



HAWAII

STATE FOUNDATION on
CULTURE and the ARTS

No. 1 Capitol District Building
250 South Hotel Street
Second Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813

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Executive Director
Jonathan Johnson

Telephone
808.586.0300

Fax
808.586.0308

Website
www.hawaii.gov/sfca

**TESTIMONY OF
THE STATE FOUNDATION ON CULTURE AND THE ARTS
TO THE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, &
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, & CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

FEBRUARY 9, 2017

H. B. 942

RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS

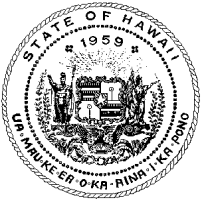
Chair Ito and members of the Committee, I am Jonathan Johnson, Executive Director of the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts (SFCA), and I am grateful for the opportunity to **COMMENT** on H.B.942.

The SFCA supports the concept to commission a monument to honor and recognize the Filipino Veterans who served alongside the Allied forces during World War II.

If it is the desire of the Legislature to commission the monument, the SFCA recommends forming an Art Advisory Committee (AAC) following the SFCA's collection management policy for all new works of art. AAC's assist with the selection of location, defining the medium and theme of the work of art, recommending an artist, and review of design proposals.

SFCA supports the future appropriation of funding to implement the proposed intent, provided doing so does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this matter.



HAWAI‘I CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 411 HONOLULU, HI 96813 · PHONE: 586-8636 FAX: 586-8655 TDD: 568-8692

February 9, 2017
Rm. 429, 9:30 a.m.

To: The Honorable Ken Ito, Chair
and Members of the House Committee on Veterans, Military, & International Affairs,
& Culture and the Arts
From: Linda Hamilton Krieger, Chair
and Commissioners of the Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission

Re: H.B. No. 942

The Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission (HCRC) has enforcement jurisdiction over Hawai‘i’s laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and access to state and state funded services. The HCRC carries out the Hawai‘i constitutional mandate that no person shall be discriminated against in the exercise of their civil rights. Art. I, Sec. 5.

H.B. No. 942 appropriates funds to commission an artist to design and build a monument at the Filipino Community Center in Waipahu, Oahu, to honor Filipino veterans who fought alongside Allied under U.S. command during World War II.

The HCRC strongly supports H.B. No. 942. The time has come for long overdue recognition of the heroic contributions of more than two hundred and sixty thousand Filipino veterans, surviving and deceased. With the building of this monument, Hawai‘i can join the United States in efforts to pay a debt of gratitude and justice, attempting to remedy a history of injustice, broken promises, and discriminatory treatment suffered by a now dwindling generation of heroic Filipino Veterans who served under US command, were promised citizenship and veteran’s benefits, and to this day continue to suffer the consequences of broken promises and belated remedies.

During WWII, members of the Philippine Armed Forces served in the US Armed Forces in the war against Japan. They were among a broader class of non-citizens serving in the US Armed Forces who were offered naturalization as part of the 1942 enactment of the Second War Powers Act, which waived a number of usual

naturalization requirements, including residence in the United States and literacy and education testing in English. The cut-off date for application was set at December 31, 1946.

The US authorized Vice Consul George H. Ennis in August 1945 to naturalize Filipino servicemen pursuant to the law. However, the applicability of the law to Filipino servicemen was questioned, and then Attorney General Tom Clark revoked Ennis' authority to naturalize in September 26, 1945. Eligible Filipino servicemen were then only able to naturalize from August through December, 1946. As a result, only about 4,000 out of more than 250,000 Filipino servicemen applied for and were granted naturalization during those few short months.

With the enactment of the Rescission Act in 1946, these Filipino Veterans who served under US Command were singled out and denied full and equal veterans status and benefits given to others.

This injustice spawned a host of litigated cases on behalf of Filipino Veterans, from the 1960s through the 1980s. Then, in 1990 Congress incorporated provisions for special naturalization for Filipino Veterans in the 1990 Immigration Act, followed by piecemeal legislation providing for limited benefits for Filipino Veterans, but not equity and full veterans benefits.

Many of those Filipino Veterans who naturalized since 1990 have waited for years for relative visas to become available, so their petitions to be reunited with their adult children in the United States can be approved and visas issued. Fewer and fewer remain with us, waiting, as those who fought under US command in WWII are now aged well into their 90s. The HCRC strongly supports H.B. No. 942, which provides for a monument to recognize these Filipino Veterans. It is time to give them their due.

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 942, RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS

PRESENTATION TO THE
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, & CULTURE
AND THE ARTS

BY

MR. RONALD P. HAN
DIRECTOR OF STATE OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

February 09, 2017
9:30 a.m.

Good morning, Chair Ito, Vice Chair Tokioka, and members of the Committee:

I'm Ron Han, Director of the State Office of Veterans Services. I appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony **in support** of the concepts in House Bill 942.

