
HOUSE RESOLUTION

URGING CONGRESS TO AMEND FEDERAL LAW TO ALLOW FUNDS FOR THE BURIAL OF QUALIFIED FILIPINO-AMERICAN VETERANS IN NATIONAL AND STATE VETERANS CEMETERIES TO COVER THE COSTS OF TRANSPORTING THE REMAINS OF FILIPINO-AMERICAN VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II TO THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR FUNERAL AND BURIAL SERVICES IN THE PHILIPPINES.

1 WHEREAS, during World War II, the Philippines was a
2 Commonwealth of the United States, and, for four years, nearly
3 100,000 soldiers of the Philippine Commonwealth Army fought
4 alongside the United States and Allied forces to defend and
5 reclaim the Philippine Islands from foreign aggression; and
6

7 WHEREAS, these valiant Filipino soldiers fought, suffered,
8 and died in some of the bloodiest battles of World War II,
9 defending beleaguered Bataan and Corregidor, and thousands of
10 them became prisoners of war, enduring the infamous Bataan Death
11 March and years of captivity; and
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13 WHEREAS, the sacrifices of these Filipino soldiers played a
14 vital role in the Allied victory in the Pacific as their
15 numerous guerrilla actions provided United States forces with
16 time to build and prepare for the Allied counterattack; and
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18 WHEREAS, these Filipino soldiers fought side-by-side with
19 United States forces to secure their island nation as the
20 strategic base from which the final effort by Allied forces to
21 bring an end to World War II was launched; and
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23 WHEREAS, the United States promised these Filipino soldiers
24 pay and benefits for their military service under the United
25 States Armed Forces and for their oath of allegiance to the
26 Constitution of the United States; however, soon after the war
27 ended, legislation was passed that wrongfully took away the
28 benefits and recognition they had earned; and



1 WHEREAS, because these World War II veterans had suffered a
2 great wrong, and recognizing that for those with family in the
3 Philippines the return of their remains to the Philippines is a
4 profound and fervent wish, the Legislature in 2003 enacted Act
5 101, Session Laws of Hawaii 2003, requiring the Office of
6 Veterans' Services to pay up to \$2,500 for the transport of
7 their remains to the Philippines and funeral and burial services
8 in the Philippines; and
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10 WHEREAS, funding, however, has not been provided to fulfill
11 this statutory requirement; and
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13 WHEREAS, in the early 2000s, the United States also enacted
14 legislation requiring the Veterans Administration to pay the
15 full cost of burials at national and state veterans cemeteries
16 to the survivors of these World War II veterans; however, this
17 legislation failed to address coverage of the costs of transport
18 to and services in the Philippines to be with their loved ones;
19 and
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21 WHEREAS, though many years have transpired since World War
22 II, the words of United States President Harry S. Truman in 1946
23 remain the honest truth: "I consider it a moral obligation of
24 the United States to look after the welfare of Philippine Army
25 veterans."; and
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27 WHEREAS, for the small number of World War II Filipino-
28 American veterans who are still living, this moral obligation of
29 the United States should extend to fulfilling their wish for a
30 resting place in the Philippines among their loved ones, for
31 this is an entitlement that they have clearly sacrificed for and
32 earned; now, therefore,
33

34 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
35 Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
36 Session of 2016, that Congress is urged to amend federal law to
37 allow funds for the burial of qualified Filipino-American
38 veterans in national and state cemeteries to cover the costs of
39 transporting the remains of eligible Filipino-American veterans
40 of World War II to the Philippines and for funeral and burial
41 services in the Philippines; and



H.R. NO. 5

1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
 2 Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States,
 3 Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, President
 4 of the United States Senate, Hawaii's Congressional delegation,
 5 and the Director of the Office of Veterans' Services.

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