

HCR 183

**URGING THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED
STATES AND CONGRESS TO SUPPORT AND PASS
THE FILIPINO VETERANS FAMILY
REUNIFICATION ACT OF 2013**



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TO: Senator Will Espero, Chair
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair
Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

Senator J. Kalani English, Chair
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair
Committee on Transportation and International Affairs

From: Melba Bantay, Program Director
General Immigration Services

Date: Friday, April 19, 2013, 3:05 p.m. (Conf Rm 423)

Re: **IN SUPPORT of HCR 183, Urging the President of the United States and Congress to Support and Pass the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act of 2013**

My name is Melba Bantay, Program Director of Catholic Charities Hawaii's General Immigration Services. Catholic Charities Hawaii strongly supports HCR 183.

Catholic Charities Hawaii has been providing services to low-income immigrants and refugees for more than 30 years and assisted numerous Filipino-American veterans of World War II to apply for Naturalization when they came to Hawaii in the early 1990's.

These brave Filipino soldiers, and their families, endured untold suffering while fighting alongside American soldiers in the Philippines. Many of them were forced to go on the infamous "Bataan Death March", a 65-mile march, on foot, from the province of Bataan to Camp O'Donnell in the province of Tarlac. Many of the 50,000 Filipino soldiers died on that march but some who survived live amongst us today.

They waited more than 50 years to receive the U.S. citizenship they were promised. They are still waiting to receive the full benefits that they deserve, including reunification with their children who are still in the Philippines.

We helped them become American citizens. We have witnessed their pain and loneliness as they have remained separated from their families. They live on the hope that someday their children will join them in this country – a country that they fought for and have grown to love.

Many are now frail, and some are very ill. Some of them have waited for more than 20 years! Their last wish is to be reunited with their children.

Please support HCR 183. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 527-4711 or via email at mbantay@catholiccharitieshawaii.org. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 12:16 PM
To: PSMTestimony
Cc: hspoehr@papaolalokahi.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for HCR183 on Apr 19, 2013 15:05PM

HCR183

Submitted on: 4/17/2013

Testimony for PSM/TIA on Apr 19, 2013 15:05PM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hardy Spoehr	Papa Ola Lokahi	Support	No

Comments: Papa Ola Lokahi maintains an ongoing effort to assist veterans with obtaining their rightful benefits. Papa Ola Lokahi strongly supports this measure.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2013 1:27 AM
To: PSMTestimony
Cc: Dmelloj@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HCR183 on Apr 19, 2013 15:05PM*

HCR183

Submitted on: 4/18/2013

Testimony for PSM/TIA on Apr 19, 2013 15:05PM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jared Dmello	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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