This measure appropriates funds for the Hawaii State Foundation on Culture and the Arts to commission an artist to design and build a monument at the Filipino Community Center in Waipahu, Oahu that honors Filipino veterans of World War II.

The OVS supports the concepts and intent expressed in this measure as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Hawaii's Veterans and their families.



Testimony in Strong Support of
HB 942 RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS
House Committee on Veterans, Military & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts Hawai'i
State Capitol, House Conference Room 429
February 9, 2017, 9:30 a.m.

Chair Ken Ito, Vice Chair Rep. James Kunane Tokioka, and House VMI Committee Members

From: Amy Agbayani, Co-chair Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights (HFCR)
3432 B-1 Kalihi St. Honolulu, Hawaii, 96819

Subject: Relating to Filipino Veterans.

HFCR supports programs and policies that seek to fair treatment for individuals and communities. We also support efforts of the Filipino and other ethnic communities to recognize diversity and inclusion in our multiethnic state. HB 942 identifies historical reasons for honoring the WW II Filipino veterans by providing a visual reminder of their service and sacrifices. HB 942 would provide funds to design and build a monument at the Filipino community center in Waipahu.

It has come to our attention that there is also a request to include historical information about Filipino and US participation in WW II to honor Filipino Veterans. We would like to incorporate some of the ideas in HB886 that are consistent with HB942 to honor the Filipino veterans with a visual reminder of their service and sacrifices. We support funding to establish a Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit as a permanent exhibit at the Honolulu International Airport as an visual educational reminder for Hawai'i residents and visitors.

I respectfully request approval of HB 942 which appropriately recognizes the historical role of Filipino veterans in our state and nation.



Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc.

... a non-profit organization with a mission to address the global nursing shortage by providing guidance and assistance for nursing colleagues to obtain their professional license in nursing.

P.O. Box 2034 Aiea, HI 96701

E-mail: namihonolulu@yahoo.com

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Linnette Takenaka, RN, DON

House Committee on
Veterans, Military & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts
Hawai'i State Capitol, House Conference Room 429
February 9, 2017, 9:30 a.m.

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 942 RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS

To: Chair Ken Ito, Vice Chair Rep. James Kunane Tokioka
House VMI & Culture and the Arts Committee Members
From: Beatrice Ramos-Razon, RN, FACDA
President, Nursing Advocates and Mentors, Inc.
Subject: Monument to honor Filipino WWII Veterans

My name is Beatrice Ramos-Razon. As the founder and president of NAMI (Nursing Advocates & Mentors, Inc.), I am proud to submit our strong support for this bill. NAMI's membership is comprised of over 75 volunteer nurses, instructors, allied health care professionals, and Filipino leaders, who are dedicated to improve the health of Hawai'i's people through education, mentoring, advocacy and service.

We are proud to support HB 942, which will design and build a monument at the Filipino Community Center to perpetuate the legacy of Filipino WWII Veterans' role in American and world history. We would also greatly appreciate your consideration to incorporate concepts in HB 886 to complement this monument with an educational component in the form of a permanent exhibit at the Honolulu International Airport, the Filipino Veterans Legacy Exhibit. We hope that the busy traffic of local and global peoples alike at the airport might draw visitors interested in the heroic service and sacrifices of our Filipino Veterans to seek out the monument at the Filipino Community Center as a point of historical importance.

Thank you for hearing this bill and for the opportunity to submit testimony to strongly encourage its passage.

Sincerely,

Beatrice Ramos Razon, RN, FACDA
President, Nursing Advocates and Mentors, Inc.

Law Office of Abelina Madrid Shaw, AAL, LLLC

810 Richards Street, Suite 960
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Phone: (808) 523-5979 Fax: (808) 523-5979

TO: Rep. Ken Ito, Chair
Rep. James Tokioka, Vice Chair
Committee on Veterans, Military & International Affairs & Culture and the Arts
Members: Romy M. Cachola, Isaac W. Choy, Takashi Ohno, Richard H.K. Onishi,
Justin H. Woodson, Gene Ward

FROM: Abelina Madrid Shaw, Esq.

DATE: February 9, 2017 (9:30 a.m.) Conference Room 429

RE: IN SUPPORT OF HB 942 RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS

Seventy-five years ago, young men of Filipino ancestry here in Hawaii and the Philippines answered the call to arms by the then President of the United States to fight side-by-side with American soldiers in World War II. In 1992, my Filipinos who fought in that war came to live in Hawaii and, because of their military service, were granted the privilege to seek United States Citizenship. They came, over thousands of them, seeking and hoping for a better life and hoping one day their children, whom they left behind, would join them here in Hawaii.

