

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 109 URGING THE
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS TO
GRANT FULL VETERANS BENEFITS TO FILIPINO VETERANS WHO FOUGHT IN
WORLD WAR II BUT WERE SUBSEQUENTLY DENIED THE BENEFITS TO WHICH
THEY WERE ENTITLED

PRESENTATION TO THE
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY
AFFAIRS

BY

MR. RONALD P. HAN, JR.
DIRECTOR OF THE STATE OFFICE OF VETERANS' SERVICES

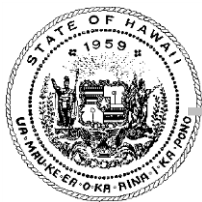
April 13, 2018
1:15 p.m.

Good morning Chair Nishihara and Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Committee:

I am Ron Han, Director of the State Office of Veterans Services. I appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony in support of House Concurrent Resolution 109 as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget.

According to the Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivor's Booklet (2012 edition), Chapter Nine (9) "Special Groups of Veterans"; World War II era Filipino Veterans are eligible for certain VA benefits. Generally, Old Philippine Scouts are eligible for VA benefits in the same manner as U.S. Veterans. Commonwealth Army Veterans, including certain organized Filipino guerilla forces and New Philippine Scouts residing in the United States who are citizens or lawfully admitted for permanent residence are also eligible for VA health care in the United States on the same basis as U.S. Veterans. Certain Commonwealth Army Veterans and new Philippine Scouts may be eligible for disability compensation and burial benefits. Other Veterans of recognized guerilla groups also may be eligible for certain VA benefits. Survivors of WW II era Filipino Veterans may be eligible for dependency and indemnity compensation. Eligibility and rates of benefits vary based on the recipient's citizenship and place of residence.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer my comments.



HAWAI‘I CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

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

April 13, 2018
Rm. 229, 1:15 p.m.

To: The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs

From: Linda Hamilton Krieger, Chair
and Commissioners of the Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission

Re: H.C.R. No. 109

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.

The HCRC strongly supports H.C.R. 109, Urging the President of the United States and the United States Congress to Grant Full Veterans Benefits to Filipino Veterans Who Fought in WW II But Were Subsequently Denied the Benefits to Which They Were Entitled.

These resolutions ask 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 veterans benefits and naturalization as part of the 1942 enactment of the Second War Powers Act, however many were denied the ability to naturalize , as well as veterans benefits, such as health care, disability pensions and burial expenses..

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.

Those who fought with American troops deserve full benefits, however belatedly. Much of that generation has already passed, and this resolution seeks to right a wrong that it may soon be too late to remedy.

The HCRC strongly supports H.C.R. 109, which asks the U.S. Congress to grant full veterans benefits to Filipino WW II veterans.

HCR-109

Submitted on: 4/12/2018 11:02:29 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/13/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for Oahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

To the Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair; the Honorable Glenn Wakai, Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs:

Good afternoon. My name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Committee ("OCC") on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on **HCR109** relating to granting full veterans benefits to Filipino veterans who fought in World War II.

The OCC on Legislative Priorities is in favor of **HCR109** and strongly supports its adoption.

HCR109 is in accord with the Democratic Platform as it urges the President of the United States and the United States Congress to grant full veterans benefits to Filipino veterans who fought in World War II but were subsequently denied the benefits to which they were entitled; and that this body requests that full veterans benefits apply to the veterans groups commonly referred to as the "Old" Philippine Scouts, the Philippine Commonwealth Army, the Recognized Guerrilla Forces, the "New" Philippine Scouts, and the United States Armed Forces in the Far East under General MacArthur (USAFFE); and that spouses and children of these veterans would qualify for the same Dependency and Indemnity Compensation that spouses and children of United States veterans receive.

The DPH Platform states that "The Armed Forces in Hawai'i and their families sacrifice to serve and defend our country and to help us in time of need. Hawai'i should honor their service by strongly supporting the best possible care of wounded and disabled veterans. We therefore support efforts to keep our Veteran's Hospitals fully funded.

We honor the service of all of our military members." (Platform of the DPH, P.8, Lines 530-534 (2016)).

Given that **HCR109** urges the President of the United States and the United States Congress to grant full veterans benefits to Filipino veterans who fought in World War II but were subsequently denied the benefits to which they were entitled; and that this body requests that full veterans benefits apply to the veterans groups commonly referred to as the "Old" Philippine Scouts, the Philippine Commonwealth Army, the Recognized Guerrilla Forces, the "New" Philippine Scouts, and the United States Armed Forces in the Far East under General MacArthur (USAFFE); and that spouses and children of these veterans would qualify for the same Dependency and Indemnity Compensation that spouses and children of United States veterans receive. it is the position of the OCC Legislative Priorities Committee to strongly support its adoption.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.
Sincerely yours,

/s/ Melodie Aduja
Melodie Aduja, Chair, OCC Legislative Priorities Committee
Email: legislativepriorities@gmail.com, Text/tel.: (808) 258-8889

HCR-109

Submitted on: 4/11/2018 9:09:50 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/13/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
James Logue	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am submitting in full support of this Resolution. As a combat veteran and active member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and other veteran organizations here in Hawaii I find it extremely vital that any veteran who fought on behalf of the United States be given their due benefits as they earned them.

HCR-109

Submitted on: 4/13/2018 10:41:58 AM

Testimony for PSM on 4/13/2018 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marcella Alohalani Boido	Individual	Support	No

Comments: