

**I MINA'TRENTAI SAIS NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
RESOLUTIONS**

Resolution No.	Sponsor	Title	Date Intro	Date of Presentation	Date Adopted	Date Referred	Referred to	PUBLIC HEARING DATE	DATE COMMITTEE REPORT FILED	NOTES
197-36 (LS)	Therese M. Terlaje Telo T. Taitague Frank F. Blas Jr. Amanda L. Shelton James C. Moylan Tina Rose Muña Barnes Mary Camacho Torres V. Anthony Ada Christopher M. Duenas Sabina Flores Perez Jose "Pedro" Terlaje Joe S. San Agustin Joanne M. Brown Clynton E. Ridgell Telena Cruz Nelson	Relative to commending Irene Perez Ploke Sgambelluri for her tireless work as an advocate for Guåhan's war claims and recognizing her life as a CHamoru survivor of World War II.	10/25/21 8:15 a.m.	11/5/2021 3:30 p.m.						

**I MINA'TRENTAI SAIS NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN
2021 (FIRST) Regular Session**


Resolution No. 197-36 (LS)

Introduced by:

Therese M. Terlaje 


Telo T. Taitague 


Frank F. Blas Jr. 

Amanda L. Shelton 

James C. Moylan 


Tina Rose Muña Barnes 

Mary Camacho Torres 

V. Anthony Ada 

Christopher M. Duenas 

Sabina Flores Perez 

Jose "Pedo" Terlaje 

Joe S. San Agustin 

Joanne M. Brown 

Clynton E. Ridgett 

Telena Cruz Nelson 

Relative to commending Irene Perez Ploke Sgambelluri for her tireless work as an advocate for Guåhan's war claims and recognizing her life as a CHamoru survivor of World War II.

1 **BE IT RESOLVED BY I MINA'TRENTAI SAIS NA LIHESLATURAN**
2 **GUÅHAN:**

3 **WHEREAS**, at the beginning of World War II, over 79 years ago, Irene
4 Perez Ploke Sgambelluri, was 10 years old, living in Agat with her father †John
5 Francis Ploke, a U.S. Navy Pharmacist, mother †Beatrice Taitano Perez Ploke,

1 and her four siblings; †Daniel Ploke, †Pauline Ploke Peterson, †Genevieve
2 Ploke Snow, †John Francis Ploke Jr.; and

3 **WHEREAS**, in a time when Irene should have been enjoying her
4 childhood, instead, she was experiencing the horrors of war. At the start of the
5 war, she and her family came close to losing their lives, had her father not
6 surrendered. Her father, however, selflessly surrendered sparing the family
7 (while attempting to comfort a sobbing Irene by clenching her hand). Her father
8 was then sent to *Zentsuji Prisoner of War Camp* in Osaka, where he spent the
9 duration of the war providing medical care to fellow prisoners, and journaling
10 when prisoners entered the camp and when they perished. Irene did not think
11 she would see her father again. Left behind, she spent the war foraging for food
12 and enduring hard labor and beatings at the hands of the Japanese; and

13 **WHEREAS**, Irene fought tirelessly to keep the island's painful past alive
14 through public speaking engagements and attending World War II
15 remembrance ceremonies. She served as a guest speaker at the *Manenngon*
16 Memorial Ceremony marking Guam's 68th Liberation Day, Guam's 71st
17 Liberation Day Grand Ceremony, laying a wreath at Arlington Cemetery's Tomb
18 of the Unknown Soldier in Commemoration of the 74th Anniversary of the
19 Liberation of Guam and the Marianas, marking the first time in history that a
20 civilian participated in the ceremony. Irene also served as guest speaker at the
21 Guam Museum's 75th Liberation Lecture Series and at the 76th Liberation
22 Ceremony. In addition to this, she has given dozens of media interviews and
23 talks at schools; and

24 **WHEREAS**, Irene has fought tirelessly to make war reparations not just a
25 local issue but a national one. She has often stated that war reparations are not
26 simply about monetary gain, but rather, a vital step to ensuring the suffering of
27 the Guamanian people will not be buried with the past. Over the years, she has

1 engaged in a multitude of conversations with local legislators to share these
2 sentiments; and

3 **WHEREAS**, Irene’s advocacy brought her to Washington, D.C. in 2018
4 where she had the ear of one of President Donald J. Trump’s top cabinet
5 members, Mr. Douglas Hoelscher, Deputy Assistant to the President and White
6 House Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, developing a friendship with Mr.
7 Hoelscher, whom she exchanged many correspondences and engaged in
8 many phone conversations. She then educated members of the White House
9 about Guam’s unique past and the vital importance of war reparations; and

10 **WHEREAS**, Irene received the validation she had been praying for when
11 she received a letter from President Trump, recognizing the bravery of her
12 military father, John Francis Ploke, and the Guamanian people. This would lead
13 to President Trump signing H.R. 1365, which enabled the Treasury to correct
14 prior technical errors and release funding. Mr. Hoelscher has publicly stated
15 that Irene was the first person the White House contacted after the bill was
16 signed into law. President Trump then gifted Irene the pen he used to sign that
17 legislation; and

18 **WHEREAS**, in addition to her political activism on both national and local
19 fronts, Irene has also been known to assist survivors in applying for war
20 reparations. Her home phone served as a survivors’ “hotline”. Local radio shows
21 regularly give out Irene’s number, as they are aware she is always willing to
22 help her fellow war survivors; and

23 **WHEREAS**, Irene has often said that she has found peace and
24 forgiveness through advocacy and testimony. She has also found comfort in her
25 supportive husband the late +Senator Rafael Sgambelluri, children; Darleen,
26 +Jennifer, Pamela and Ralph, and +John, grandchildren and great
27 grandchildren. Today, at 90 years old, Irene’s sole wish is that her story and the

1 story of all those Guamanians who suffered and died during World War II will
2 not be buried with the past; and

3 **WHEREAS**, *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* acknowledges and celebrates, Irene
4 Perez Ploke Sgambelluri for her tireless work in advocating for war claims owed
5 to Guam, and ensuring that those who suffered as a result of the war are
6 remembered; and

7 **WHEREAS**, it is a long-standing tradition of *I Liheslaturan Guåhan* to
8 commend and honor members of our community, such as Irene Perez Ploke
9 Sgambelluri, whose diligent service has greatly contributed to the well-being of
10 our community; now, therefore, be it

11 **RESOLVED**, that *I Mina'trentai Sais Na Liheslaturan Guåhan* does
12 hereby, on behalf of the people of Guam, commend and recognize Irene Perez
13 Ploke Sgambelluri for her tireless work as an advocate for Guåhan's war claims
14 and her life as a CHamoru survivor of World War II.; and be it further

15 **RESOLVED**, that the Speaker certify, and the Legislative Secretary attest
16 to, the adoption hereof, and that copies of the same be thereafter transmitted
17 to Irene Perez Ploke Sgambelluri; and to the Honorable Lourdes A. Leon
18 Guerrero, *I Maga'hågan Guåhan*.

DULY AND REGULARLY ADOPTED BY *I MINA'TRENTAI SAIS NA LIHESLATURAN GUÅHAN* ON THE 5th DAY OF NOVEMBER 2021.

THERESE M. TERLAJE
Speaker

AMANDA L. SHELTON
Legislative Secretary