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JON J. P. FERNANDEZ
Superintendent of Education

GL# 34-18-1637
Vice Speaker Therese M. Terlaje

March 9, 2018

Honorable Therese M. Terlaje
Acting Speaker, Chairperson: Committee on Culture and Justice
34th Guam Legislature
Guam Congress Building
163 Chalan Santo Papa
Hagatna, Guam 96910

GL#
Speaker Benjamin J.F. Cruz

MAR 09 2018
Time: 4:35pm
Received by:

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Dear Acting Speaker Terlaje:

I am reaching out to you on behalf of the Guam Education Board, to urge you and your colleagues to work together with Governor Eddie Calvo to find a revenue solution that will insulate our schools and classrooms from the financial crisis affecting the Government of Guam.

As the days continue without a revenue solution in place, additional budget cuts loom closer, and a second string of cuts will be more painful and more impactful to the Guam Department of Education and our stakeholders.

The Guam Education Board is preparing to move forward with a second phase of cost cutting measures next week. If the GDOE is forced to implement the second round of cuts, the reductions will inevitably affect our department's personnel.

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This includes the potential decision to implement a 32-hour work week, which would impact over 3,500 employees and their families.

Additionally, we have 700 limited term employees that could be pushed to the front lines of this crisis. These include substitute teachers, college-educated teachers who are working toward certification, retired certified teachers, and the people directly caring for our children in the classrooms. If they are no longer there to care for our kids, our students will be walking into empty classrooms, which I hope you would agree is unacceptable.

We also met with Department of Public Works, and if they go into a 32-hour work week during the school year and reduce night differential, the schedule for bus pick-up and drop-off is going to be significantly affected. We anticipate buses potentially being 60 to 90 minutes late, which is a concern for us and for parents in terms of student safety. It is not just high school that will be impacted but also our middle and elementary school students. In fact, our youngest children in Head Start would also be impacted. This would require major changes to our bell schedule and could impact our ability to meet our mandate for 180 days or its equivalent. This is also

unacceptable, and we request that DPW bus services, as our partner, be protected from this financial crisis.

Acting Speaker Terlaje, the livelihood of thousands of our employees, and the quality of education for over 30,000 students rests in the hands of you and your colleagues. We pray for a resolution and for revenue relief that will alleviate the need for these deeper cuts. We ask that you and your colleagues thoughtfully consider the legislation before your august body. Please help our students, faculty, staff and administrators.

Senseramente,

MARK B. MENDIOLA
Chairman
Guam Education Board

JON J.P. FERNANDEZ
Superintendent
Guam Department of Education

Cc: Members, Guam Education Board