
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO SUPPORT THE PASSAGE OF S. 1337, THE FILIPINO VETERANS FAMILY REUNIFICATION ACT OF 2009, OR SIMILAR LEGISLATION, TO EXPEDITE FAMILY REUNIFICATION FOR 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

5
6 WHEREAS, at that time, the Philippines was a commonwealth
7 associated with the United States and its citizens were
8 nationals of the United States, similar to the status of
9 Hawaii's residents prior to statehood and the current status of
10 American Samoa's residents; and

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

17
18 WHEREAS, thousands more Filipinos joined the United States
19 Armed Forces immediately after the war and served in
20 occupational duty throughout the Pacific theater; and

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

27
28 WHEREAS, their many guerrilla actions slowed the Japanese
29 takeover of the Western Pacific region and allowed United States



1 forces the time to build and prepare for the allied
2 counterattack on Japanese forces; and

3
4 WHEREAS, Filipino troops fought side by side with American
5 forces to secure their islands as the strategic base from which
6 the final effort to defeat Japan was launched; and

7
8 WHEREAS, in February of 1946, the United States Congress
9 enacted the 1946 Rescission Act, which denied World War II
10 Filipino veterans rights to veterans benefits equal to those
11 enjoyed by other veterans and soldiers of more than sixty-six
12 other countries who were similarly inducted into the United
13 States military; and

14
15 WHEREAS, the Rescission Act discriminated against
16 Filipinos, making them the only national group singled out for
17 denial of full United States veterans status and benefits,
18 including rights of immigration and naturalization; and

19
20 WHEREAS, decades later, in recognition of the courage and
21 loyalty of the Filipino troops who fought alongside our armed
22 forces in the Pacific during World War II, the United States
23 Congress enacted legislation in 1990 that provided a waiver from
24 certain immigration and naturalization requirements for these
25 Filipino veterans; and

26
27 WHEREAS, as a result of that legislation, many of those
28 Filipino veterans have become proud citizens and residents of
29 this country; and

30
31 WHEREAS, despite the granting of citizenship, these World
32 War II Filipino veterans are still denied equal treatment and
33 status as American veterans by the Rescission Act; and

34
35 WHEREAS, the 1990 legislation did not go far enough in
36 extending those immigration and naturalization benefits to the
37 children of those veterans, resulting in years of long
38 separation between the veterans and their children remaining in
39 the Philippines awaiting the issuance of immigrant visas; and

40
41 WHEREAS, President William J. Clinton proclaimed October
42 20, 1996, as a day honoring the Filipino Veterans of World War
43 II, recalling the courage, sacrifice, and loyalty of Filipino



1 veterans of World War II in defense of democracy and liberty;
2 and

3
4 WHEREAS, on April 1, 2008, the Hawaii State Legislature
5 adopted House Resolution No. 91 requesting the United States
6 Congress and the President of the United States to enact the
7 Filipino Veterans Equity Act to provide veterans benefits to
8 Filipino veterans who served our nation during World War II; and

9
10 WHEREAS, on February 17, 2009, United States Senator Daniel
11 Akaka, along with Senator Daniel Inouye and others, introduced
12 S. 671, the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act, to amend
13 the Immigration and Naturalization Act to exempt children of
14 certain Filipino World War II veterans from the numerical
15 limitation on immigrant visas; and

16
17 WHEREAS, on May 14, 2009, United States Representative
18 Mazie Hirono and then United States Representative Neil
19 Abercrombie introduced H.R. 2412 to exempt children of certain
20 Filipino World War II veterans from the numerical limitations
21 on immigrant visas; and

22
23 WHEREAS, on February 17, 2009, the American Recovery and
24 Reinvestment Act of 2009 was signed into law and, among many
25 other things, formally recognized and set the historical record
26 straight by declaring the service of Filipino World War II
27 veterans as active United States military service in the Armed
28 Forces for purposes of this law; and

29
30 WHEREAS, decades after their heroic service under the
31 command of their leaders and General Douglas MacArthur, men and
32 women of Filipino-American national heritage are still being
33 denied the benefits and privileges that are provided to their
34 American compatriots who fought side by side with them; and

35
36 WHEREAS, the surviving World War II Filipino veterans are
37 now in their 70s and 80s, and many are permanently disabled and
38 would, except for the Rescission Act, be eligible for full
39 federal veterans benefits and services; and

40
41 WHEREAS, correction of this injustice to the Filipino
42 veterans who served our nation courageously in the fight for
43 freedom and democracy during World War II is long overdue; now,
44 therefore,



H.C.R. NO. 98

1
 2 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
 3 Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
 4 of 2011, the Senate concurring, that the President of the United
 5 States and the members of the United States Congress are urged
 6 to support the passage of S. 1337, The Filipino Veterans Family
 7 Reunification Act of 2009, or similar legislation, to expedite
 8 family reunification for certain Filipino veterans of World War
 9 II; and

10
 11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 12 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the
 13 United States, President of the Republic of the Philippines,
 14 Majority Leader of the United States Senate, Speaker of the
 15 United States House of Representatives, Chair of the Committee
 16 on the Judiciary of the United States Senate, Chair of the
 17 Committee on the Judiciary of the United States House of
 18 Representatives, Director of the Bureau of United States
 19 Citizenship and Immigration Services, United States Secretary of
 20 Veterans Affairs, each member of Hawaii's congressional
 21 delegation, the respective Chairs of the Senate Committee on
 22 Human Services, the House of Representatives Committee on Human
 23 Services, the Senate Committee on Tourism, and the House of
 24 Representatives Committee on International Affairs of the Hawaii
 25 State Legislature.

26
 27
 28

OFFERED BY:





MAR - 9 2011













