

Lawmaker says military announcement 'very alarming'

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50 Comments

REPRESENTATIVE Sheila Babauta finds "very alarming" the recent announcement of the U.S. Department of the Navy.

On Thursday evening, the Navy said it has opted for Alternative 2, which allows it to continue training within the Marianas.

Alternative 2, the Navy stated, "will allow the Navy, other U.S. military services, and the U.S. Coast Guard to fully meet current and future training and testing requirements."

The Navy said it made its final decision after taking into consideration its strategic and operational needs, as well as the potential impacts the training and testing activities may have on human, natural, and cultural environments.

It said it has also taken into consideration comments from elected officials, government agencies, organizations, and the public.

The Navy said it is "committed to being a good steward of the environment and will continue to implement mitigation measures to avoid or reduce potential environmental impacts from training and testing."

It added that it will continue to work with its valued partners in the CNMI and Guam to share information and address concerns.

Babauta is one of the main sponsors of House Joint Resolution 21-8, which urges Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to oppose an increase in "destructive military presence" in the Commonwealth.

The joint resolution is currently with the House Committee on Federal and Foreign Affairs.

"I am just alarmed," Babauta said on Friday. "It is very alarming. I am concerned. It is frustrating. This process hasn't been easy. The communication lines were not as easily accessible as they claim."

She added, "The harm and irreversible damage to our environment is really my main concern because that, at the end of the day, will impact our sustainability as a people here in the Marianas."

Isa Arriola of Our Common Wealth 670, which supports H.J.R. 21-8, for her part, said, "I'm sifting through the document now to see that it's the most extreme alternative. It's really disconcerting."

"Just looking over what they're considering and what they plan to do now, it's more fleet exercises, more unit level activities that they [say] may come up as a result of emerging world events that require more readiness on their part," she said. "What that even means is something we're trying to see if we need to sift through as a group."

Arriola said a reoccurring issue has been trying to put these "long technical documents" into layman's terms.

"The other disconcerting portion is that they're having more anti-submarine warfare exercises. They're talking about a 50% increase in unit level events, [including surface]-to-air exercises. We have no clue how that's going to impact us for generations to come."

Arriola said the Navy's final decision would also allow for other training by other military services in CNMI waters.

"Those exercises, again, are very disconcerting from the environmental side. A lot of it seems very up in the air," she said.

Rep. Babauta and Arriola said they will continue to reach out to the House Committee on Federal and Foreign Affairs Chairman Luis John Castro, as well as the Bureau of Military Affairs director Glenna Reyes to "see how we can all work together to really communicate our serious concerns to the Navy."

"We understand that comments were received from the community, but as you can see, in the record of decision, the Navy's response was almost a blatant disregard for our extreme worries for our environment," said Babauta.

"How can you even deny the harm and ignore what detrimental effect [this] will have on our environment, our waters, our air in restricting the airspace and the sea space? How will that impact our fishermen or fisherwomen? How will that impact commerce, travel, [and] mobility for us native people and visitors? It's a lot to take in."

She added, "Understanding is really key. We need to help one another understand what this means for the Commonwealth. There are thousands of pages that have been amended [and] terminology that has been changed, and so it's time, really, for us to come together."

Arriola said in terms of regulatory language, the record of decision, or ROD, from a military standpoint, forecloses conversations about the environment.

However, she said, Our Common Wealth 670 sees this as "an opportunity to open more discussion."

"There were really excellent comments that were submitted by the public, and I think we deserve better answers," she said.

"That's our next step: mobilizing the public, creating education, creating more awareness, despite the fact that this might be a record of decision... It can be the beginning of further conversation."

Babauta and Arriola encourage the general public to follow Our Common Wealth 670 on Facebook for more information and updates regarding this matter.

Babauta said members of the public should reach out to their leaders.

"Let them know that this is something that is important to you. I think that we, as a community, really need to stay on top of this topic because it has an overall impact on our everyday lives," she said.

"This will impact tourism, commerce, our quality of life in general, our health and our welfare as a community. The sense of urgency is there."

What do you think?

12 Responses

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- Funny
- Love
- Surprised
- Angry
- Sad

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Name



CNMI Lawyer · a day ago

Environmentalists, hold your fire!

