

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1483 Could This be the Answer to Guam's Housing Woes?

Everybody knows that Guam has a housing crisis, one that elected leaders haven't dealt with, and isn't getting any better. One of the keys to the problem is the lack of workers who can build houses, condos, and apartments. I'm Jerry Roberts and what if I told you that you can now build a house by yourself, using unskilled labor? What if I told you that house would not be made of concrete? What if I told you it is rated to stand up to a Category 5 storm? Now, what if I said that you could build it for 20% cheaper than concrete? Are you interested yet? That's coming next on The Extra Point.

In a groundbreaking construction project, a team of unskilled laborers in Florida utilized an interlocking block system called Renco to build a 96-unit apartment building. They did this in under two months.

Renco is a Lego-like building system that uses recyclable combination of repurposed glass and plastic, calcite dust, and resin. Developed in Turkey and successfully used in over 100 projects since 2012, Renco has now gained approval for construction in the United States.

The apartment complex in Palm Springs, Florida, was built 20% faster and 20% cheaper compared to conventional methods. The builder, Coastal Construction, a South Florida-based general contractor, recognized the material's potential to withstand Florida's hurricanes.

It took 10 years to get the project approved, Despite facing bureaucratic obstacles, but the company persisted, conducting over 400 tests to ensure structural integrity, safety, and resilience against various environmental factors, including Category 5 storms.

What caught my eye is that Renco can be erected using untrained individuals to assemble the blocks with minimal effort.

Color-coded instructions give the assembly process, while a special adhesive and a mallet

secure the blocks together. The blocks come in various sizes and shapes, and can be easily handled by a single person.

The builder and architect emphasize Renco's potential for both high-end hotels, as well as residential housing of all kinds.

Coastal Construction has recently completed a production facility in Florida dedicated to manufacturing Renco blocks, with capacity to produce materials for 5,000 apartment units annually.

The company will collaborate with developers nationwide for a wide array of projects utilizing the innovative building system.

Any politician who thinks housing in Guam is an issue worth discussing, the product is Renco. Their website is: <https://renco-usa.com/>

This government should be following up every lead possible to find a way to build affordable housing, as this is a massive problem that will not improve without drastic, quick action.

Home ownership is a pipe dream for far too many people in Guam, with the average house beyond the reach of most people. They have no choice but to rent, and costs there are sky-high and going up.

Many people have given up on trying to make it here, and they've moved away to places that offer better jobs and a lower cost of living.

Renco may be new, but this isn't a new story. Directions magazine published what I believe was the first in-depth article on this issue, and that was maybe 17 years ago.

Numerous construction advances have been developed since then, yet our housing problem is the same as it was a generation ago. No, it's not the same...it's worse. The question we all should be asking is whether it will be another 17 years before a solution comes. (Con't.)

The website is: <https://renco-usa.com/>
Somebody in the current administration, or in the legislature, ought to be looking at their site and ringing their number this week, to learn about the product and to figure out if this Lego-like solution is a potential answer to our housing crisis.

If Renko is not the answer, then we should adopt a “no-stone-unturned” philosophy when it comes to housing.

If we don’t, things will only get even worse.

That’s the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3FM, the Ray Gibson Show, and First Hawaiian Bank, I’m Jerry Roberts.

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