
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO
SUPPORT 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
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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
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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
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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
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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
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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

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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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



H.C.R. NO. 86

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2 WHEREAS, on April 1, 2008, the Hawaii State Legislature
3 adopted House Resolution No. 91 requesting Congress and the
4 President of the United States to enact the Filipino Veterans
5 Equity Act to provide veterans benefits to Filipino veterans who
6 served our nation during World War II; and
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8 WHEREAS, on February 17, 2009, Senator Daniel Akaka, along
9 with Senator Daniel Inouye and others, introduced S. 671, The
10 Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act, to amend the
11 Immigration and Naturalization Act to exempt children of certain
12 Filipino World War II veterans from the numerical limitation on
13 immigrant visas; and
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15 WHEREAS, on May 14, 2009, Representative Mazie Hirono,
16 former Representative Neil Abercrombie, and others introduced,
17 H.R. 2412, to facilitate family reunification of certain
18 Filipino veterans of World War II; and
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20 WHEREAS, H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
21 of 2009, was signed into law, among many other things, to
22 formally recognize and set the historical record straight by
23 declaring the service of Filipino World War II veterans as
24 active United States military service in the Armed Forces for
25 purposes of this law; and
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27 WHEREAS, decades after their heroic service under the
28 command of their leaders and General Douglas MacArthur, men and
29 women of Filipino-American national heritage are still being
30 denied the benefits and privileges provided to their American
31 compatriots who fought side by side with them; and
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33 WHEREAS, the World War II Filipino veterans that survive,
34 are now in their 70s and 80s, and many are permanently disabled
35 and would, except for the Rescission Act, be eligible for full
36 federal veterans benefits and services; and
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38 WHEREAS, correction of this injustice to the Filipino
39 veterans who served our nation courageously in the fight for
40 freedom and democracy during World War II is long overdue; now,
41 therefore,
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43 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
44 Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session

HCR HMS 2011-2446



1 of 2011, the Senate concurring, that the President of the United
 2 States and United States Congress are urged to support The
 3 Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act of 2009, or similar
 4 legislation, to expedite family reunification for certain
 5 Filipino veterans of World War II; and

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

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Karen Alvarado
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OFFERED BY: *John M. ...*
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MAR 3 2011