



# Judiciary of Guam

Administrative Office of the Courts  
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HON. ROBERT J. TORRES  
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ADMINISTRATOR OF THE COURTS

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 15, 2025

### **2025 LAW MONTH FORUM: THE CONSTITUTION'S PROMISE: OUT OF MANY, ONE? FEDERAL POLICY AND TERRITORIAL IMPACTS**

(Hagåtña, Guam) — Each year on May 1, we commemorate Law Day, a day in which the nation celebrates the rule of law. For the past 17 years, the Judiciary of Guam, the District Court of Guam, and the Guam Bar Association have partnered to sponsor Law Month, hosting outreach events that highlight the vital role of law and the legal process in safeguarding our freedoms. Our Law Month initiatives have garnered national recognition, having earned the American Bar Association's Law Day Outstanding Activity Award for Best Public Program ten times since 2008.

The American Bar Association Law Day theme, “The Constitution’s Promise: Out of Many, One,” embodies a fundamental aspect of American democracy — the idea of unity amidst diversity. As we celebrate Law Day, we reflect on how our constitutional principles shape our lives and our governance. However, for the people of Guam, this theme holds a unique significance. While it emphasizes our American identity, it also highlights the complications of our political status as an unincorporated territory of the United States. Unlike states, whose residents fully enjoy the privileges of citizenship, those of us in Guam navigate a complex landscape where federal policies can significantly affect our access to healthcare, education, employment, housing, and legal services. Yet, we do so without full political representation in our national government.

Guam’s political status is a product of history, shaped by both colonial legacies and the post-war adjustments in the Pacific. As a territory, we grapple with federal policies — and Law Day themes — that often feel disconnected from our lived experiences. This dichotomy between being an American territory and lacking certain fundamental rights creates a tension all its own. In considering “The Constitution’s Promise,” we must critically assess how federal policy impacts Guam and potentially exacerbates – or, at times, causes – the socioeconomic challenges we face.

The 2025 Law Month Forum distinguished panel included:

- The Honorable Robert Underwood, a former Congressional Delegate for Guam, retired President of the University of Guam, and the current Chairman of the Pacific Center for Island Security, provided a perspective shaped by his extensive background and lifelong public service.
- Dr. Roseann Jones, Dean and Professor of Economics of the School of Business & Public Administration at the University of Guam, gave us an economic perspective on how federal policies affect the island.
- Attorney Vincent Camacho, a Board Member of the Guam Chamber of Commerce and the Managing Principal of Camacho Calvo Law Group, discussed implications for local business and employment.
- Attorney Daniel Somerfleck, Executive Director of Guam Legal Services, spoke about the implications of federal policy on access to legal services.
- Jamela Santos, MSW, LPC, President of the National Association of Social Workers - Guam Chapter, addressed the impact on social services and community welfare.
- Attorney Harry Elliott, IV, Region Environmental, International Law, and Real-Estate Counsel for Joint Region Marianas and Counsel for Joint Task Force–Micronesia, offered insights from the Department of Defense.

The forum was moderated by:

- Attorney Alicia Limtiaco, former U.S. Attorney for the Districts of Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, former Attorney General of Guam, and current Regulation Counsel with the Supreme Court of Guam.
- Attorney Erica Eschbach, Staff Attorney with the Supreme Court of Guam.



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The 2025 Law Month Forum provided a platform for insightful discussions on the unique challenges faced by Guam as an unincorporated territory of the United States. The distinguished panel and moderators brought diverse perspectives, highlighting the impact of federal policies on various aspects of life in Guam. As we reflect on “The Constitution’s Promise: Out of Many, One,” it is crucial to continue these conversations and advocate for policies that address the specific needs and circumstances of our community. Through unity and informed dialogue, we can work towards a more equitable future for all residents of Guam.

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