This is **not** about the CJMT, with its potential destructive live-fire bombardment of Pagan and Tinian.

As explained by several commenters below, this is about military use of the open ocean, and FDM bombing.

I have been a life member of the Sierra Club for almost four decades.

This proposal indeed is not optimal for the environment. But if we spin our wheels and wildly oppose every military expansion, including ones such as these which are wholly consistent with the Covenant, we will squander and lose credibility and public support when it comes time to **unite** as a community and stand up in defense of Tinian and Pagan.

Pick your battles wisely!

3 ^ | v · [Reply](#) · [Share](#)



Tinalakattne Yantitiyas · a day ago



Just to be clear, I am a Veteran and for sure not anti-USMIL and would gladly serve all over again.. But, USMIL already has Tinian and Farallon de Medinilla (FDM). For CNMI, that is a big sacrifice for we locals do not have much to spare and we must think of our children's future. Love-love to be the entire provider for those that fight for our continued democracy but unfortunately; we are limited. So NO, no to Pagan to be used by USMIL or any other islands. Enough already. And saying so is not being disrespectful and not that we are being ungrateful or even un-patriotic. None of that at all. USMIL has left some bad reputation on certain bases (former and current). Yes, its great to have as it generates some economical benefits but at same token leave a tainted environment behind which hurts generations upon generations of CNMI's children. Again, land will continue to give as long as you take care of it. USMIL does not have the best track record in these types of dealing. Biba CNMI!

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



tarklejr → Tinalakattne Yantitiyas • a day ago

You said it very well. I was on Pagan twice and I love the island. I also say NO to the military use of it. They may make needed improvements, but what will be the cost? Maybe they can make the improvements (harbor, airfield, roads) WITHOUT messing up the rest of it - but they must PROVE it first.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Peter J. Perez • 2 days ago • edited

Kind of tiresome seeing the usual posts by ignorant mainland Americans who don't understand the issues, think that bombing ranges are the same as military bases, don't know that the Marines stranded on Guam are not a forward fighting force because they have no transport to a conflict, don't know that the US Military already has adequate training in place for 1.2 million servicepeople and don't need to take and destroy more islands just to train the 4,800 Marines closer to Guam where they are stranded, that don't know about the U.S. Navy's record of decades of abuse of the people of the Pacific, exposing us to radiation, chemicals and ordnance, poisoning our land, seas, water and children, nor that new bombing ranges in the CNMI deter no one since they are just practice ranges with no attack capacity, that what the Navy is doing is literally destroying our community, that there is no money to be made in bombing ranges - just money spent on bombs and weapons purchased from the states, that the Federal funds that the CNMI gets are the result of a negotiation and signed agreement between the Northern Marianas and the USA, that don't know what the Monroe Doctrine is, nor what the Guano Act is, nor what the Jones Act is and how these effect the CNMI, nor why the people of the Pacific under the American flag are not allowed to vote and have a representative in Washington with no vote. No, they are just ignorant loudmouths who always show up saying the same lame things about ours being an ungrateful community that lives on

[see more](#)

1 ^ | v 2 • Reply • Share ›



tarklejr → Peter J. Perez • a day ago

Peter, Sorry to say, I think you finally "lost it". The above commentary only proves that you have become exactly what you preach against. I'll wager my thirty plus years of service to the CNMI against your years in California any time. I knew your dad (at the paper) - a wonderful man who shared all our dreams for the CNMI - a lot of those "dreams" that most likely would have made the CNMI a better place never materialized, at least in part, because of the many misleading tirades foisted upon the public by yourself, Cinta and a SMALL group (less than 5) very loud and prolific nay-sayers to almost everything - ESPECIALLY if it involved in any way anyone from "outside" the CNMI even if they were living "inside" the CNMI and no matter the science, the facts, the advantages IF those people or the project didn't "fit" or somehow slighted your own narrow vision of how the CNMI "should be" even though you spent so very little of your own life there.

^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



MP670 → Peter J. Perez • a day ago • edited

Spot on. Most of these bloggers here should divert their attention to all the social ills in their backyard in the states - there are plenty.

