

October 01, 2020

The Guam Association of REALTORS®

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Hagåtña, GU 96910

Subject: Legislative Candidate Interview Vying For Election To The 36th Guam Legislature

A. Real Estate Industry Related

- 1. Will you support the preparation and passage of legislation to classify the whole of the real estate industry encompassing both the private sector and related Government of Guam agencies as TRUE ESSENTIAL SERVICES?**

Response: As a result of our experience with this worldwide pandemic, I will introduce legislation that will require legislative approval to extend any governor's declaration of a state of emergency powers to shut down our island economy beyond the 30-days prescribed by the law. When facing an emergency, it is imperative that we reconsider the laws, rules and regulations granting authority to unilaterally make decisions that affect the economy as a whole. Decisions of such far reaching consequences, beyond 30-days, must require eight (8) votes or more in the Guam Legislature and the collaborative engagement of our entire community. We all want to keep our people safe but we also must take action to ensure we are not creating more problems that diminish our ability to live as a society governed by the people.

- 2. Will you support the classification of the GLUC application processing system (critical to improving Guam's economic well-being) as an essential service during the COVID-19 Condition of Readiness operating restrictions?**

Response: The shut-down of "nonessential" government departments and agencies due to Covid-19 restrictions by Governor Leon Guerrero have had adverse effects to include the processing of GLUC applications. As we have experienced, there has not been enough transparency or community engagement with the Governor's decisions to unilaterally shutdown the island's economy for undetermined periods of time or enough collaboration to minimize as much as possible adverse economic consequences and at the same time instituting safe practices to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus. The government must do everything it can to ensure that every industry, to include the real-estate industry, remain operational even during pandemic times.



B. General Government

1. Will you support the creation, introduction and passage of a bill to change the operation of the Guam Legislature from full time to part time?

Response: I will support legislation to put the issue of a part-time legislature before the people and have the people decide if they desire to restructure their legislative branch of government. I have supported and voted in favor of such initiatives in the past as a Senator to include the reduction of the legislative membership from 21- members to 15-members. There were several other initiatives that were placed on the same election ballot. The people voted by majority to reduce the legislative membership and this decision has been sustained for the past 20-years.

2. Will you support the repeal of the 1% increase in the Business Privilege Tax/Gross Receipt Tax rate, i.e. restoring the BPT/GRT rate to 4%?

Response: I will support the reduction of the 1% increase to the BPT. Considering the significant downturn in the economy as a result of COVID 19, I believe that a reduction in the BPT will stimulate our economy and help support struggling businesses keep their doors open and their workers employed.

3. Are you in favor of increasing taxes and/fees to deal with Government of Guam revenue shortfall caused by COVID-19 imposed restrictions on private sector business operations?

Response: No. When the government of Guam is faced with revenue shortfalls, it must prioritize its funding to government agencies to maintain its mandates to the people of Guam.

4. Will you support a significant reduction in Government of Guam expenditures including payroll during COVID-19 lockdown and PCOR2 periods in order to keep the Government solvent?

Response: The government must rein in government spending and prioritize its funding whether it is during a pandemic or day-to-day operations. The government must follow the budget law that is approved by the legislative branch.

5. Are you in favor of increasing the local minimum wage and Why?

Response: Public Law 35-38 increased the minimum wage from \$8.75 an hour by March 2020 to \$9.25 an hour by March 2021. This is the law. With current economic challenges on our island, I would not consider raising the minimum wage at this time.



6. Are you in favor of reducing taxes and fees to assist in the start of small businesses and in maintaining their viability?

Response: I will support the reduction of the 1% increase to the BPT. Considering the significant downturn in the economy as a result of COVID 19, I believe that a reduction in the BPT will stimulate our economy and help support new or struggling businesses keep their doors open and their workers employed. I am in favor of reducing government red tape making government services easier and more convenient.

7. What functions of the Government of Guam do you believe should be privatized?

Response: While the privatization of the Guam Telephone Authority benefited the government of Guam and the ratepayers who experienced competitive rates, greater dialogue must occur between the government of Guam and the people of Guam to ensure that the public's interest is at the forefront of the government's decision-making and not at the behest of special interest groups.

8. Are you in support of the impending military buildup and the Marine relocation?

Response: I support the military buildup but will also want to ensure that the military is a responsible community partner to protect our islands environmental and cultural resources.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Brown
Candidate for Senator of the 36th Guam Legislature

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