



# UNITED FILIPINO COUNCIL OF HAWAII

P.O. BOX 498, Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0498

## TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HCR 22

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS  
March 20, 2008, 9 a.m. | Conference Room 309

Measure Title: PROCLAIMING THE MONTH OF JUNE 2008 AS FILIPINO  
VETERANS APPRECIATION MONTH.

To: Hon. Rep. Cindy Evans, Chair  
Hon. Rep. Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair;  
Hon. Members of the House Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

From: Bryan Andaya, President, United Filipino Council of Hawaii

My name is Bryan Andaya. I serve as president of the United Filipino Council of Hawaii and work as an attorney, specializing in labor law. Founded in 1959 to help Filipinos in Hawaii play a larger role in the State of Hawaii, the mission of the Council is to promote a sense of unity, friendship, camaraderie and mutual assistance among Filipinos in Hawaii while promoting and perpetuating the Filipino heritage and culture. Today, the Council consists of six Island Councils with jurisdiction over 100+ Filipino organizations and a combined membership of about 10,000 from every major island in the State.

The Council strongly supports this proposed legislation, which is in keeping with the passage of a resolution at our statewide annual convention in July 2006 to support local and national initiatives to restore parity and equity for Filipino WWII veterans' benefits that were rescinded by the U.S. government in 1946. This measure would ensure that the public be informed of the contributions to peace by our veterans, and the historical injustices that still wait to be addressed. The surviving Filipino veterans deserve no less for their loyalty and service to the U.S. government and America's diverse people. Thank you very much for hearing this bill. We appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Bryan P. Andaya, Esq.,  
President, United Filipino Council of Hawaii

\*2006-07

\*\*2007-08



# **CONGRESS OF VISAYAN ORGANIZATIONS**

## **Testimony in Support of HCR 22**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS  
March 20, 2008, 9 a.m.  
Conference Room 309

Measure Title: PROCLAIMING THE MONTH OF JUNE 2008 AS FILIPINO VETERANS APPRECIATION MONTH.

To:

Hon. Rep. Cindy Evans, Chair; Hon. Rep. Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair  
Hon. Members of the House Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

From:

Margarita Hopkins, President & Serafin Colmenares, Jr., Vice President  
Congress of Visayan Organizations

Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the House Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs Committee:

My name is Margarita Hopkins, President of the Congress of Visayan Organizations, which is a statewide umbrella organization that represents 22 unit organizations of Visayan ancestry.

I testify in strong support of this proposed legislation. With due diligence and bravery, our Filipino WWII veterans, in particular, have put themselves in harm's way to protect Americans, yet they are the only U.S. WWII allied troops to have their veterans benefits and rights rescinded by Congress in 1946. Please support this social justice issue by enacting this measure to proclaim June as Filipino Veterans Appreciation Month. It is our duty to advocate for the veterans, as they age, become more vulnerable, and are in dire need of family support. Lessons learned from righting a wrong is important for all global citizens to understand.

Thank you for hearing this important bill, and for this opportunity to testify. We appreciate your consideration to vote yes.

For the President:

Serafin Colmenares Jr.  
Executive Vice President  
Congress of Visayan Organizations

# Filipino American Citizens League

Jake Manegdeg, President  
P. O. Box 270126 \* Honolulu, Hawai'i 96827

## TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HCR 22

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

March 20, 2008, 9 a.m.

Conference Room 309

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PROCLAIMING THE MONTH OF JUNE 2008 AS  
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To:

Hon. Rep. Cindy Evans, Chair

Hon. Rep. Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair;

Hon. Members of the House Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

From:

Jake Manegdeg, President, Filipino American Citizens League

My name is Jake Manegdeg. As president of the Filipino American Citizens League, I am proud to submit our full and strong support of this bill. The Filipino American Citizens League was formed over ten years ago to contribute to the advancement of civil rights and social justice for minority groups, underserved populations, and vulnerable communities through education, advocacy, and social action.

June as Filipino Veterans Appreciation Month will bring justice to our Filipino World War II veterans. Please help us restore their human dignity with the passage of this bill. The American public will benefit from learning about the history and role of Filipino WWII veterans, so we will rectify, and not repeat historical injustices in the future. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please vote yes for its enactment.

Very Sincerely,

Jake Manegdeg, President  
Filipino American Citizens League



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To: Hon. Rep. Cindy Evans, Chair  
Hon. Rep. Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair  
Hon. Members of the House Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

From: Charlene Cuaresma, President, Filipino Coalition for Solidarity

My name is Charlene Cuaresma. As president of the Filipino Coalition for Solidarity, I am submitting testimony in strong support of this bill. Since its inception in 1990, the Coalition has represented more than 50 Filipino community leaders whose aim is to work for social justice issues to empower Filipinos to make socially responsible contributions to Hawai'i and our global neighbors through education, advocacy, and social action.

Instituting June as Filipino Veterans Appreciation Month, is aligned with the spirit of a resolution passed at the Coalition's General Assembly in September 2005 to advocate for full equity for Filipino WWII Veterans. It is imperative that society be informed with historical facts and lessons of social justice for Filipino veterans.

