legislative Findings and Intent.

The Legislature finds that the Guam Department of Education (GDOE) continues to experience significant staffing shortages in specialized areas critical to student success, including special education services, language access for persons with limited English proficiency (LEP), and support for students who are deaf, hard of hearing, or otherwise disabled. While formal education pathways remain vital, incentivizing current GDOE employees to obtain relevant certifications or training can address immediate needs and enhance service delivery.

I Liheslaturan Guåhan further finds that the preservation and continued use of the CHamoru language depends in significant part on having qualified educators who can teach the language and culture to future generations. GDOE continues to face challenges in recruiting and retaining CHamoru language teachers with the

1 specialized knowledge, language proficiency, and cultural competency necessary to
2 provide meaningful instruction. Providing incentive pay to employees who obtain
3 and utilize approved CHamoru language or cultural certifications will strengthen
4 GDOE's ability to develop and retain qualified CHamoru educators, expand student
5 access to CHamoru language instruction, and support the preservation and
6 perpetuation of Guam's indigenous language and cultural heritage.

7 It is the intent of this Act to establish a Specialty Certification Incentive Pay
8 Program specifically for GDOE employees who obtain and apply approved
9 certifications in these shortage areas, thereby improving educational outcomes and
10 supporting professional development.

11 **Section 2.** A new §6236 is hereby *added* to Article 2 of Chapter 6, Title 4,
12 Guam Code Annotated, to read as follows:

13 **“§6236. Specialty Certification Incentive Pay Program for Guam**
14 **Department of Education Employees.**

15 (a) Establishment. There is hereby established a Specialty Certification
16 Incentive Pay Program for employees of the Guam Department of Education who
17 obtain and actively utilize approved certifications or training in critical shortage
18 areas, as defined in subsection (b), in the performance of their duties.

19 (b) Eligible Areas. Eligible shortage areas for GDOE employees shall include,
20 classroom teachers, school-site support staff including, school aides who possesses
21 education, training, certification, experience, or other relevant backgrounds in one
22 or more of the following areas:

23 (1) Special Education services (e.g., paraprofessional certification,
24 applied behavioral analysis training, SPED classroom support);

25 (2) Language Access services (e.g., certified interpreters, translators,
26 bilingual proficiency certifications, American Sign Language interpretation);

1 (3) Disability Services (e.g., assistive technology certification,
2 accessibility coordination, ADA compliance training);

3 (4) CHamoru Language and Cultural Instruction (e.g., CHamoru
4 language proficiency certification, CHamoru studies certification.

5 (c) Incentive Pay

6 (1) Employees who obtain and actively utilize an approved certification
7 shall receive:

8 (a) A percentage differential of ten percent (10%) of base salary,
9 as determined by the pay grade and step under the GovGuam Unified
10 Pay Schedule or other applicable pay plan.

11 (2) Incentive pay shall remain in effect only while the certification is
12 valid and current.

13 (d) Certification Approval. The Guam Department of Education shall
14 maintain and annually update a list of approved certifications and training programs.
15 Such list shall include local, national, or online programs meeting recognized
16 professional standards applicable to GDOE roles. The list shall be published on the
17 GDOE website and distributed to all employees upon update.

18 (e) Funding. Incentive pay for GDOE employees receiving specialty
19 certification incentive pay may be funded through:

20 (1) Available federal funds, including Individuals with Disabilities
21 Education Act (IDEA) or other applicable grants;

22 (2) Special education or language access appropriations; or

23 (3) General Fund appropriations as authorized by I Liheslaturan
24 Guåhan.

25 (f) Reporting. The Guam Department of Education shall submit an annual
26 report to I Liheslaturan Guåhan and I Maga'hågan/Maga'låhen Guåhan, no later than
27 September 30th, detailing:

- (1) The number of employees receiving specialty incentive pay;
- (2) The amount expended on specialty incentive pay; and
- (3) The impact of the program on reducing staffing shortages in GDOE,
including metrics such as vacancy fill rates, retention in eligible areas.

(g) Review. This Specialty Certification Pay Program shall be subjected to periodic reviews as follows:

(1) Interim Review. No later than two (2) years after the effective date of this Act, the Guam Department of Education shall submit a comprehensive interim report to I Liheslaturan Guåhan incorporating data from the annual reports required under subsection (f). The interim report shall assess preliminary program effectiveness, including participant enrollment, cost per certification, initial impacts on vacancy rates in eligible shortage areas, and any barriers to implementation.

