



Joint News Release

February 7, 2020, 3:30 p.m. (ChST)

Administration Denies Entry of Potentially-Infected Vessel

Honoring its commitment to keep the people of Guam safe, the Leon Guerrero-Tenorio Administration respectfully denied a request today from the U.S. State Department to accept entry of a cruise line vessel whose passengers may be infected with the 2019 novel coronavirus.

The vessel in question is the MS Westerdam, a British-American private cruise vessel currently housing 1,455 guests as well as 802 crew members. On February 1, 2020, the vessel docked in Hong Kong and boarded approximately 800 passengers. The vessel sought entry at two other ports but was denied given the potential risk of infection and the need for a large quarantine.

After consultation with Governor Lou Leon Guerrero, Acting Governor Joshua Tenorio denied the request made by the Under Secretary of State hours ago.

“While we feel for every soul on board the MS Westerdam, our obligation is to protect the people of Guam. Though Guam is prepared to deal with the potential implications of the coronavirus, few jurisdictions can screen, quarantine, or treat 1,400 patients at one time,” said Governor Leon Guerrero. **“We respect that Guam has a duty to the nation we love, but that duty cannot jeopardize the health and safety of our people.”**

Based on information from counterparts at the Center for Disease Control and the U.S. State Department, the vessel has enough food and fuel to sustain itself.

“We have made clear that we will use every tool available to us to protect our people and our border,” said Acting Governor Tenorio

To date, there are no confirmed cases of the coronavirus on Guam. The Administration will inform the public as new information becomes available.

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