^ | v 2 • Reply • Share ›



tarklejr → MP670 • a day ago

And there are PLENTY of "bloggers" in the states that raise their voices - and ACTIONS (sometimes unfortunately so). But I make comments here because I DO love the islands of the CNMI - ALL of them, but especially Tinian as I lived and worked there for MANY years. I don't want to see "bad" things happen to any of them, but let's not get all huhu over speculation and extremist views colored by personal bias. The military can be a great help in many ways - but let's just keep a watchful eye on them at the same time.

1 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



PunisherTimesTwo • 2 days ago

Would you prefer to become a Chinese citizen? That would be MORE alarming. You would be out of a job because no one would be allowed to vote!

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



The Epistemologist → PunisherTimesTwo • 2 days ago

and her opinion doesnt count~! these UNICORNS boy...how messed up is the education system..dang~!

2 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



John Ulrich • 2 days ago • edited



“ The Navy said it is "committed to being a good steward of the environment”

Look how the navy took care of these islands: does it make you feel safer deep down?

<https://youtu.be/d1up-TRMxdo>

<https://youtu.be/eCtxSIH0DK0>

<https://youtu.be/3wxWNAM8Cso>

<https://youtu.be/MMDuASm6sDs>

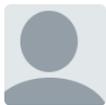
<https://youtu.be/mP3bcPvglG8>

No ot weapons of mass destruction! Take your bombs and your imminent domains.

#defundthegov

#Bota Bitcoin

^ | v 3 · Reply · Share ›



Johnny B. Good · 2 days ago

No need for alarm. You know the CCP is flexing its muscle close by so the US is flexing too. Besides, and you've probably heard this before, the military of today is unlike that of the past in dealing with environmental issues. With a lagging tourism economy, one would think that defense spending locally expands economic diversification.

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



The Epistemologist → Johnny B. Good · 2 days ago · edited

YOU THINK...BOTH THOSE SO-CALLED INTELLIGENT PEOPLE WENT TO LIBERAL, RAINBOW AND UNICORN- MINDED SCHOOLS ON THE WEST COAST...BUT, THEY CAN'T EVEN READ THE DANG PAPERWORK..WHAT A WASTE OF SCHOLARSHIP...

2 ^ | v 1 · Reply · Share ›



MarineJay → Johnny B. Good · 2 days ago · edited

Tinian got 20 million recently from the Air Force. Dont let these fake outraged local "environmentalists" with ties to China fool you. They are just playing du*b after the fact.

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



Juan Pancho → MarineJay · a day ago

military is socialism for the big corps who send jarheads to fight in fake wars like Iraq!

^ | v 2 · Reply · Share ›



Juan Pancho → MarineJay • a day ago

are you the new dufus Rump speaker on the block?

^ | v 2 • Reply • Share ›



The Epistemologist → MarineJay • 2 days ago • edited

AND, WHOSE FUNDING THEIR LITTLE PINK W/ POCKADOTS FANTASY...STOPPING THE DoD...get real..sinophiles with some chicnese paymaster...they wasn't talking this smack while drinking at jonnys a few years back..what changed...who put those dollars in their pockets and batteries in their backs? ummmmm?

2 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



The Epistemologist • 2 days ago • edited

they're concerned about a few trees, NOT CHINA TAKING OVER THE ISLANDS...OPPS~! THE CHINESE HAS ALREADY TAKEN OVER THE ISLANDS...MY BAD~! HAHAHAHAHAHAHAH~!

3 ^ | v 2 • Reply • Share ›



The Epistemologist • 2 days ago • edited

they even admit, that they cant comprehend what is wrtten...hahahahahahaha~! laymans terms...opps, grade school is finished already~! and these are the elected officials mind you..hahahahahahaha~!

2 ^ | v 2 • Reply • Share ›



The Epistemologist • 2 days ago • edited

commonwealth 670..where were you when tan corp made a deal with gov. fitial to take over that island for upscale chinese toruism.....against, the same people who gave you a passport, education, gates foundation scholarship...what ingrates~!

3 ^ | v 2 • Reply • Share ›



MarineJay → The Epistemologist • 2 days ago

Chinese bots keep disliking your comments. Probably the same Chinese boys that insult other posters on youtube on the IPI videos.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



The Epistemologist → MarineJay • 2 days ago • edited

BRAH, ITS THE SINOPHILES, THE PAID-OFF CHINESE LOVERS, AND THE MENTALLY ENSLAVED...THEY HATE AMERICA, POINT BLank, because they can't keep their little scam, corruption bs up...with law-abiding citizery around all the time...