(2) Full Review and Sunset. No later than five (5) years after the effective date of this Act, the Guam Department of Education, in consultation with the Guam Education Board, shall conduct a full evaluation of the Specialty Certification Pay Program's overall effectiveness, total costs, return on investment (e.g., retention rates and compliance with federal mandates such as IDEA), and long-term impact on GDOE workforce capacity. The evaluation shall be submitted as a report to I Liheslaturan Guåhan, who may amend, reauthorize, or allow the Specialty Certification Pay Program to sunset based on the findings. If the Program is not reauthorized by legislation prior to the fifth anniversary of the effective date of this Act, the Program shall terminate at the beginning of the next fiscal year following such anniversary. All incentive payments authorized pursuant to this Section shall cease on that date, regardless of the date on which an individual employee first began receiving incentive pay.

1 **Section 3. Severability.** If any provision of this Act or its application to any
2 person or circumstance is found to be invalid or inorganic, such invalidity shall not
3 affect other provisions or applications of this Act that can be given effect without
4 the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this Act are
5 severable.

6 **Section 4. Effective Date.** This Act shall be effective upon enactment.

I MINA'TRENTAI OCHO NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2025 (FIRST) Regular Session

Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

*As Amended by the Committee on Education,
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Introduced by:

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**AN ACT TO *ADD* A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6
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I Liheslaturan Guåhan further finds that the preservation and continued use of the CHamoru language depends in significant part on having qualified educators who can teach the language and culture to future generations. GDOE continues to face challenges in recruiting and retaining CHamoru language teachers with the

specialized knowledge, language proficiency, and cultural competency necessary to provide meaningful instruction. Providing incentive pay to employees who obtain and utilize approved CHamoru language or cultural certifications will strengthen GDOE's ability to develop and retain qualified CHamoru educators, expand student access to CHamoru language instruction, and support the preservation and perpetuation of Guam's indigenous language and cultural heritage.

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Section 2. A new §6236 is hereby *added* to Article 2 of Chapter 6, Title 4, Guam Code Annotated, to read as follows:

“§6236. Specialty Certification Incentive Pay Program for Guam Department of Education Employees.

(a) Establishment. There is hereby established a Specialty Certification Incentive Pay Program for employees of the Guam Department of Education who obtain and actively utilize approved certifications or training in critical shortage areas, as defined in subsection (b), in the performance of their duties.

(b) Eligible Areas. Eligible shortage areas for GDOE employees *shall* include, classroom teachers, school-site support staff including, school aides who possesses education, training, certification, experience, or other relevant backgrounds in one or more of the following areas but not be limited to:

(1) Special Education services (e.g., paraprofessional certification, applied behavioral analysis training, SPED classroom support);

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1 (3) Disability Services (e.g., assistive technology certification,
2 accessibility coordination, ADA compliance training);

3 (4) CHamoru Language and Cultural Instruction (e.g., CHamoru
4 language proficiency certification, CHamoru studies certification.

5 ~~The Superintendent of the Guam Department of Education, in consultation~~
6 ~~with the Guam Director of Administration and relevant stakeholders (including~~
7 ~~GDOE employee representatives and the Guam Federation of Teachers), may~~
8 ~~designate additional shortage areas based on documented GDOE needs, such as~~
9 ~~vacancy rates exceeding 15% or federal compliance risks. The Guam Education~~
10 ~~Board shall review and approve or modify the proposed list of additional eligible~~
11 ~~shortage areas at least annually, with designations effective within 60 days of~~
12 ~~approval unless otherwise specified.~~

13 (c) Incentive Pay

14 (1) Employees who obtain and actively utilize an approved certification
15 shall receive either:

16 (a) ~~A biweekly stipend not less than One Hundred Dollars~~
17 ~~(\$100.00) and not more than One Hundred Eighty Dollars (\$180.00);~~
18 ~~or~~

19 (b) (a) A percentage differential of not less than five percent (5%)
20 and not more than ten percent (10%) of base salary, as determined by
21 the pay grade and step under the GovGuam Unified Pay Schedule or
22 other applicable pay plan.

