
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE UNITED STATES PRESIDENT, SENATE, AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO ENACT LEGISLATION TO EXPEDITE IMMIGRANT VISAS FOR FAMILY REUNIFICATION OF CERTAIN FILIPINO VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II.

1 WHEREAS, on December 8, 1941, thousands of Filipino men and
2 women responded to President Roosevelt's call for help to
3 preserve peace, democracy, and freedom for America and the
4 World; and

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6 WHEREAS, at that time, the Philippines was part of the
7 Commonwealth of the United States of America and its citizens
8 were nationals of the United States of America, just like Hawaii
9 was then and American Samoa is today; and

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11 WHEREAS, during the dark days of World War II, nearly one
12 hundred thousand soldiers of the Philippine Commonwealth Army
13 provided a ray of hope in the Pacific as they fought alongside
14 United States and Allied forces for four long years to defend
15 and reclaim the Philippine Islands from Japanese aggression; and

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17 WHEREAS, thousands more Filipinos joined the United States
18 Armed Forces immediately after the war and served in
19 occupational duty throughout the Pacific Theater; and

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21 WHEREAS, valiant Filipino soldiers fought, died, and
22 suffered in some of the bloodiest battles of World War II,
23 defending beleaguered Bataan and Corregidor, and thousands of
24 Filipino prisoners of war endured the infamous Bataan Death
25 March and years of captivity; and

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27 WHEREAS, their many guerrilla actions slowed the Japanese
28 takeover of the Western Pacific region and allowed United States
29 forces the time to build and prepare for the allied
30 counterattack on Japan; and

1 WHEREAS, Filipino troops fought side-by-side with United
2 States forces to secure their islands as the strategic base from
3 which the final effort to defeat Japan was launched; and
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5 WHEREAS, President William J. Clinton proclaimed
6 October 20, 1996, as a day honoring the Filipino Veterans of
7 World War II, recalling the courage, sacrifice, and loyalty of
8 Filipino veterans of World War II in defense of democracy and
9 liberty; and
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11 WHEREAS, for decades after their heroic service under the
12 command of their leaders and General Douglas MacArthur, these
13 men and women of Filipino-American national heritage were denied
14 the benefits and privileges provided to their American
15 compatriots who fought side-by-side with them; and
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17 WHEREAS, the Rescission Act of 1946 withdrew the United
18 States veteran's status of Filipino World War II soldiers,
19 thereby denying them the benefits and compensation received by
20 their American counterparts and soldiers of more than sixty-six
21 other United States allied countries, who were similarly
22 inducted into the United States military; and
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24 WHEREAS, the Rescission Act discriminated against
25 Filipinos, making them the only national group singled out for
26 denial of the full United States status and benefits of United
27 States veterans, including the rights of immigration and
28 naturalization; and
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30 WHEREAS, in recognition of the courage and loyalty of the
31 Filipino troops who fought alongside the United States armed
32 forces during World War II, the United States Congress enacted
33 legislation in 1990 that provided a waiver from certain
34 immigration and naturalization requirements for those Filipino
35 veterans; and
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37 WHEREAS, as a result of that legislation, many of those
38 Filipino veterans have become proud citizens and residents of
39 the United States; and
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41 WHEREAS, because the 1990 legislation did not extend
42 immigration and naturalization benefits to the children of those
43 veterans, resulting in separations that were years long, as the

1 children remained in the Philippines awaiting the issuance of
2 immigrant visas; and

3 WHEREAS, on February 16, 2007, Senator Daniel Akaka, along
4 with Senator Daniel Inouye and other Senators, introduced S.
5 671, the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act, in the
6 United States Senate, to amend the Immigration and
7 Naturalization Act to exempt children of certain Filipino World
8 War II veterans from the numerical limitation on immigrant
9 visas; and

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11 WHEREAS, Representative Mazie Hirono, Representative Neil
12 Abercrombie, and other Representatives have expressed an
13 interest or intent to introduce or co-sponsor a House companion
14 bill to S. 671 to facilitate family reunification of certain
15 Filipino Veterans of World War II; and

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17 WHEREAS, H.R. 1, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act
18 of 2009, set the historical record straight by declaring that
19 the Filipino Veterans' service during World War II is hereby
20 recognized as active United States military service; now,
21 therefore,

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23 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
24 Twenty-fifth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
25 of 2009, the Senate concurring, that the United States
26 President, the United States Senate, the United States House of
27 Representatives, and the United States Secretary of Veterans
28 Affairs are respectfully urged to support the passage of H.R.
29 1287, the Filipino Veterans Family Reunification Act, to
30 expedite family reunification for certain Filipino veterans of
31 World War II; and

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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
34 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the
35 United States, President of the Republic of the Philippines,
36 President and Majority Leader of the United States Senate,
37 Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Chair of
38 the Senate Judiciary Committee, Chair of the House Judiciary
39 Committee, Director of the Bureau of United States Citizenship
40 and Immigration Services, United States Secretary of Veterans
41 Affairs, American Coalition for Filipino Veterans, and Hawaii's
42 congressional delegation.