2 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



alkanitan • 2 days ago • edited



elkapitan · 2 days ago · edited

The question remains as with comments from before (even as when there was a link posted in the past article) IS just what areas and exactly how much of what activities are involved such as does this mean that there will be live fire in areas that in the past have not been the case. Such as on Tinian and also on Pagan.

Ex;Will also there be beach landings on Tinian (or Pagan) using amphibian vehicles (or other units) that will tear up the coral etc.

Any complaints such as this by Sheila Babauta and others is at this point only speculation as to any possible harm to which she speaks without actually knowing exactly what this "Alternative 2" actually is and at what "new" locations this may encompass.

In the past link that was posted did not spell out much of anything and no details were given only many reference that ended up as another reference etc. that would end up in a much time consuming research in attempts to find out details on just what will be going on.

Best these elected use their position to find out exactly what "Alternative 2" means and what it entails before making such non specific comments about additional damages caused by the US military.

3 ^ | v · Reply · Share ›



MP670x → elkapitan · 2 days ago · edited

Did you read the article at all? That's exactly what the article is about: they're trying to find out what exactly the military is planning to do! All they're getting is the run around and military technical jargon in order to dissuade them from this whole thing.

3 ^ | v 2 · Reply · Share ›



The Epistemologist → MP670x · 2 days ago

its a conspiracy...but we love our bluepassports...and free education, free this and that..and we cant even read...but, we have a good family name so elect us dimwits...hahahahahaha~! jokes..all of em'~!

2 ^ | v 3 · Reply · Share ›



MP670 → The Epistemologist · a day ago

Jokes on you. Your parasites in the states are worse than anything you have to say about anyone.

^ | v · Reply · Share ›



The Epistemologist → MP670 · a day ago · edited

says, who... "you"hahahahahaha~! but you sure did love being there with them...

^ | v 2 · Reply · Share ›



The Epistemologist → elkapitan • 2 days ago

HERE YOU GO:>>> <https://mitt-eis.com/>

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



The Epistemologist → elkapitan • 2 days ago

AT ISSUE IS: MORE DEPT OF DEFENSE MEANS=LESS CORRUPTION+MORE QUALIFIED AMERICAN CITIZENS ON ISLANDS...THATS' THE REAL WORRY FOR THESE FOLKS...OVERSIGHT~!

5 ^ | v 2 • Reply • Share ›



MP670x → The Epistemologist • 2 days ago • edited

Babauta has more integrity than you can handle.

3 ^ | v 4 • Reply • Share ›



Juan Pancho → MP670x • a day ago

because hes a wife beater

^ | v 4 • Reply • Share ›



MP670 → Juan Pancho • a day ago • edited

Sheila Babauta

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Peter J. Perez • 2 days ago • edited

Piece by piece, the Navy is taking control of the CNMI. Five projects, each of which takes huge areas away for destructive purposes. MERC - 500,000 sq nautical miles of open ocean around the Marianas. MITT - increases this to nearly 1 million square nautical miles and over 300% increase in bombing of FDM. DIVERT - use of Tinian for air support of live fire training. These projects are implemented and continue to expand. Coming soon are CJMT - all of Pagan for the highest level live fire including aerial bombardment and shelling from ships, and 2/3 of Tinian for the 2nd highest level including howitzers, tanks, amphibious landings, missiles, mortars, rockets and machine guns grenades, rifles and small arms, MARINES RELOCATION (to GUam) - Bulldozing of huge tracks of primary forest and ancient village sites for new live-fire ranges and a new military base for Marines pushed out of Okinawa in huge part due to outrage over rapes of civilians.

If we cannot stop them, we stand to lose not only Pagan and Tinian fall, but access to Alamagan and Agrigan will be severely restricted, access to fisheries will also be severely limited, our tourist industry will be impacted as our reputation changes from Micronesian paradise to bombing range islands. The inevitable progression is a destroyed economy and the relocation of the population to the states as jobs and quality of life dry up.

