

Yet, the U.S. presence here is at risk. According to the 2020 decennial census the population of the Marianas declined by 12.2 percent since the 2010 census. This is the second largest decline among all states and non-state areas of our Nation over that 10-year period.

This population erosion—and the loss of economic viability that results—occurs against the backdrop of increased competition with China in the Western Pacific, a time when the United States needs to be strengthening our position in the region, not shrinking in significance.

There are many reasons why people are leaving the Marianas. There are better public services and greater economic opportunity in the mainland United States. The anxiety stemming from the repeated and hyperdestructive typhoons associated with accelerating climate change also factors in the decision to leave. I refer Members to the article “People are fleeing Puerto Rico, Guam and every other U.S. territory. What gives?” in the Washington Post edition of September 23, 2022, for a discussion of population loss in all the U.S. insular areas. The article, “Perfect Storm. When is it time to abandon a place to climate change?” in *Harpers Magazine’s* October 2022 edition tracks the decision of one family in the Marianas to leave their home to escape the impacts of climate change.

Population decline, whether in the islands or in rural areas of the continental United States, creates a negative feedback loop. Reduced tax revenues limit the ability of local governments to improve services. And the reduced consumer base and labor pool throttle business. You can see this affect in the drop in Gross Domestic Product in the Marianas. GDP fell 11.2 percent in 2019, the most recent available data, a decline that would have been even more severe but for the COVID-related relief that Congress provided.

The Northern Mariana Islands Population Stabilization Act builds on several laws enacted during the Trump administration and on previous action by the House.

In the 116th Congress, we passed this same legislation by voice vote without dissent. It allows certain longterm foreign workers and investors already lawfully present in the islands to apply for permanent status in the Marianas-only. Previously, President Trump had approved USPL 115–218, defining these long-term workers, and signed USPL 116–24, creating the Marianas-only resident status.

The Marianas-only resident status that President Trump sanctioned provides no eligibility for public assistance. It bars entry into any other part of the United States except for purpose of transit through Guam to a non-U.S. destination. The status President Trump approved is revocable in case of communicable disease, criminal conviction, or terrorist activity.

Making this Marianas-only status available simply encourages continued residence and employment by people already lawfully present and gainfully employed; and doing so would help to stabilize the population in our islands.

After the House approved the legislation I have introduced today in the 116th Congress, the Senate took no action. In the intervening years, the population eligible for Marianas-only status—which by definition cannot increase—has shrunk from 2,600 to 1,600, underscoring

the continuing flight and the urgent need for us to act.

In this time of heightened concern about spending, I do want to remind the House that the Congressional Budget Office determined in 2019 this legislation has negligible effect on direct spending. That assessment must remain the same in 2023, as the number of affected individuals has only declined.

I ask all Members to support this simple, straightforward response to the problem of population loss in the Marianas. It is not a total solution, but acknowledgement a problem exists and must be addressed.

I ask, too, that Members see the Northern Mariana Islands Population Stabilization Act as an important component of our larger national response to the continuing Chinese expansion occurring throughout the Pacific.

HONORING CHIEF MASTER
SERGEANT EVA M. APPIAH

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 26, 2023

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my former United States Air Force fellow, Eva M. Appiah, on her promotion to Chief Master Sergeant.

Born and raised in Ghana, Eva moved to the United States at 14 years of age, living and studying in Alabama before moving to Georgia for her university studies. She successfully graduated from Columbus State University with both her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees. Eva began her distinguished career in the Air Force Reserve in May 2002. She attended Basic Military Training and Materiel Management Apprentice training at Joint Base San Antonio Lackland, Texas, graduating in March 2003. Throughout her career, she has served in various capacities within the logistics community. Serving as a First Sergeant at Maxwell Air Force Base, she was the principal advisor to the Commander, and the liaison to other senior officers, noncommissioned officers, and base agencies where she was responsible for advising on personnel programs, ensuring welfare, morale, and readiness. In her most recent deployment, she served as the First Sergeant for the 746th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, 379th Air Expeditionary Wing Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar in support of Operation FREEDOM SENTINEL and INHERENT RESOLVE.

As the Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC) Enlisted Legislative Fellow and a treasured member of my team, Eva provided unparalleled support in managing the defense priorities of my office, advising me in these matters, and extending the essential perspective that a member of the armed services offers to those in Congress. As a member of the Defense Subcommittee on Appropriations, it was a privilege having Eva in my office in 2022. She is sharp, passionate, eager to assist, and a true patriot. My staff and I valued having her on the team, and we are proud to celebrate this important milestone with her.

Mr. Speaker, this is an impressive accomplishment. Chief Master Sergeant is the highest enlisted rank in the Air Force, and I hope Eva’s promotion is an inspiration for young women who are interested in a career in our

treasured Armed Forces. She has shown that with dedication, hard work, and perseverance, even the loftiest of dreams can be achieved.

It has been an honor to work with Chief Master Sergeant Eva M. Appiah, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the achievements of this outstanding individual on the occasion of her well-deserved promotion.

CELEBRATING DR. WILLIAM
“BILL” QUIRK, PHD

HON. ERIC SWALWELL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 26, 2023

Mr. SWALWELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize former California State Assemblymember Bill Quirk, who retired Wednesday, November 30, 2022, after 10 years serving our community in the California State Assembly.

Bill was born in Summit, New Jersey, and moved to the Bay Area when he was 15 years old. He received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering and Applied Physics in 1967 and a Ph.D. in Astrophysics in 1970 from Columbia University. He then moved back to California to work as a postdoctoral fellow at the California Institute of Technology.

Bill continued his work as a research scientist at NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies. In 1973, he supervised the first global three-dimensional model of the earth’s climate. Bill then moved to Hayward in 1978 and began his work at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, where he contributed his talents for 26 years. He specialized in foreign nuclear programs until his retirement in 2005. His expertise was vital in negotiating the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in 1996.

In 2004, Bill began his political career when he was elected to the Hayward City Council. During that time, he also served on the board of the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency and the Hayward Area Shoreline Planning Agency.

In 2012, Bill ran and was elected to represent California’s 20th Assembly District and was re-elected 4 times before announcing his retirement. During his tenure, he served on the Assembly Rules Committee, Appropriations Committee, Public Utilities and Commerce Committee, Agriculture Committee, Public Safety Committee, and chaired the Environmental Safety and Toxic Materials Committee. Bill and his team prioritized legislation that addressed issues related to energy, climate change, transportation, and public safety. He helped pass numerous critical bills, including one that made it easier to request restraining orders to prevent repeated episodes of domestic violence, and another that increased resources for testing lead levels in drinking water.

For 10 years, Bill Quirk has diligently served our mutual constituents. His work has left a lasting impact on the community in Alameda County and California more broadly. I wish him well-deserved rest and relaxation with his wife, Laurel, children, Ian and Zephyr, and grandchildren, Rory and Emily, as he enters this new chapter.