



**COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS**  
**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**  
**Municipality of Saipan**  
**Afetna Square, San Antonio**

**JUAN BORJA TUDELA**  
*Mayor of Saipan*

July 5, 2007

Mariana Islands Range Complex EIS  
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100  
Pearl Harbor, Hawaii 96860-3134  
ATTN: EV2

Re: Public Scoping Comments

Dear Sir:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on plans to relocate approximately 8,000 U.S. Marines to the Mariana Islands from Okinawa and at the same time to minimize the environmental impact of such a move.

As the Mayor of Saipan, I must note in all frankness that our economy is in dire straits. The fact is: we are looking to the U.S. military for opportunities to boost our ailing economy. Since the new provisions of the World Trade Organization regulating international textiles took effect in January 2005, 34 garment factories that have operated on the island for the past few decades have ceased or drastically reduced operations. More than 15,000 garment workers have lost their jobs and consequently government revenues have also drastically declined.

Today on Saipan one can find dozens of empty factories, empty barracks and empty warehouses. All of these facilities have ready access to Saipan's seaport and airport. For this reason, we respectfully request that Saipan be included in efforts to integrate these former factory-sites as well as other small businesses into future plans to accommodate the military.

Because Saipan and the entire Mariana Islands will experience a significant amount of military construction and other related work as part of the relocation of U.S. Marines from Okinawa, it is appropriate that work must begin now to ensure that small businesses in the islands are included in the build-up plans. We would like to recommend that an inventory of these facilities on Saipan be conducted to explore the possibility of utilizing them as part of the overall military buildup within the Mariana Islands.

We must also note that in the past the Department of Defense has always been committed to involving small business in such expansion efforts. We interpret this to mean that

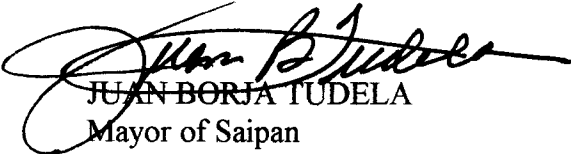
small businesses can somehow be accommodated or integrated into government contracting efforts. Such efforts always raise specific challenges, however, it is important to emphasize at this time the critical need not to neglect local small businesses and to make the small businesses throughout the Mariana Islands part of the overall process.

If this can be accomplished, the island economies of the Marianas, including Guam, Saipan, Tinian, and all the islands could be expected to benefit from the expansion of the military's activities throughout the Mariana Islands Range Complex.

In closing, I would like to stress the importance for the entire environmental impact study to help ensure that the changes will not harm the environment of Saipan and all the Mariana Islands, including the land and sea animals and plants, natural resources, cultural sites and artifacts. Equally important is the need to assist the islands in promoting economic growth and the overall quality of life of the people of Saipan and all the Mariana Islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important environmental impact study. If you need more information regarding my recommendations, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,



JUAN BORJA TUDELA  
Mayor of Saipan