
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING THE UNITED STATES PRESIDENT, SENATE, AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 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
4 World; 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

10
11 WHEREAS, during the dark days of World War II (WWII),
12 nearly 100,000 soldiers of the Philippine Commonwealth Army
13 provided a ray of hope in the Pacific as they fought alongside
14 United States and Allied forces for four long years to defend
15 and 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 WWII, defending
23 beleaguered Bataan and Corregidor, and thousands of Filipino
24 prisoners of war endured the infamous Bataan Death March and
25 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



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 WWII, recalling the courage, sacrifice, and loyalty of Filipino
8 veterans of WWII in defense of democracy and liberty; and
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10 WHEREAS, for decades after their heroic service under the
11 command of their leaders and General Douglas MacArthur, these
12 men and women of Filipino-American national heritage were denied
13 the benefits and privileges provided to their American
14 compatriots who fought side-by-side with them; and
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16 WHEREAS, the Rescission Act of 1946 withdrew the U.S.
17 veteran's status of Filipino WWII soldiers, thereby denying them
18 the benefits and compensation received by their American
19 counterparts and soldiers of more than 66 other U.S. allied
20 countries, who were similarly inducted into the U.S. military;
21 and
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23 WHEREAS, the Rescission Act discriminated against
24 Filipinos, making them the only national group singled out for
25 denial of full U.S. veterans status and benefits, including
26 rights of immigration and naturalization; and
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28 WHEREAS, in recognition of the courage and loyalty of the
29 Filipino troops who fought alongside our armed forces in the
30 Philippines during WWII, the United States Congress enacted
31 legislation in 1990 that provided a waiver from certain
32 immigration and naturalization requirements for those Filipino
33 veterans; and
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35 WHEREAS, as a result of that legislation, many of those
36 Filipino veterans have become proud citizens and residents of
37 this country; and
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39 WHEREAS, because the 1990 legislation did not go far enough
40 in extending those immigration and naturalization benefits to
41 the children of those veterans, the result has been years long
42 separations between the veterans and their children remaining in
43 the Philippines awaiting the issuance of immigrant visas; and



1 WHEREAS, on February 16, 2007, Senator Daniel Akaka, along
2 with Senator Daniel Inouye and other members, introduced S. 671,
3 the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act, in the United
4 States Senate, to amend the Immigration and Naturalization Act
5 to exempt children of certain Filipino WWII veterans from the
6 numerical limitation on immigrant visas; and
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8 WHEREAS, Representative Mazie Hirono, Representative Neil
9 Abercrombie, and other Representatives have expressed an
10 interest or intent to introduce or co-sponsor a House companion
11 bill to S. 671 to facilitate family reunification of certain
12 Filipino Veterans of WWII; and
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14 WHEREAS, H.R. 1, the stimulus bill, set the historical
15 record straight by declaring that the Filipino Veterans' service
16 during WWII is hereby recognized as active U.S. military
17 service; now, 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, and the
23 United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs are respectfully
24 urged to support the passage of federal law 1287 to expedite
25 family reunification for certain Filipino veterans of WWII; 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 President of the Republic of the Philippines, President of the
30 United States Senate, Speaker of the United States House of
31 Representatives, Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Chair
32 of the House Judiciary Committee, Director of the Bureau of U.S.
33 Citizenship and Immigration Services, United States Secretary of
34 Veterans Affairs, American Coalition for Filipino Veterans, and
35 Hawaii's congressional delegation.

