

Honolulu, Hawaii

MAR 27 2009

RE: H.B. No. 556  
H.D. 2

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa  
President of the Senate  
Twenty-Fifth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2009  
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs, to which was referred H.B. No. 556, H.D. 2, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO VETERAN BURIAL GRANTS,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to provide payment of up to an unspecified monetary amount per veteran, under the Veterans' Burial Grant Program, directly to a mortuary or crematory to:

- (1) Provide funeral and burial services at the request of a qualifying deceased Filipino veteran's survivor or an interested party; and
- (2) Transport the veteran's remains to the Philippines, upon the submission of a contract for services.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from Office of Veterans Services. Written testimony presented to the Committee may be reviewed on the Legislature's website.

A Filipino veteran of the New Filipino Scouts who enlisted between October 6, 1945, and June 30, 1947, who died after June 30, 2004, and who was, at the time of the veteran's death, a United States citizen and a resident of the State of Hawaii, is presently entitled to receive a burial grant from the Office of Veterans Services. To qualify for this burial grant, however, the Filipino veteran's survivor or an interested party must produce an itemized paid invoice showing that the specific services were

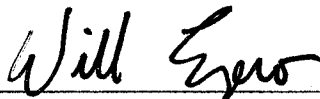


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rendered. However, because of the tremendous upfront costs associated with funeral and burial services as well as transportation to the Philippines, some World War II Filipino veterans, and their families and friends, cannot afford to pay for these activities in advance. Consequently, they will not be able to qualify for these burial grants from the Office of Veterans Services. This measure provides burial grant funds to pay for funeral and burial services and to transport the remains of the person to the Philippines, and establishes procedures for the disbursement of these funds.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of H.B. No. 556, H.D. 2, and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Public Safety and  
Military Affairs,



WILL ESPERO, Chair