23 (2) Incentive pay shall remain in effect only while the certification is
24 valid and current.

25 (a) ~~The certification is valid and current; and~~

26 (b) ~~The skills are actively applied in the employee's assigned~~
27 ~~duties, as certified annually by the Superintendent of Education. Active~~

1 ~~utilization shall be verified via a simple annual attestation form,~~
2 ~~including examples such as caseload assignments or program~~
3 ~~implementation logs.~~

4 (d) Certification Approval. The Guam Department of Education *shall*
5 maintain and annually update a list of approved certifications and training programs.
6 Such list *shall* include local, national, or online programs meeting recognized
7 professional standards applicable to GDOE roles. The list shall be published on the
8 GDOE website and distributed to all employees upon update.

9 (e) Funding. Incentive pay for GDOE employees ~~receiving specialty~~
10 ~~certification incentive pay shall may~~ be funded through:

11 (1) Available federal funds, including Individuals with Disabilities
12 Education Act (IDEA) or other applicable grants;

13 (2) Special education or language access appropriations; or

14 (3) General Fund appropriations as authorized by *I Liheslaturan*
15 *Guåhan*, ~~not to exceed \$500,000 annually without prior legislative approval.~~

16 (f) Reporting. The Guam Department of Education *shall* submit an annual
17 report to *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* and *I Maga'hågan/Maga'låhen Guåhan*, no later than
18 September 30th, detailing:

19 (1) The number of employees receiving ~~certification~~ specialty incentive
20 pay;

21 (2) The amount expended on specialty incentive pay; and

22 (3) The impact of the program on reducing staffing shortages in GDOE,
23 including metrics such as vacancy fill rates, retention in eligible areas.

24 (g) Review. This ~~Specialty Certification Pay~~ Program *shall* be subjected to
25 periodic reviews as follows:

26 (1) Interim Review. No later than two (2) years after the effective date
27 of this Act, the Guam Department of Education shall submit a comprehensive

1 interim report to *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* incorporating data from the annual
2 reports required under subsection (f). The interim report shall assess
3 preliminary program effectiveness, including participant enrollment, cost per
4 certification, initial impacts on vacancy rates in eligible shortage areas, and
5 any barriers to implementation.

6 (2) Full Review and Sunset. No later than five (5) years after the
7 effective date of this Act, the Guam Department of Education, in consultation
8 with the Guam Education Board, shall conduct a full evaluation of the
9 Specialty Certification Pay Program's overall effectiveness, total costs, return
10 on investment (e.g., retention rates and compliance with federal mandates
11 such as IDEA), and long-term impact on GDOE workforce capacity. The
12 evaluation shall be submitted as a report to *I Liheslaturan Guåhan*, who may
13 amend, reauthorize, or allow the Specialty Certification Pay Program to sunset
14 based on the findings. If not reauthorized by legislation prior to the five-year
15 mark, the Program shall terminate on the sixth anniversary of the effective
16 date, with any active incentive payments phasing out over six (6) months. If
17 the Program is not reauthorized by legislation prior to the fifth anniversary of
18 the effective date of this Act, the Program shall terminate at the beginning of
19 the next fiscal year following such anniversary. All incentive payments
20 authorized pursuant to this Section shall cease on that date, regardless of the
21 date on which an individual employee first began receiving incentive pay.

22 **Section 3. Severability.** If any provision of this Act or its application to any
23 person or circumstance is found to be invalid or inorganic, such invalidity shall not
24 affect other provisions or applications of this Act that can be given effect without
25 the invalid provision or application, and to this end the provisions of this Act are
26 severable.

27 **Section 4. Effective Date.** This Act shall be effective upon enactment.



COMMITTEE ON RULES

Vice Speaker V. Anthony Ada, Chairperson
I Mina'trentai Ocho Na Liheslaturan Guåhan
38th Guam Legislature

December 4, 2025

To: **Rennae V. C. Meno**
Clerk of the Legislature

From: **Vice Speaker V. Anthony Ada** 
Chairperson, Committee on Rules

Subject: **Fiscal Note for Bill No. 226-38 (COR)**

Håfa Adai!

Find the attached, Fiscal Note for the following bill:

Bill No. 226-38 (COR).

I also request that the same be sent to the respective Chairperson of the Standing Committee, to which this bill has been referred. Kindly copy the same to Management Information Services (MIS) for posting on our website.



