



March 27, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

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Dear Mr. President:

We, the duly elected Governors of the Territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, request to meet with you at your earliest convenience. We are alarmed and concerned over the prospect of expanding potential fishery closures through designating a marine sanctuary within the full U.S. economic exclusive zones (EEZs) of the Pacific Remote Island Areas which already include a Marine National Monument.

Further closures of waters around U.S. Pacific Islands would be devastating to the local tuna economy of American Samoa and deprive our Pacific Territories of economic development opportunities into the future. Fisheries are the leading source of economic development that binds us to our neighboring Pacific Island nations. Further closures would be in direct conflict with your Administration's Indo-Pacific Economic Framework and be counter to principles of Equity and Environmental Justice as outlined in Executive Orders 13984 and 14008. Our already disadvantaged and marginalized communities carry a disproportionate burden for meeting national conservation goals. We do not believe taking further action to fully close waters around the Pacific Remote Island Areas are necessary to fulfill the aspirations of your 'America the Beautiful' Initiative.

Thank you for taking time to have informal discussions earlier this year when you hosted us for dinner at the White House. We request further consultation on this matter before any decision is made, because our communities and constituents inhabit islands in proximity to the Pacific Remote Island Areas. Please have your staff reach out to us and arrange a meeting, either in-person or virtual.

Sincerely,

Hon. Lemanu Peleti Mauga
Governor, American Samoa

Hon. Lourdes Leon Guerrero
Governor, Guam

Hon. Arnold Palacios
Governor, Commonwealth of the
Northern Mariana Islands