
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. For four long years in some of the bloodiest
2 and deadliest battles of World War II, nearly one hundred
3 thousand soldiers of the Philippine Commonwealth Army responded
4 to President Roosevelt's call to arms, fighting alongside and
5 serving as an integral part of the United States Armed Forces.

6 After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Filipinos
7 residing in the United States and the Territory of Hawaii also
8 responded to President Roosevelt's call to arms. Despite being
9 initially rejected because they were not United States citizens,
10 they remained undaunted and volunteered for the draft after
11 enactment of the Selective Training and Service Amendments Act,
12 which allowed Filipinos in the United States to enlist in the
13 United States Armed Forces, and enactment of the Second War
14 Powers Act, which authorized naturalization for Filipinos who
15 served in the United States Armed Forces. As a result, more
16 than seven thousand Filipinos and Filipino Americans fought in



1 the 1st and 2nd Filipino Regiments of the United States Army in
2 World War II.

3 During this period of time, the Allied forces experienced,
4 among other tragedies:

5 (1) The fall of the Bataan Peninsula, wherein over
6 seventy-eight thousand members of the United States
7 Armed Forces were captured and nearly seven hundred
8 United States service members and from six thousand to
9 ten thousand Filipinos perished in the Bataan Death
10 March; and

11 (2) The fall of Corregidor, wherein eight hundred United
12 States and Filipino service members were killed and
13 eleven thousand were captured and distributed to
14 prisoner of war camps.

15 Persevering against all odds, guerrilla armies comprising
16 Filipino soldiers were vital in turning the tide to end the war.
17 They fought in bloody combat against foreign aggression and
18 assisted in intelligence missions and mop-up operations. They
19 were integral to the freeing of prisoners of war, including from
20 the Cabanatuan death camp and the Santo Tomas prisoner of war
21 camp. An estimated fifty-seven thousand Filipino soldiers died



1 in this courageous effort to reclaim the Philippines, fight
2 fascism, and protect the free world.

3 The legislature finds that a Filipino Veterans Legacy
4 Exhibit would preserve, perpetuate, and share the legacy of the
5 Filipino veterans, including those from the Philippines, United
6 States, and Territory of Hawaii, who served loyally alongside
7 the Allied forces in World War II. Such an exhibit would
8 recognize and honor their uncommon commitment, valor, and
9 sacrifice, and develop a deeper understanding of their unique
10 place in American and global history.

11 The legislature further finds that there is broad support
12 in Hawaii for the recognition of veterans in general and
13 Filipino veterans of World War II in particular. There is also
14 national support, as evidenced by President Obama signing into
15 law a measure that awards those Filipino veterans the
16 Congressional Gold Medal.

17 The purpose of this Act is to make a one-time appropriation
18 of moneys for the planning, design, and establishment of a
19 Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit as a permanent exhibit at the
20 Honolulu International Airport; provided that volunteers shall
21 maintain the Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit.



1 SECTION 2. The office of veterans' services, with the
2 assistance of the department of transportation and the
3 department of defense, shall plan, design, and establish a
4 Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit as a permanent exhibit at the
5 Honolulu International Airport; provided that volunteers shall
6 maintain the Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit. The purpose of
7 the Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit shall be to preserve,
8 perpetuate, and share the legacy of the Filipino veterans,
9 including those from the Philippines, United States, and
10 Territory of Hawaii, who served loyally alongside the Allied
11 forces in World War II.

12 SECTION 3. The office of veterans' services shall report
13 to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to the
14 convening of the regular session of 2018 on the status of the
15 establishment of a Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit.

16 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
17 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so much
18 thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2017-2018 for the
19 plans, design, and establishment of a Filipino Veterans Legacy
20 Exhibit in accordance with this Act.



1 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the office of
2 veterans' services for the purpose of this Act.

3 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2017.

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H.B. NO. 886

Report Title:

Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit; Honolulu International Airport; Appropriation

Description:

Requires and funds the Office of Veterans' Services to establish a Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit at the Honolulu International Airport.

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