

# LATE TESTIMONY

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**Sent:** Thursday, February 12, 2009 3:52 PM  
**To:** EBMtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB 556  
**Attachments:** HB556 Veteran Burial (Fil-Am).doc

*Aloha,*

*Please accept the corrected testimony for HB 556 from Director Mark Moses and replace with the previous testimony.*

*Thank you,*

*Jennifer*

*Jennifer Aina, Secretary  
to the Director, Office of Veterans Services  
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Honolulu, HI 96819  
Tel. 433-0423*

# LATE TESTIMONY

STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES  
TESTIMONY ON H.B. No. 556, RELATING TO VETERAN BURIAL GRANTS  
COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION, BUSINESS & MILITARY  
AFFAIRS

FEBRUARY 12, 2009

Good afternoon Chair Angus McKelvey, Vice-Chair Isaac Choy, and members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs.

I am Mark Moses, Director of the Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I appreciate this opportunity to comment on HB 556, which requires the office of veterans' services to pay directly to a mortuary for services and to transport the remains of a deceased veteran who joined the New Filipino scouts between 10/06/1945, and 06/30/1947, and died after 06/30/1994, to the Philippines upon submission of an unpaid invoice, as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget for Fiscal Years 2009-2010.

My concern with this measure is that it provides a benefit to this group of veterans and is not provided to any other group of veterans. Filipino veterans who enlisted between 10/06/1945 and 06/30/1947 are presently eligible for burial in either a state or federal veterans cemetery.

Additionally, the family or estate of any deceased veteran must pay for the transportation cost to bury a veteran in a veterans' cemetery even when located in the same state where the veteran passed. For instance, transportation for a veteran from a neighbor island who passes away on Oahu would be the responsibility of their family or estate. Transportation of remains is not a veteran's benefit.

My final concern with this measure is that as written, only individuals with other than honorable service would be eligible for the benefit (see the bottom of the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph of Section 1 of this bill.) This would add an extraordinary benefit that no other veteran may receive.

I do not believe that is the intent of this measure.

Thank you for allowing me to present the Veterans' perspective on this issue. I will respond to any questions.