

# **HB 1119**

## **RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS**

Appropriates funds for burial grants for qualifying Filipino veterans to provide funeral and burial services and transportation of their remains to the Philippines.

PSM, WAM

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1119, RELATING TO FILIPINO VETERANS

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

BY

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

March 17, 2015

Aloha Chair Espero, Vice Chair Baker and Committee Members:

I'm Ron Han, Director of the State Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I appreciate this opportunity to provide testimony in support of the concepts in House Bill 1119 with the following comments:

This measure appropriate funds for burial grants to qualifying Filipino veterans to provide funeral and burial services and transportation of their remains to the Philippines.

Eligible Filipino veterans have earned the right to be buried in a National or State Veterans Cemetery. This is the same entitlement as eligible military members and veterans of the United States Armed Forces. Currently, eligible U.S. Veterans do not receive State or federal compensation for transportation of their remains to their respective state of residency or home of record.

This proposed measure in accordance with HRS 363 and if State funds are available, the amount of \$2,000 dollars may be provided for the transportation of the remains of eligible Filipino veterans. From the preliminary research with mortuary services in Hawaii, the approximate cost to ship the remains in a sealed casket with all of the proper safety measures adhered to would be approximately \$3,000 dollars. The transportation cost of shipping a casket from Hawaii to Manila in the Philippines would be approximately an additional \$5,000 dollars. Total estimate of the preparation and transportation of remains would be approximately \$8,000 dollars. The preparation and transportation of cremains in a urn would cost considerably less. Besides the cost factor, another point of interest would be the final requested burial location of the eligible Filipino veteran in the Philippines. For example, the cost of the casket transported from Hawaii to any other location other than Manila in the Philippines could drive cost substantially higher.

The OVS supports the 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 in support of HD1119.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 14, 2015 12:06 PM  
**To:** PSMTestimony  
**Cc:** mjgolo@email.phoenix.edu  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB1119 on Mar 17, 2015 13:45PM

**HB1119**

Submitted on: 3/14/2015

Testimony for PSM on Mar 17, 2015 13:45PM in Conference Room 229

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>     | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mike Golojuch       | Veterans Advisory Board | Support                   | No                        |

Comments: The Advisory Board of the Office of Veterans Services supports the appropriation of funds for burial grants for qualifying Filipino veterans to provide funeral and burial services and transportation of their remains to the Philippines.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2015 3:57 PM  
**To:** PSMTestimony  
**Cc:** TGB103@GMAIL.COM  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB1119 on Mar 17, 2015 13:45PM

**HB1119**

Submitted on: 3/15/2015

Testimony for PSM on Mar 17, 2015 13:45PM in Conference Room 229

| Submitted By      | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| TERESITA BERNALES | Individual   | Support            | No                 |

Comments: I am submitting this testimony in support of the HB1119 providing burial grants for qualifying Filipino Veterans. During WWII some 100,000 Philippine Commonwealth Army fought side-by side with US soldiers and were promised full benefits like their US counterparts. To this day the Filipino veterans are still fighting for full equity. Passing this bill is one small step toward the realization of these veterans' hope for equality. My father was a also a Filipino soldier who fought in WWII. He made the ultimate sacrifice for he died during the war. Due to this, I feel compassion for the surviving veterans, they deserve equal justice and honor that they so deserve. I urge you to pass this bill without reservations. Sincerely, Teresita G. Bernales

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 15, 2015 7:27 PM  
**To:** PSMTestimony  
**Cc:** rtbernardo@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB1119 on Mar 17, 2015 13:45PM

**HB1119**

Submitted on: 3/15/2015

Testimony for PSM on Mar 17, 2015 13:45PM in Conference Room 229

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Roberto Bernardo    | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments: I wish to support this bill because it is a small measure of recognition to the surviving WWII heroes who fought and gave so much for our freedom. There are only a few of them left now.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2015 10:12 AM  
**To:** PSMTestimony  
**Cc:** carl.campagna@kamakagreen.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB1119 on Mar 17, 2015 13:45PM

**HB1119**

Submitted on: 3/16/2015

Testimony for PSM on Mar 17, 2015 13:45PM in Conference Room 229

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Carl Campagna       | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments: Aloha and mahalo for the opportunity to testify. I am in strong support of this bill. Filipino soldiers played a vital role in WWII and the wishes of many of the soldiers was to be returned to their homes. We should honor the wishes of those who fought on our behalf.

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