In the ensuing years, they learned about our culture, joined various organizations, participated in government and our politics, and added to our diversity. But, they were always looking, hoping for the recognition accorded other American soldiers – in general, more respect and, specifically, full health benefits. And, what about the future of their children, could they come to the United States?

For many years, our Congressional Delegation appealed to Congress to make good the promises made by then President Roosevelt that they would be entitled to "full benefits." Congresswoman Hirono called for "equal and fair treatment," Senator Akaka called them "Brothers in War," Senator Dan Inouye saw the injustice.

The years have come and gone, but today, the Veterans and their spouses still have that fervent hope that their bravery and sacrifices would be recognized. Their allegiance to the United States has not waned.

Finally, through the concerted efforts of our Congressional delegation, in 2010, the United States Congress passed the Filipino Veterans Equity Compensation Bill. In 2016, it passed the Filipino Veteran Parole Program Bill - Reunification of families and, more

recently, in December 2016, President Obama awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to Filipino Veterans. Through these hard fought measures, the Congress has shown its gratitude to the now elderly men and, who 75 years ago, were eager to defend the freedom we enjoy today.

The passage of this bill which proposes a MONUMENT and which should include a LEGACY EXHIBIT that chronicles their military service and their life here in Hawaii, would send a message of recognition for their service from this grateful State - home to many Veterans.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill.



LATE

House Committee on
Veterans, Military & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts
Hawai'i State Capitol, House Conference Room 429
February 9, 2017, 9:30 a.m.

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 942
RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS

To: Chair Ken Ito, Vice Chair Rep. James Kunane Tokioka and Committee Members of Veterans, Military & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts

From: Charlene Cuaresma, Chair, NaFFAA-National Federation of Filipino American Associations Region 12

Subject: Strong Support of Filipino Veterans Monument

My name is Charlene Cuaresma, Chair, NaFFAA Region 12, which represents the interests of Filipinos in Hawai'i, Guam, and the Commonwealth of Northern Marianas Islands. We are an affiliate of the National NaFFAA. Washington policy-makers, private industry and national advocacy groups recognize NaFFAA as the Voice of Filipinos and Filipino Americans throughout the United States. We are a non-partisan, non-profit national affiliation of more than five hundred Filipino-American institutions and umbrella organizations that span twelve regions throughout the continental United States and U.S. Pacific territories.

I am proud to submit strong support for this bill. Since 1946, Hawai'i's Congressional delegation has joined our Filipino leaders in leading and sustaining our fierce charge to reinstate veterans' benefits for our Filipino WWII veterans, but to no avail. As a result of the wrongful and cruel passage of the Rescission Act, today, some of our Filipino WWII veterans, now in their 80's and 90's, are left with no relatives because the provision of family reunification was rescinded. We are saddened and angered that it has come to this indignant, pathetic quandary for some of our veterans to face their death in poverty and loneliness.

Given this, I extend deep gratitude to Rep. Ty Cullen for introducing HB 942, which aims to design and build a monument to honor and uplift our Filipino veterans' place in history for generations to come. I respectfully request that your Committee also review how elements of HB 886 might be integrated into the design and concept development to establish a monument at the Filipino Community Center and a dynamic Filipino Legacy Exhibit at the Honolulu International Airport. The aim would be to optimize exposure from domestic and international travelers at the airport, as well as from local foot traffic at community events held at the Filipino Community Center. This dual monument and digital exhibit would generate synergy toward the shared goal of educating the public and celebrating the legacy of our beloved Filipino WWII veterans.

Thank you for hearing this bill, and for the opportunity to offer our strong support. Apologies for this late testimony.

Sincerely,

Charlene Cuaresma, Chair, National Federation of Filipino American Associations Region 12

Filipino American Citizens League

Jake Manegdeg, President
P. O. Box 270126 * Honolulu, Hawai'i 96827

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 942 RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS

LATE

House Committee on Veterans, Military & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts
Hawai'i State Capitol, House Conference Room 429
February 9, 2017, 9:30 a.m.

To: Chair Ken Ito, Vice Chair Rep. James Kunane Tokioka
House VMI Committee Members
From: Jake Manegdeg, President, Filipino American Citizens League
Subject: Relating to Filipino Veterans Monument

My name is Jake Manegdeg. I am the president of the Filipino American Citizens League. The Filipino American Citizens League was formed over twenty years ago to contribute to the advancement of civil rights and social justice for minority groups, underserved populations, and vulnerable communities through education, advocacy, and social action.

The League strongly supports this bill, which aims to design and establish a monument to commemorate the historical contributions to world peace through the bravery and sacrifices of our Filipino WWII veterans. We also respectfully ask for you to vet the merits of HB 886, and see if there might be an opportunity to utilize the concept and design phase to explore the possibility of complementing the monument at the Filipino Community Center with a digital, educational, Filipino Veteran Legacy exhibit at the Honolulu International Airport.