Bureau of Budget & Management Research
Fiscal Note of Bill No. 226-38 (COR)

AN ACT TO ADD A NEW §6236 TO ARTICLE 2 OF CHAPTER 6 TITLE 4, GUAM CODE ANNOTATED, RELATIVE TO ESTABLISHING INCENTIVE PAY FOR CERTAIN GUAM DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION EMPLOYEES WHO OBTAIN AND UTILIZE SPECIALIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR TRAINING IN CRITICAL SHORTAGE AREAS, INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATION, LANGUAGE ACCESS, AND DISABILITY SERVICES.

Department/Agency Appropriation Information

Dept./Agency Affected: Guam Department of Education (GDOE)	Dept./Agency Head: Dr. Kenneth E. Swanson, Superintendent
Department's General Fund (GF) appropriation(s) to date: P.L. 38-60: Operations (\$228,187,734); School Maintenance & Repairs (\$10,000,000); Chamoru Studies (\$513,824); Menstrual Hygiene Products (\$25,000); Textbooks from UOG Press (\$481,578); and Y Kuantan Salappe Prinsepap (\$1,200,000)	\$240,408,136
Department's Other Fund (Specify) appropriation(s) to date: Guam Educational Facilities Fund (\$11,328,487); Public School Library Resources Fund (\$815,331); Healthy Futures Fund (\$891,754); School Lunch/Child Nutritional Meal Reimbursement Fund (\$12,504,000); Limited Gaming Fund (\$343,564)	\$25,883,136
	\$266,291,272

Fund Source Information of Proposed Appropriation

	General Fund:	(Special Fund):	Total:
FY 2025 Unreserved Fund Balance		\$0	\$0
FY 2026 Adopted Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0
FY 2026 Appro. (P.L. 38-60)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Sub-total:	\$0	\$0	\$0
Less appropriation in Bill	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total:	\$0	\$0	\$0

Estimated Fiscal Impact of Bill

	One Full Fiscal Year	For Remainder of FY 2026 (if applicable)	FY 2027	FY 2028	FY 2029	FY 2030
General Fund	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
Special Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000

- | | | |
|---|------------|----------|
| 1. Does the bill contain "revenue generating" provisions? | / / Yes | / X / No |
| If Yes, see attachment 1/ | | |
| 2. Is amount appropriated adequate to fund the intent of the appropriation? | / X / N/A | / / Yes |
| If no, what is the additional amount required? \$ _____ | / X / N/A | / / No |
| 3. Does the Bill establish a new program/agency? | / / Yes | / X / No |
| If yes, will the program duplicate existing programs/agencies? | / X / N/A | / / Yes |
| Is there a federal mandate to establish the program/agency? | / / Yes | / X / No |
| 4. Will the enactment of this Bill require new physical facilities? | / / Yes | / X / No |
| 5. Was Fiscal Note coordinated with the affected dept/agency? If no, indicate reason: | / X / Yes | / / No |
| /X/ Requested agency comments not received by due date | / / Other: | |

Analyst: 	Date: 12/2/25	Director: 	Date: DEC 03 2025
Arthur R. Mariano, B&MA Supervisor		Lester L. Carlson, Jr., Director	

Footnotes:

In its current form, Bill 226-38 (COR) seeks to establish incentive pay for certain Guam Department of Education (GDOE) employees who obtain and utilize specialized certifications or training in critical shortage areas, including special education, language access, and disability services. Compensation shall be either via a bi-weekly stipend not less than \$100 and not more than \$180 or via a percentage differential of not less than 5% and not more than 10% of the employee's base salary. Relative to the bi-weekly stipends, the projected cost per employee per annum would range from \$2,600 to \$4,680. Regarding the percentage differential computation and assuming the employee is earning approximately \$50,000 per annum, the cost per employee would be between \$2,500 to \$5,000 per annum. The subject legislation identifies the following fund sources: 1) Federal funds or grants, 2) Special education or language access appropriations, or 3) a General Fund appropriation not to exceed \$500,000 annually subject to appropriation by *I Liheslaturan Guahan*. It should be noted that the overall fiscal impact cannot be determined at this time absent additional information from the GDOE including a list of employees and salaries of those that may qualify for the aforementioned incentive pay, etc.