We're way past time to stand up to the Navy. We're late to the fight. But it is not too late

to reverse this trend. We can stop it if we start taking action and stop sitting around deluding ourselves that our islands are not under attack by the US Navy.

^ | v 3 • Reply • Share ›



The Epistemologist → Peter J. Perez • 2 days ago

sorry, brah...THESE ISLAND REPS BEEN SHOT...save it~~!@!

2 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



PunisherTimesTwo → Peter J. Perez • 2 days ago

Stop deluding yourself that you even have half a chance against the U.S. military. Why don't you start by returning the millions the U.S. hands over to Saipan every year.

1 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



The Epistemologist → PunisherTimesTwo • 2 days ago

BAM~! MIC DROP~!@!-, as he slowly walks off stage , right...places his Raybans squarely on his ears, and lights a real one...

2 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



This comment was deleted.



The Epistemologist → Guest • 2 days ago

even better, they didnt say a word while ipi was paying off their inlaws, family and friends...but, let uncle sam and the long arm of the law...namely federal come round, and all hades busts open, with all this legal funding...who is giving them money??/ lets follow the cash...shall we.? they're 501 3c, so they have to show where the cash comes from , right?

^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



wangdangdoodle → Peter J. Perez • 2 days ago

Perhaps the US should just pull out and let you "stand up" to the Chinese People's Liberation Army all by yourselves. **You** might not be interested in them but **they** are definitely interested in you.

4 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



John Doe → Peter J. Perez • 2 days ago • edited

All the billions that CNMI got over the years for nothing? Take, take and nothing to give is what we're good for. Shame on you people! Or perhaps, you're feeling the heat over China and U.S. and, afraid of being bomb? Live with it...they made that choice for you and me by our forefathers. Let's honor their commitment.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



This comment was deleted.



The Epistemologist → Guest • 2 days ago

bam~! put your mouth, hands, brain and moeny... where your fake concern is...

^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



MP670x → Guest • 2 days ago

How do you know she hasn't already done so? She says in the article that communicating with them has been difficult. How about offer your services if you have anything better than a web link!

2 ^ | v 3 • Reply • Share ›



The Epistemologist → MP670x • 2 days ago

S.B, has a GATES FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP. why dont you take a few moments to research how much BLOOD BILL GATES HAS ON HIS HANDS...welcome to the rabbithole...<https://thelogicalindian.com/fact-c...>

^ | v 3 • Reply • Share ›



The Epistemologist → MP670x • 2 days ago • edited

sorry, no freebies for tree-hugger-nazifeminist...no antifa-eco-warriors ..not allowed...because, they HATE CAPITALISM, right?

^ | v 3 • Reply • Share ›



This comment was deleted.



MP670 → Guest • a day ago

If you need all that information, ask her yourself. She doesn't have to state anything to satisfy your useless requirements.

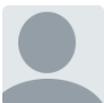
1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



The Epistemologist → Guest • 2 days ago

Mental "Hulk Smash"...too much logic...

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



tarklejr • 2 days ago

"Arriola said a reoccurring issue has been trying to put these "long technical documents" into layman's terms."

No, actually, you're trying to put them into YOUR terms. You make many alarmist staements as if you have a crystal ball that "sees" your version of future events. And, you're trying your darndest to change the wording to suit your views that "all the military

does is destroy".

That's just not so and looking back at long-gone events (the way is USED to be done) and claiming they will re-occur in today's world is just nuts. It appears the military of today is quite aware of environmental concerns and just because they don't agree with your extremist views is no reason to assume they're wrong and you're right.

4 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share ›



Peter J. Perez → tarklejr • a day ago

"alarmist" and "extremist"?

Suggestion: Maybe play a little less bingo there in Florida (where you retired and will not be personally harmed by the Navy's bombing actions that you support) and actually read the EIS. It is indeed alarming and extreme.

^ | v 2 • Reply • Share ›



tarklejr → Peter J. Perez • a day ago

Peter, you've always been "alarmed" and "extreme" ever since we sparred over Pagan.. and you never seem to address the problems head on; just sideways and off-point by allowing a great degree of your attacks to be personal against the author; unable to cite pertinent (current) facts while relying heavily on that faulty crystal ball you keep pulling out.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

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