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## HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE UNITED STATES PRESIDENT AND SENATORS AND CONGRESS MEMBERS TO ENACT LEGISLATION TO EXPEDITE IMMIGRANT VISAS FOR FAMILY REUNIFICATION OF CERTAIN FILIPINO VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II.

1           WHEREAS, on December 8, 1941, thousands of Filipino men and  
2 women responded to President Roosevelt's call for help to  
3 preserve peace, democracy and freedom for America and the World;  
4 and

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6           WHEREAS, at that time, the Philippines were part of the  
7 Commonwealth of the United States of America and its citizens  
8 were nationals of the United States of America just like Hawaii  
9 was and American Samoa is today; and

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11           WHEREAS, during the dark days of World War II, nearly  
12 100,000 soldiers of the Philippine Commonwealth Army provided a  
13 ray of hope in the Pacific as they fought alongside United  
14 States and Allied forces for four long years to defend and  
15 reclaim the Philippine Islands from Japanese aggression; and

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17           WHEREAS, thousands more Filipinos joined U.S. Armed Forces  
18 immediately after the war and served in occupational duty  
19 throughout the Pacific Theater; and

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21           WHEREAS, valiant Filipino soldiers fought, died, and  
22 suffered in some of the bloodiest battles of World War II,  
23 defending beleaguered Bataan and Corregidor, and thousands of  
24 Filipino prisoners of war endured the infamous Bataan Death  
25 March and years of captivity; and

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27           WHEREAS, their many guerrilla actions slowed the Japanese  
28 takeover of the Western Pacific region and allowed U.S. forces  
29 the time to build and prepare for the allied counterattack on  
30 Japan; and

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1 WHEREAS, Filipino troops fought side-by-side with U.S.  
2 forces to secure their islands as the strategic base from which  
3 the final effort to defeat Japan was launched; and  
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5 WHEREAS, President William J. Clinton proclaimed  
6 October 20, 1996, as a day honoring the Filipino Veterans of  
7 World War II, recalling the courage, sacrifice, and loyalty of  
8 Filipino veterans of World War II in defense of democracy and  
9 liberty; and  
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11 WHEREAS, for decades after their heroic service under the  
12 command of their leaders and General Douglas MacArthur, these  
13 men and women of Filipino-American national heritage were denied  
14 the benefits and privileges provided to their American  
15 compatriots who fought side-by-side with them; and  
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17 WHEREAS, the Rescission Act of 1946 withdrew the U.S.  
18 veteran's status of Filipino World War II soldiers, thereby  
19 denying them the benefits and compensation received by their  
20 American counterparts and soldiers of more than sixty-six other  
21 U.S. allied countries, who were similarly inducted into the U.S.  
22 military; and  
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24 WHEREAS, the Rescission Act discriminated against  
25 Filipinos, making them the only national group singled out for  
26 denial of full U.S. veterans status and benefits, including  
27 rights of immigration and naturalization; and  
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29 WHEREAS, in recognition of the courage and loyalty of the  
30 Filipino troops who fought along side our armed forces in the  
31 Philippines during World War II, the United States Congress  
32 enacted legislation in 1990 that provided a waiver from certain  
33 immigration and naturalization requirements for those Filipino  
34 veterans; and  
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36 WHEREAS, as a result of that legislation, many of those  
37 Filipino veterans have become proud citizens and residents of  
38 this country; and  
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40 WHEREAS, because the 1990 legislation did not go far enough  
41 in extending those immigration and naturalization benefits to  
42 the children of those veterans, the result has been years long  
43 separations between the veterans and their children remaining in  
44 the Philippines awaiting the issuance of immigrant visas; and

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2 WHEREAS, on February 16, 2007, Senator Daniel Akaka, along  
3 with Senator Daniel Inouye and other members, introduced S. 671,  
4 the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act, in the United  
5 States Senate, to amend the Immigration and Naturalization Act  
6 to exempt children of certain Filipino World War II veterans  
7 from the numerical limitation on immigrant visas; and  
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9 WHEREAS, Rep. Mazie Hirono, Rep. Neil Abercrombie and other  
10 members have expressed an interest or intent to introduce or co-  
11 sponsor a House companion bill to S. 671 to facilitate family  
12 reunification of certain Filipino Veterans of WWII; and  
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14 WHEREAS, H.R. 1 the stimulus bill set the historical record  
15 straight by declaring that the Filipino Veterans' service during  
16 WWII is hereby recognized as active U.S. military service; now,  
17 therefore,  
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19 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
20 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session  
21 of 2009, that the United States President, the United States  
22 Senate, the United States House of Representatives are  
23 respectfully urged to support the passage of a federal law 1287  
24 to expedite family reunification for certain Filipino veterans  
25 of World War II; and  
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27 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
28 Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States,  
29 the Chair of the Judiciary Committee and the President of the  
30 United States Senate, the Chair of the Judiciary Committee and  
31 the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives,  
32 Hawaii's Congressional delegation and the Director of the Bureau  
33 of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.  
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OFFERED BY: *Pida C. C. C.*

MAR 18 2009

