

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND CULTURE  
20TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO  
SABLAN**

OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 12, 2018*

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, this year the Northern Mariana Islands Museum of History and Culture celebrates its 20th anniversary.

Our islands' only, locally-run museum is as much a tribute to the story of the people of the Marianas as it is to the resilience and determination of those who have led the Museum's operation. They have kept the Museum alive despite many years of inadequate funding, understaffing, and a destructive typhoon that could well have shut it down permanently.

The Museum is located in a 92-year-old hospital built during the time the Northern Marianas were under the administration of Japan. The structure itself is an artifact of our history, and before its renovation looked the part. Its concrete, paint-less exterior told the story of war and every typhoon that has passed through our islands in the last century.

Today, within the Museum a visitor can view artifacts from the time of the ancient Chamorro people, and of the Spanish, German, and Japanese occupations that descended upon us. These artifacts, and the paintings and photographs that are part of the displays, tell the story of how our people survived, adapted, and thrived throughout our history. They—and other objects stored away in the Museum—are lovingly preserved by their local conservators, who exhibit a profound dedication to keeping the memories of our people alive.

The NMI Museum of History and Culture is an independent program of our Governor's Office. Sadly, the facility fell on hard times in the mid-2000s, when massive budget cuts forced the lay-off of most staff. At this low point, the Museum had only one employee, whose availability determined when the museum would open and close. As a result, many a visitor was turned away who could have experienced the history of the Chamorro people.

In 2015, the Marianas were hit by Typhoon Soudelor, the most devastating typhoon in decades. That terrible storm could well have meant the end for our Museum. The typhoon left many artifacts damaged, the roof leaking, mold along the walls, floors flooded, and much of the plumbing a wreck. And the museum was forced to close its doors to visitors—indefinitely.

Into this scene of destruction a new energy arrived in the person of Mr. Danny Aquino. Appointed Executive Director last year, Mr. Aquino was tasked with the grueling repair of the museum.

And more help was on the way. An outpouring of financial and material support from IT&E, Saipan Stevedore, Saipan Shipping, CMS Trucking, Soudelor Corporation, Tropical Gardens, and other local businesses, a

\$55,000 appropriation from the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation, and \$50,000 from the Marianas Visitors Authority gave Aquino and his team the funds to start repairs.

Help from the staff of the Mayor of Saipan also moved the work along at a faster pace. The Mayor's team assisted museum staff with grounds maintenance, landscaping, and other outdoor work. Somehow, restoration took less than six months to complete; and the Museum reopened last November to its first visitors in a very long time.

I visited the museum in February to see this progress. I had been there shortly after Typhoon Soudelor; and I can report the difference between then and now is night and day. Mr. Aquino's can-do attitude, and the tireless work of his staff—James Cabrera, James Macaranas, Allan Lifoifoi, and Wenny Haruo—drove the repair efforts and the result is a museum that the Marianas can truly be proud of.

Today, visitors to our islands can orient themselves to the three-and-a-half millennia of Marianas history at our Museum. Residents can take pride in who they are and where they come from by strolling through this beautiful facility. And students—many of whom are required to take a course on the history of our islands—can enlarge their vision of the future by learning about our past at the Northern Mariana Islands Museum of History and Culture.

Please join me in congratulating the Northern Mariana Islands Museum of History and Culture on 20 years of serving our islands and our people.

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NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND: AN  
UPDATE ON THE GOLDMAN ACT

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 12, 2018*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we held a hearing on parental child abduction. International parental child abduction rips children from their homes and whisks them away to a foreign land, alienating them from the love and care of the parent and family left behind.

Child abduction is child abuse, and it continues to plague families across the United States.

According to State Department statistics, almost 800 children are today held hostage in a foreign country, separated from their American parent. Several hundred additional children join their ranks every year.

If past is prologue, only 16 percent of these children will be returned to the United States.

In 2014, Congress adopted legislation I wrote, the Sean and David Goldman International Child Abduction Prevention and Return Act (Public Law 113–150) to change the status quo. Since 2014, we have seen a reduction in new abductions, but not an increase in percentage of returns in ongoing cases.

Despite the new legislation, the State Department has persistently refused to use the return tools in the Goldman Act as envisioned by Congress. Moving beyond letters and meetings, the Goldman Act is an enforcement tool for the Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and leverage for return agreements with non-Hague countries.

The Goldman Act takes the lessons learned from the successful return of Sean Goldman from Brazil and lays out actions: a delay or cancellation of one or more bilateral working, official, or state visits; the withdrawal, limitation, or suspension of U.S. development, security, or economic support assistance; and extradition.

To my knowledge, extradition has been used once and the other options not at all. The Obama State Department said in the past that sanctions will not work. But in the one case where sanctions were tried by Congress, they worked.

The inaction by the Obama Administration has been noted and challenged. On February 14 of 2017, one month into the new Trump Administration, Japan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Fumio Kishida, noted in a Diet discussion of abduction that, "until now there is not a single example in which the U.S. applied [Goldman Act sanctions] towards foreign countries." He went on to note that "according to the U.S. [Japan is] not included in the category of the non-compliant countries."

Three days later, the Osaka High Court overturned a return order for the four American children of James Cook in flagrant violation of the Hague Convention, Japan's own Hague implementation guide, and U.S. law. The court had reopened the case because Mr. Cook had moved into an apartment after the enormous legal bills from years in court in Japan. When did sharing a bedroom with a sibling become a grave risk to a child's physical or psychological well-being?

I urge and believe the new administration can and must do better.

At least 300 to 400 children have suffered abduction from the U.S. to Japan since 1994, and more than 35 currently await reunification with their American parent—most of these are left over from previous Administrations. In almost all cases, the child is completely cut off from contact with the left behind parent. Most have aged out of the system without ever being reunited with their left behind parent.

Some parents have won in court only to find that Japan's law enforcement could not return their children unless the taking parent agreed to abide by the decision, and the taking parent did not.

The systematic non-enforcement of access and return orders is so bad in Japan that 26 EU countries recently issued a joint demarche to Japan, asking Japan to fix the problem. Although non-enforcement has plagued many U.S. cases, the U.S. did not join the demarche.

However, in the upcoming Goldman Act report, the U.S. has the chance to hold Japan

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