
SENATE RESOLUTION

URGING CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO
SUPPORT THE PASSAGE OF LEGISLATION TO EXPEDITE FAMILY
REUNIFICATION FOR 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

5
6 WHEREAS, at that time, the Philippines was a commonwealth
7 associated with the United States and its citizens were
8 nationals of the United States, similar to the status of
9 Hawaii's residents prior to statehood and the current status of
10 American Samoa's residents; and

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

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

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

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

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1 WHEREAS, Filipino troops fought side by side with American
2 forces to secure their islands as the strategic base from which
3 the final effort to defeat Japan was launched; and
4

5 WHEREAS, in February of 1946, the United States Congress
6 enacted the 1946 Rescission Act, which denied World War II
7 Filipino veterans rights to veterans benefits equal to those
8 enjoyed by other veterans and soldiers of more than sixty-six
9 other countries who were similarly inducted into the United
10 States military; and
11

12 WHEREAS, the Rescission Act discriminated against
13 Filipinos, making them the only national group singled out for
14 denial of full United States veterans status and benefits,
15 including immigration and naturalization rights; and
16

17 WHEREAS, decades later, in recognition of the courage and
18 loyalty of the Filipino troops who fought alongside United
19 States Armed Forces in the Pacific during World War II, the
20 United States Congress enacted legislation in 1990 that provided
21 a waiver from certain immigration and naturalization
22 requirements for these Filipino veterans; and
23

24 WHEREAS, as a result of the 1990 legislation, many Filipino
25 veterans have become proud citizens and residents of this
26 country; and
27

28 WHEREAS, despite the granting of citizenship, World War II
29 Filipino veterans are still denied equal treatment and status as
30 American veterans by the Rescission Act; and
31

32 WHEREAS, the 1990 legislation did not go far enough in
33 extending immigration and naturalization benefits to the
34 children of Filipino veterans, resulting in years of long
35 separation between the veterans and their children remaining in
36 the Philippines awaiting the issuance of immigrant visas; and
37

38 WHEREAS, President William J. Clinton proclaimed
39 October 20, 1996, as a day honoring the Filipino veterans of
40 World War II, recalling the courage, sacrifice, and loyalty of
41 Filipino veterans of World War II in defense of democracy and
42 liberty; and



1
 2 WHEREAS, on February 17, 2009, the American Recovery and
 3 Reinvestment Act of 2009 was signed into law and, among many
 4 other things, formally recognized and set the historical record
 5 straight by declaring the service of Filipino World War II
 6 veterans as active United States military service in the Armed
 7 Forces for purposes of this law; and

8
 9 WHEREAS, decades after their heroic service under the
 10 command of their leaders and General Douglas MacArthur, men and
 11 women of Filipino-American national heritage are still being
 12 denied the benefits and privileges provided to their American
 13 compatriots who fought side by side with them; and

14
 15 WHEREAS, World War II Filipino veterans are now in their
 16 seventies and eighties, and many are permanently disabled and
 17 would, except for the Rescission Act, be eligible for full
 18 federal veterans benefits and services; and

19
 20 WHEREAS, correction of this injustice to the Filipino
 21 veterans who served our nation courageously in the fight for
 22 freedom and democracy during World War II is long overdue; now,
 23 therefore,

24
 25 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth
 26 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2015,
 27 that the President of the United States and United States
 28 Congress are urged to support legislation to expedite family
 29 reunification for certain Filipino veterans of World War II; and

30
 31 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 32 Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States;
 33 President of the Republic of the Philippines; Majority Leader of
 34 the United States Senate; Speaker of the United States House of
 35 Representatives; Chair of the Committee on the Judiciary of the
 36 United States Senate; Chair of the Committee on the Judiciary of
 37 the United States House of Representatives; Director of the
 38 Bureau of United States Citizenship and Immigration Services;
 39 United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs; Hawaii's
 40 congressional delegation; Chairs of the Senate Committee on
 41 Human Services and Housing; House Committee on Human Services;
 42 Senate Committee on Tourism and International Affairs; House



- 1 Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
- 2 Culture and the Arts; and House Committee on Tourism.

