

WRDA Speech

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for holding this hearing and all the work you, members of this committee, and your staff are putting in for this term's Water Resource Development Act.

Guam needs help from the US Army Corps of Engineers, my office has submitted several study proposals for a wide range of issues. Increasing the raw water storage capabilities at the Ugum Surface Water Treatment plant, under the Guam Waterworks Authority. In its current state, the plant's capabilities are insufficient during times of drought or heavy rainfall. These shortcomings are caused by many things, but most pressing is the outdated machinery and a security system that is in desperate need of improvements.

This is a hearing to discuss future needs, and I see Guam as a perfect future partner for USACE. US Army Corps staff have informed me that a WRDA project has never been conducted in my district, and while Guam already has funding for a potential future project, no relevant studies have been introduced or completed to help clarify where this funding is best directed.

Being in 3,000 miles from Hawaii, building critical infrastructure on Guam is significantly more difficult and expensive than it is here in the lower 48 due to the tyranny of distance and Buy American laws that vastly inflate the already high cost of goods. This means that opportunities like WRDA projects are important for improving critical infrastructure on island.

Guam's role as a vital part of the U.S. national security matrix means that Chinese hackers are looking for every opportunity to infiltrate our critical infrastructure, water infrastructure is on that target list. In addition to providing for basic water needs, these project proposals will seek to increase our water security from natural disasters and malign foreign actors.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.