

Former Guam Congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo Endorses Teri Helenese for Delegate

Madeleine Bordallo, who represented Guam in Congress for 16 years and now serves as the governor's Washington liaison, says Teri Helenese has the experience, credibility and relationships to represent the Virgin Islands effectively from her first day.

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Madeleine Bordallo.

Former Guam congresswoman Madeleine Bordallo has endorsed Teri Helenese for Delegate to Congress, citing Helenese's years of work in Washington, experience in national healthcare and homeland security, and relationships across the federal government as qualifications that would allow her to represent the Virgin Islands from her first day in office.

Bordallo, who represented Guam in Congress for 16 years and now serves as Washington liaison to Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero, announced her endorsement in a sponsored op-ed. She said she has worked alongside Helenese for years, with their offices located across the hall from each other in Washington.

The endorsement centers on what Bordallo described as Helenese's career-long effort to close the distance between the Virgin Islands and the federal government. Washington, D.C., is more than 1,600 miles from the territory, but Bordallo said the separation can feel significantly greater to families struggling to make ends meet.

She argued that decisions made in Washington eventually affect the daily lives of Virgin Islanders. A congressional vote can affect a retiree's pension, healthcare policy can determine whether a veteran receives a doctor's appointment, and an education initiative can influence whether a child sees a future as a scientist, engineer, doctor, skilled tradesperson or even a NASA employee.

Similarly, Bordallo said a disaster appropriation can determine whether a family is able to rebuild following a hurricane in the Virgin Islands or a typhoon in Guam.

"That is how Teri measures success: by whether Washington makes life better for the people of the Virgin Islands and the Territories."

Drawing from her own experience representing an island community, Bordallo said the distance between the territories and Washington is measured by more than geography. It also depends on whether families are heard, whether territorial priorities are understood and whether someone is prepared to turn federal decisions into opportunities at home.

Bordallo said that while the public often sees federal announcements, she has witnessed the work behind them, including long days, difficult negotiations and relationships developed over decades. Through that work, she said, Helenese has established a reputation for integrity, perseverance, credibility and results.

Helenese's experience in national healthcare and homeland security, combined with her years representing the Virgin Islands in Washington, has prepared her to understand and navigate the federal government, establish bipartisan partnerships and deliver for the people she serves, according to Bordallo.

Bordallo said, however, that Helenese's character and motivations impressed her more than her résumé. Regardless of the difficulty of a negotiation or significance of an outcome, she said Helenese returns to one central question:

"Is this good for the Virgin Islands and the Territories?"

Bordallo argued that Virgin Islands voters deserve more than campaign promises. She said they need a delegate whose work has already improved lives, earned trust in Washington and produced results before seeking elected office.

She said Helenese's reputation was not developed during the campaign but established over the course of her career.

"I have spent my career fighting to ensure Guam's voice is heard in Washington. After watching Teri Helenese do the same for the Virgin Islands, I have no doubt she is ready to serve you in

Congress on day one.”

Bordallo concluded by urging voters to support Helenese in the August 1 election.

“On August 1, send the woman who has already spent a lifetime bringing Washington closer to your kitchen table. Because when Washington gets closer, results come home.”

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