Your help to pass this bill would go a long way to bring judicial closure and dignity to our Filipino WWII Veterans who have been stripped of the rights and privileges afforded to all other allied troops who had fought on behalf of the United States in World War II. Thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of our Filipino WWII veterans. Please support this bill.

Respectfully,

Charlene Cuaresma  
President, Filipino Coalition for Solidarity



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To:

Hon. Rep. Cindy Evans, Chair

Hon. Rep. Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair;

Hon. Members of the House Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

From:

Amy Agbayani, Assistant Vice Chair, NaFFAA Region 12

3432 B1 Kalihi St., Honolulu, HI 96819

My name is Amy Agbayani. I serve as Vice Chair of the National Federation of Filipino American Associations Region 12, which represents the interests of Filipinos in Hawai'i, Guam, and the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands. NaFFAA Region 12 is an affiliate of the National NaFFAA, which is recognized by Washington policy-makers, private industry and national advocacy groups as the Voice of Filipinos and Filipino Americans throughout the United States. We are a non-partisan, non-profit national affiliation of more than five hundred Filipino-American institutions and umbrella organizations that span twelve regions throughout the continental United States and U.S. Pacific territories.

NaFFAA strongly supports this measure to proclaim June as Filipino Veterans Appreciation Month. NaFFAA continues to spearhead nationwide advocacy initiatives as more Filipino WWII veterans die without the rights and benefits accorded to other veterans, who served in the same war. We thank you for hearing this very important bill, and respectfully request your support



# *Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc.*

*... a non-profit organization with a mission to address the global nursing shortage by providing guidance and assistance for nursing colleagues to obtain their professional license in nursing.*

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## **Testimony in Strong Support of HCR 22**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS  
March 20, 2008, 9 a.m. | Conference Room 309**

**Measure Title: PROCLAIMING THE MONTH OF JUNE 2008 AS  
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**To: Hon. Rep. Cindy Evans, Chair  
Hon. Rep. Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair  
Hon. Members of the House Committee on Public Safety  
and Military Affairs**

**From: Beatrice Ramos-Razon, President  
Nursing, Advocates & Mentors, Inc.**

My name is Beatrice Ramos Razon. I am speaking as the founder and president of NAMI (Nursing, Advocates & Mentors, Inc.). NAMI's membership is comprised of over 75 nurses, allied health care professionals, and Filipino leaders, who are dedicated to improve the health of Hawaii's people by addressing the global issues of a worldwide nursing shortage through the training and mentoring of foreign medical graduate nurses to pass Hawaii's nurses board exams.

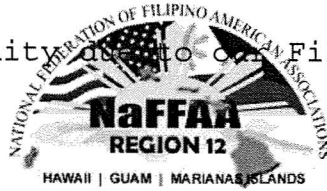
NAMI is in full support of this bill and all of its provisions to designate June as the Filipino WWII Veterans Appreciation Month. They have loyally served the American people, yet have endured and survived compounding life hardships, in addition to having their veterans' benefits rescinded by the U.S. Congress in 1946. This resolution helps to bring justice to their service.

We are grateful that your committee is hearing this bill, and respectfully ask for your support to enact it.

Sincerely,

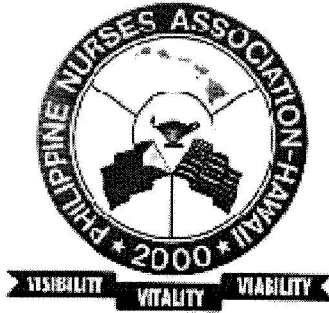
Beatrice Ramos Razon, RN, FACDA  
President, Nursing  
Advocates and Mentors, Inc.

of social justice and dignity due to our Filipino veterans and their families.



Sincerely,

Amy Agbayani, Ph.D., Assistant Vice Chair  
NaFFAA Region 12



Tessie Oculito, RN, President  
Philippine Nurses Association-Hawaii  
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## TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HCR 22

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To:

Hon. Rep. Cindy Evans, Chair; Hon. Rep. Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair  
Hon. Members of the House Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

From:

Tessie Oculito, RN, President  
Philippine Nurses Association-Hawaii

My name is Tessie Oculito. I am speaking as president of the Philippine Nurses Association-Hawaii, which has a membership of over 70 registered nurses. As a national affiliate of the Philippine Nurses Association of America, our shared mission is to uphold and foster the positive image and welfare of our constituent members; to promote professional excellence and contribute to significant outcomes to healthcare and society.

We strongly support this bill, which would enable Filipino veterans, especially our elderly Filipino WWII veterans, to be honored and recognized in education initiatives that will ensure that the Americans everywhere will be made aware of the injustices that still exist in the U.S. military toward those who have served America in good faith. Many nurses in our membership in Hawaii and across the U.S. have close ties to the veterans and to the military.

Thank you for hearing this proposal and for this opportunity to testify. Please vote yes.

Sincerely,

Tessie Oculito, RN  
President, Philippine Nurses Association - Hawaii