Thank you for hearing this bill and for the opportunity to offer our strong support.

Very Sincerely,

Jake Manegdeg
President
Filipino American Citizens League

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY
AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, CULTURE AND THE ARTS
Thursday, February 9, 2017, 9:30 a.m.
Conference Room 429

IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 942

Chair Ken Ito, Vice Chair Tokioka and Members of the Committee:

Countless stories have been told about the bravery and valor of Filipino veterans of World War II, who fought side by side with the Americans during this significant period in history.

Sadly, countless stories too have been told of how the United States had been rather late in recognizing their heroism and courage. Despite being promised a path to citizenship at the end of World War II, the United States reneged on its promise.

Since 1993, a version of the Filipino Veterans fairness Act has been introduced in Congress but all of them died in committee. Hawaii's own Senator Daniel Inouye led that charge, and those cudgels have since been picked up by our own congressional delegation who continues the battle to right the wrong.

Recently, President Obama signed a measure that would collectively award the Congressional Gold Medal, the nation's highest civilian honor to these veterans, many of whom are now in their 90s and in frail health.

Building a memorial on the grounds of the Filipino Community Center in Waipahu is an appropriate way for Hawaii to honor these World War II veterans. The Filcom Center is a gathering place which provides social, economic and cultural support for our people. Housing the memorial in this location would provide an opportunity for the next generation to understand the sacrifices that have been made so their freedom can today be enjoyed.

Hawaii's Filipino community is in strong support of this measure. Please support this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Bennette Misalucha
Aiea, Hawaii
Bennette.misalucha808@gmail.com

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Franz D. Juan	The Filipino Community Center, Inc.	Support	No

LATE

House Committee on
Veterans, Military & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts
Hawai'i State Capitol, House Conference Room 429
February 9, 2017, 9:30 a.m.

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 942
RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS

To: Chair Ken Ito, Vice Chair Rep. James Kunane Tokioka
House VMI Committee Members

From: Jean Jeremiah, Private Citizen

Subject: Strong Support of Filipino Veterans Monument

My name is Jean Jeremiah. I am speaking as a private citizen. I am proud to submit my full support of this bill. I served as former President of the Oahu Filipino Community Council, where many of our Filipino cultural events aimed to raise scholarship funds for deserving Filipino youth to pursue their education and career aspirations.

Thank you, Rep. Ty Cullen for introducing HB 942, which seeks to design and develop a monument, established at the Filipino Community Center, in honor of our Filipino Veterans. I support this bill, because our Filipino WWII Veterans deserve to have their stories of bravery and sacrifice kept alive. I would also humbly ask this Committee to review how any part of HB 886 can be re-imagined into the design and concept to incorporate a dynamic, digital Filipino Veteran Legacy exhibit at the Honolulu International Airport. Their bravery should be remembered and honored by generations of visitors and locals.

Thank you for hearing this bill and for the chance to offer my strong support for its passage.

Very Sincerely,

Jean Jeremiah

LATE

House Committee on
Veterans, Military & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts
Hawai'i State Capitol, House Conference Room 429
February 9, 2017, 9:30 a.m.

Testimony in Strong Support of HB 942
RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS

To: Chair Ken Ito, Vice Chair Rep. James Kunane Tokioka and Committee Members of
Veterans, Military & International Affairs, & Culture and the Arts

From: Davelyn Quijano, Private Citizen

Subject: Strong Support of Filipino Veterans Monument

I strongly support this bill. I am speaking as a private citizen. My name is Davelyn Quijano, president of the Sinait National High School Alumni Association of Hawaii. Our alumni association was established in 1995 and has grown to 60 members in Hawaii. I also serve as the secretary of the Anak ti Sinait of Hawai'i (Children of Sinait). Our alumni association prides itself in volunteerism both in Hawai'i and the Philippines, where we perpetuate our culture, join in disaster relief efforts, finance medical missions to the Philippines, foster good health through outreach programs to our Filipino community, empower our youth through scholarship programs, offer aid to deceased members and their beneficiaries, and engage network opportunities to contribute successfully to Hawaii's economy through entrepreneurship.

Many of our organization members have family members who are World War II veterans. We were very, very grateful when we heard that Rep. Ty Cullen had introduced this bill to establish a monument at the Filipino Community Center to remember the gallant service and bravery of our Filipino World War II veterans to America and the world. We kindly request that your Committee also take a look at HB 886, which proposes to memorialize the stories of our Filipino veterans stories in an educational Filipino Veterans Legacy exhibit at the Honolulu International Airport. How can we maximize the design process to come up with a coordinated and appealing concept that will uplift the status of our Filipino veterans, while at the same time perpetuate public education and appreciation of our Filipino veterans in world history?

Thank you for hearing this bill and for the opportunity to express my full support of this bill.

Warmest regards,

Davelyn Quijano