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# HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING CONGRESS TO AMEND FEDERAL LAW TO ALLOW FUNDS FOR THE BURIAL OF QUALIFIED FILIPINO-AMERICAN VETERANS IN NATIONAL AND STATE VETERANS CEMETERIES TO COVER THE COSTS OF TRANSPORTING THE REMAINS OF FILIPINO-AMERICAN VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II TO THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR FUNERAL AND BURIAL SERVICES IN THE PHILIPPINES.

1           WHEREAS, during World War II, the Philippines was a  
2 Commonwealth of the United States, and, for four years, nearly  
3 100,000 soldiers of the Philippine Commonwealth Army fought  
4 alongside the United States and Allied forces to defend and  
5 reclaim the Philippine Islands from foreign aggression; and  
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7           WHEREAS, these valiant Filipino soldiers fought, suffered,  
8 and died in some of the bloodiest battles of World War II,  
9 defending beleaguered Bataan and Corregidor, and thousands of  
10 them became prisoners of war, enduring the infamous Bataan Death  
11 March and years of captivity; and  
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13           WHEREAS, the sacrifices of these Filipino soldiers played a  
14 vital role in the Allied victory in the Pacific as their  
15 numerous guerrilla actions provided United States forces with  
16 time to build and prepare for the Allied counterattack; and  
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18           WHEREAS, these Filipino soldiers fought side-by-side with  
19 United States forces to secure their island nation as the  
20 strategic base from which the final effort by Allied forces to  
21 bring an end to World War II was launched; and  
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23           WHEREAS, the United States promised these Filipino soldiers  
24 pay and benefits for their military service under the United  
25 States Armed Forces and for their oath of allegiance to the  
26 Constitution of the United States; however, soon after the war  
27 ended, legislation was passed that wrongfully took away the  
28 benefits and recognition they had earned; and



1           WHEREAS, because these World War II veterans had suffered a  
2 great wrong, and recognizing that for those with family in the  
3 Philippines the return of their remains to the Philippines is a  
4 profound and fervent wish, the Legislature in 2003 enacted Act  
5 101, Session Laws of Hawaii 2003, requiring the Office of  
6 Veterans' Services to pay up to \$2,500 for the transport of  
7 their remains to the Philippines and funeral and burial services  
8 in the Philippines; and  
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10           WHEREAS, funding, however, has not been provided to fulfill  
11 this statutory requirement; and  
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13           WHEREAS, in the early 2000s, the United States also enacted  
14 legislation requiring the Veterans Administration to pay the  
15 full cost of burials at national and state veterans cemeteries  
16 to the survivors of these World War II veterans; however, this  
17 legislation failed to address coverage of the costs of transport  
18 to and services in the Philippines to be with their loved ones;  
19 and  
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21           WHEREAS, though many years have transpired since World War  
22 II, the words of United States President Harry S. Truman in 1946  
23 remain the honest truth: "I consider it a moral obligation of  
24 the United States to look after the welfare of Philippine Army  
25 veterans."; and  
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27           WHEREAS, for the small number of World War II Filipino-  
28 American veterans who are still living, this moral obligation of  
29 the United States should extend to fulfilling their wish for a  
30 resting place in the Philippines among their loved ones, for  
31 this is an entitlement that they have clearly sacrificed for and  
32 earned; now, therefore,  
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34           BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the  
35 Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular  
36 Session of 2016, the Senate concurring, that Congress is urged  
37 to amend federal law to allow funds for the burial of qualified  
38 Filipino-American veterans in national and state cemeteries to  
39 cover the costs of transporting the remains of eligible  
40 Filipino-American veterans of World War II to the Philippines  
41 and for funeral and burial services in the Philippines; and



# H.C.R. NO. 23

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this  
 2 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the  
 3 United States, Speaker of the United States House of  
 4 Representatives, President of the United States Senate, Hawaii's  
 5 Congressional delegation, and the Director of the Office of  
 6 Veterans' Services.

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