
HOUSE 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
30 forces the time to build and prepare for the allied
31 counterattack on Japanese forces; and
32



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

38 WHEREAS, President William J. Clinton proclaimed October
39 20, 1996, as a day honoring the Filipino Veterans of World War
40 II, recalling the courage, sacrifice, and loyalty of Filipino
41 veterans of World War II in defense of democracy and liberty;
42 and
43



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

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

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

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

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 that are provided to their
31 American compatriots who fought side by side with them; and
32

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

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,
42

43 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
44 Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session



H.R. NO. 90

1 of 2011, that the President of the United States and the members
 2 of the United States Congress are urged to support the passage
 3 of S. 1337, The Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act of
 4 2009, or similar legislation, to expedite family reunification
 5 for certain Filipino veterans of World War II; and
 6

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

OFFERED BY:

Ray Nash
[Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

John M. [Signature]

[Signature]

Tom [Signature]

[Signature]

[Signature]

